



Sustainable Agriculture and Natural Resource Management Collaborative Research Support Program

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Trip Report: Haiti 18-26 July 2010

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Purpose of Trip: Visit CAPS and field trial sites established with Zanmi Agrikol and Caritas-Hinche. Strengthen ties with in-country partners and outline research goals for the remainder of 2010 and the upcoming 2011 season.

Sites Visited: Corporant Research Site in Mirebalais
Bois Jali Research Site
Lascahobas
Lachateau Research Site in Boucan Carré
Maïssade Research Site near Maïssade
Papaye
Farms and small lakes near Pandiassou
Port-au-Prince

Description of Activities:

On arrival, the team met with Robert Badio (Haitian Ministère de l'Agriculture des Ressources Naturelles et du Développement Rural) and two potential survey enumerators (students) to plan activities and set goals for the week. The team also visited the downtown areas of Port Au Prince to see the earthquake damage and reconstruction/cleanup efforts. We traveled just out of the city to see vegetable and crop production on very steep hillsides. This area has erosion control terraces, rock walls, etc., in place as well as some strip cropping. N. Kennedy met with Su'ad Jarbawi, MercyCorps Office Director Hinche. Mercy Corps surveyed 20,000 individuals in the Plateau after the earthquake for a baseline survey (Nathan has a copy). They collected very basic information and covered all 4 communes of the Central Plateau.

Experimental sites:

The team visited the Corporant site where we observed the cropping practices and species used at the farm. We then saw the distribution of several hundred 100 lb sacks of fertilizer. The material was donated by Mosaic Corp and given to farmers who had previous experience with

fertilizer and who work closely with ZA. It is intended mainly for peanuts this summer and beans this summer/fall.

We visited Bois Jali, site of one of the black bean trials, where we also observed maize, pigeon pea, millet, yams, and cowpea cultivation. Elevation at this site was 650-700 m. Black bean trials at Bois Jali and Balandri were planted in April and harvested in July. ***Both sites were planted using Conservation Agriculture techniques (no burning, minimal tillage).*** We also observed a pigeon pea crop planted into weed mulch. Rock walls are present for erosion control in some fields and have been there since approximately 1986. Their major cash crop is black beans planted in March after first rain, with a second season planting in August.

The team conducted a planning meeting with Herby Etienne, Caritas Agronomist at his office in Hinche to discuss the status of the project and our itinerary. We then traveled to the experimental site near Maissaide. The road to the field is finished and the depot/education building foundation is finished. The dam below our experimental site is mostly done and will back up water nearly to the level of our field. Maize trials will be planted with the beginning of the second rainy season in August.

We prepared beans for the trials to be planted at three sites by ZA in August.

Meetings with growers and grower groups:

At Corporant, we conducted an informal meeting with 12 farmers from the general area. They listed maize, beans, banana, and legumes (vegetables) as their most important crops. They eat most of the maize and beans, sell vegetables because they won't store. Irrigation water and pumps to move it are major concerns as are returns and profitability of crops.

At Bois Jali, we met for approximately one hour with 45 farmers, including 9 women. They are well aware that erosion is their biggest problem and have some low rock walls and live barriers on contours on many fields. They were willing to plant the bean trials again and seemed pleased that we were there. They mentioned that researchers had been there before and had asked personal questions that they didn't like.

At Maissaide we met informally with one farmer who was using two bulls to plow our site. Herby and two other Caritas agronomists took us to visit several other projects they have ongoing. In Papaye, we visited a Caritas goat project. Crossbred Boer and native goats are given to farmers for an equal number of progeny. Goats are maintained in pens financed by Caritas (\$50).

Near Pandiassou, the team met with a dozen farmers who irrigate from the lakes. They only irrigate a 20 by 20 m area and use it for vegetables (legumes) but they are high value. Vegetables are their main income and are only grown in the dry season. They also all farm an additional 1-3 carreau (1 carreau = 1.29 ha) but that may be up to an hour's walk from the lakes. We then went with one farmer to visit his homestead and pond. We saw dams that were probably 20 years old and one that was newly built last year and still filling. There are approximately 70 of these dams in the area.

Observation of market products:

On Wednesday, July 21, the team visited the open market in Lascahobas. We observed lots of plantain and black bean, some yellow beans as well and some new crop maize. There was a nice selection of vegetables including carrots, onions, greens, and okra. We paid 265 gourdes for 10 scoops of beans, both black and yellow. These were purchased with the intent to include local types in the variety trials to be planted in August.

Suggestions and Recommendations:

We need access to current and recent (pre-earthquake) population and census data for the experimental sites. A record exists and we should obtain a copy of the 2003 Census “Resultas Definitifs” compiled by the Institut Haitien de statistique ed d informatique (IHSI).

Farmers consistently mentioned that rains were often later in coming and more sporadic than in the past. This should be investigated if data can be obtained. An inquiry to Columbia Earth Institute about fine resolution meteorological data should be made to determine what is available.

K.M Rainey to communicate with ZA re:detail on the August bean plantings. Field books for data collection will be edited and expanded.

Summarize and distribute first season black bean trial data to SANREM partners and cooperators.

Training Activities Conducted

Program type (workshop, seminar, field day, short course, etc.)	Date	Audience	Number of Participants		Training Provider (US university, host country institution, etc.)	Training Objective
			Men	Women		
Research plot handling and data collection	7/19-20	ZA agronomists and enumerators	2	1	Virginia Tech	Research data quality assurance

List of Contacts Made:

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