



Sustainable Agriculture and Natural Resource Management Collaborative Research Support Program

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Trip Report: Bolivia

11 – 17 February 2007

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Purpose of Trip:

Supervise research progress, finalize questionnaire and sample size for baseline survey, and training in watershed management techniques and basic economic analysis. Begin planning activities for subsequent year, discuss training activities, and hold discussions related to the annual meeting beginning 24-27 June 2007.

Sites Visited: Cochabamba (Tiraque), Bolivia

Description of activities:

We worked with partners in the Tiraque watershed and visited the Toralapa experiment station. Current treatments in field are quite simple and aimed at validating the technical possibility of producing alternative crops. We made several suggestions about increasing the complexity to compare alternative soil erosion control and soil fertility management techniques. The researchers were open to these suggestions and will increase complexity in the subsequent round of research. We also suggested adding an ecologist to the research team, as the upper reaches of the watershed are subject to population stress and PROINPA's solution (alternatives such as seed potato beds in relatively virgin soils) carries with it the possibility of long-term increases in environmental degradation.

Discussions also highlighted the need for attention to markets, and several studies of market potential were discussed. Nadezda Amaya, a PROINPA researcher would like to start studying for a marketing/economics MS degree at Virginia Tech this fall.

Met with the Tiraque "consejo municipal" and made several suggestions about means for increasing local participation in the collaborative research process. The local government is in full support of the SANREM project, but wishes to explore options to increase the utility of the



research for their own residents. In particular, the official wished to know if the approach could be used to strengthen their own efforts at land use planning, as local governments will need to have land use plans in place over the next couple of years. The team communicated strong agreement that the watershed models we are creating will be available to assist in the process. We also reiterated the idea that the tool would be jointly created with local residents.

The team had a lengthy meeting in the offices of CERES, the group that will conduct the socioeconomic and baseline survey. Several problems were encountered with the existing survey instrument, and changes were made. The team also discussed delaying the baseline survey until the end of the crop year so that reference to the most recent growing season would reduce confusion. Since most crops are out of the ground in May, it was agreed that the delay would be reasonable and, given the likely increment to survey response quality, the team decided to accept the delay.

The team trained a group of approximately 20 PROINPA, CERES and PROMIC researchers on: (i) conduct of a natural resource management research project (presented by Mr. Victor Barrera, South American coordinator for our SANREM project); (ii) economic analysis for natural resource management (presented by Jeffrey Alwang); and (iii) an overview of watershed management techniques (presented by Darrell Bosch). Approximately ½ of the audience was women.

A meeting with USAID officials (Mr. Angel Vasquez and Mr. Ricardo Roca) in La Paz indicated a good degree of complementarity between our SANREM project and Mission goals. The Mission would like to be invited to the annual meeting and additional contacts between PROINPA and the Mission are strongly encouraged. A large Title 2 program supported by USAID in Potosi could benefit from the SANREM global experience.

Suggestions and Recommendations:

1) Incorporate ecologist into team; 2) conduct market analysis for alternative crops; 3) take steps to build participation of watershed residents through increased meetings; 4) modify survey instrument and delay implementation until after current crop year; 5) take steps to increase communication between the Bolivian partners and the USAID mission; and 6) take steps to broaden participation by US researchers in Bolivian site.

List of Contacts Made:

Name	Title/Organization	Contact Info (address, phone, email)
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