



Sustainable Agriculture and Natural Resource Management Collaborative Research Support Program

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Trip Report: Haiti 26 February - 1 March 2012

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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. Introduce the new Assistant In-country Coordinator (Dilou Prospere) to research partners, and finalize arrangements for his salary and expenses to be paid. Evaluate status of research plots, discuss research goals and objectives for field trials in the spring and summer of 2012, and continue to strengthen ties with in-country partners.

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

Description of Activities

The cover crops for the 2012 CAPS field experiments have been planted at Corporant, Lachateau, and Maïssade. Plans are in place to plant maize in these plots in the first growing season of 2012. The VT team (Thompson with 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. Overall, the project is in good position to achieve strong positive results in the upcoming year.

Key accomplishments:

1. Met with representatives of all key partners.
2. Visited all three experimental locations for this project (Corporant, Lachateau, Maïssade) and met with all agronomists affiliated with the project.

3. Obtained agreement from Zanmi Agrikol (Bellevue Guibbonz of ZA and Michael Hebert of Partners in Health) to put Dilou Prospere on their payroll. This was agreed upon during email and phone conversations with Michael Hebert (Partners in Health, Boston), and in a face-to-face meeting with Bellevue Guibbonz and Ferest Sonneus of Zanmi Agrikol. This is a major step forward and will contribute significantly to the success of the project. Specifically, we agreed that:
 - a. The pay for Dilou Prospere will start on February 1, 2012.
 - b. Virginia Tech will increase the advance for ZA from \$5,000 to \$10,000. Thompson has requested this action from Virginia Tech's Office of Research Services.
 - c. As soon as the advance increase is received, Prospere will be paid at the next payday.
 - d. Zanmi Agrikol may invoice Virginia Tech as often as monthly if needed.
4. Visited with partners at Zanmi Agrikol and Caritas about invoicing and reimbursement questions and agreed to follow up immediately. The first invoice for Caritas has been approved for payment and should be paid very soon. Two more invoices have been submitted and are in process now.

Field Experiments and Plans:

Thompson and Prospere met with partners at Zanmi Agrikol on February 27-28. Those attending were Ferreste Sonneus (ZA Agronomist), Jean-Philippe Dorzin (ZA Agronomist), Jean Louis Stenio (ZA Agronomist) and Larose Deus (ZA Agronomist). We observed the cover crop-tillage (CAPS) experiment field plots at the two ZA locations (Corporant and Lachateau--Boucan Carré), discussed their progress, and agreed on management practices for the rest of the season. We also discussed planting and other cultural practices.

We also observed the ongoing hybrid corn variety trials at Boucan Carré. The corn was at the VT growth stage (tasseling) during our visit, and overall looked very good. The ZA agronomists observed enormous differences among the CIMMYT open-pollinated varieties during 2011, and agreed that the CIMMYT varieties were clearly superior to local varieties. It was agreed that the trials will be repeated during 2012. Arrival of the maize seeds for the second year variety trials was discussed. Thomason has requested the seeds from CIMMYT. The goal is to deliver them by hand to ZA by 1 April if possible. They hope to plan maize no later than 15 April.

The VT team met briefly with the Caritas Agronomist Guedry at the Caritas office in Hinche on February 28. Following a brief discussion, we visited the experimental farm at Maissade. We inspected the CAPS field trial plots. The plots were planted and irrigated on February 21 and appear to be in good shape.

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

1. Make banners to publicize the experimental sites (Thompson)
2. Ensure payment of Invoices 2 and 3 from Caritas (Thompson)