



Sustainable Agriculture and Natural Resource Management Collaborative Research Support Program

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Trip Report: Haiti

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Purpose of Trip: Visit CAPS and maize field trial sites established with Zanmi Agrikol and Caritas-Hinche for the 2012 season. Evaluate status of research plots, discuss research goals and objectives for field trials in the summer and fall of 2012, and establish plans for Conservation Agriculture Workshops to be held in cooperation with partners during Summer 2012.

Sites Visited: Port Au Prince, Mirebalais, Cange, Hinche, and research sites at Corporant, Boucan Carré and Maïssade

Description of Activities:

Thompson and In-country Coordinator Robert Badio met with James Woolley of USAID at the U.S. Embassy on 12 June. Thompson and Badio provided an update of the SANREM LTRA project and Woolley discussed the WINNER project with us. Plans will be made to further our communication with WINNER. The maize crops for the 2012 CAPS field experiments were planted in May at Corporant, Lachateau (near Boucan Carré), and Maïssade. This maize should be ready for harvest during August. The maize crops for the CIMMYT open-pollinated and hybrid trials were planted on about 2 June at Maïssade, 12 June at Corporant, and 15 June at Lachateau. The VT team (Thompson and Assistant Coordinator Dilou Prospere) was able to visit each field site, observe the condition of the CAPS field plots, and visit with the agronomists about progress and needs. We also began planning for Conservation Agriculture Workshops to be held during this summer. During the final two days, Thompson and Prospere were joined by VT graduate student Michael Graham.

Key Accomplishments:

1. Met with James Woolley of USAID, briefed him on LTRA activities and our partners, and established email contact with WINNER personnel.
2. Met with representatives of key partners (Ministry of Agriculture, Zanmi Agrikol, Caritas-Hinche.
3. Visited all three experimental locations for this project (Corporant, Lachateau, Maissade) and met with all agronomists affiliated with the project.
4. Visited with Zanmi Agrikol personnel at Corporant (Gillaine Warne, Reginald Cean, Jean-Phillipe Dorzin, Jean Louis Stenio) to discuss plans for Conservation Agriculture Workshops to be presented jointly by VT and ZA personnel. We agreed on a date of July 17 at Corporant and to invite 25 farmers and 25 students from the technical school at Corporant. We distributed seeds of six cover crops and asked the agronomists to plant small (1m²) plots of each to aid in demonstrations at the upcoming workshops.
5. Visited with Zanmi Agrikol personnel at Lachateau (Larose Deus) to discuss plans for Conservation Agriculture Workshops to be presented jointly by VT and ZA personnel. We agreed on a date of July 18 at Lachateau and to invite 50 farmers to attend. We distributed seeds of six cover crops and asked the agronomist to plant small (1m²) plots of each to aid in demonstrations at the upcoming workshops.
6. Visited with Caritas personnel at Hinche (Augustin Guedry, Evans Bien-Aime) to discuss plans for Conservation Agriculture Workshops to be presented jointly by VT and Caritas personnel. We agreed on a date of July 20 at Maissade and to invite 50 farmers to attend. We distributed seeds of six cover crops and asked the agronomists to plant small (1m²) plots of each to aid in demonstrations at the upcoming workshops.
7. Visited with partners at Zanmi Agrikol (Bellevue Guibbonz) and Caritas (Augustin Guedry) about invoicing and reimbursement questions. One invoice for ZA is in process and should be paid soon.
8. WatchDog 2000 weather stations with data logging capability were deployed and data gathering was successfully initiated at the three experimental locations (Corporant, Lachateau, and Maissade) by Michael Graham and Dilou Prospere.

Field Experiments and Plans:

Thompson and Prospere met with partners at Zanmi Agrikol on June 13-14. Those attending were, Jean-Philippe Dorzin (ZA Agronomist), Jean Louis Stenio (ZA Agronomist), Gillaine Warne (ZA lead volunteer), Reginald Cean (Head of the agricultural school) and Larose Deus (ZA Agronomist). We observed the cover crop-tillage (CAPS) experiment plots at the two ZA locations (Corporant and Lachateau--Boucan Carré), discussed progress, and agreed on management practices for the rest of the season.

We also observed the just-planted open-pollinated and hybrid maize trials at each of the three sites. The ZA agronomists observed enormous differences among the CIMMYT open-pollinated maize during 2011, and agreed that the CIMMYT lines were clearly superior to local varieties. Agronomist Larose Deus showed us a field of maize near the Lachateau experimental farm, planted from seed selected from last year's variety trials. While no single line was selected, Larose noted the overall shorter stature and superior yield of the CIMMYT lines.

The VT team met with Caritas Agronomists Guedry and Evans at the Caritas office in Hinche on June 14. Following a brief discussion, we visited the experimental farm at Maissade. We inspected the CAPS field trial plots and CIMMYT maize open-pollinated and hybrid test plots.

The ZA agronomists expressed interest in more black bean seed (especially ‘Arroyo Negro’ and ‘Zorro’) for distribution to farmers. It was agreed that the VT team will search for seeds and will be willing to give modest quantities in exchange for farmer’s sharing yield results.

Suggestions, Recommendations, and/or Follow-up Items:

Activities for the next three weeks will be focused on preparing for the Conservation Agriculture Workshops to be held July 17-20. We will also schedule a time to visit the WINNER offices and farm(s).