

Report to:
AID/W and
USAID/Costa Rica

MISC-81-3

Administrative Visit
to the
Costa Rica Seed Program



SEED TECHNOLOGY LABORATORY
MISSISSIPPI STATE UNIVERSITY
MISSISSIPPI STATE, MISSISSIPPI



TITLE: Administrative visit to the Costa Rica seed program.

REPORT NO: MISC-81-3

CONTRACT: AID/DSAN-CA-0148 with Mississippi State University

CONSULTANT: A. H. Boyd, Professor/Agronomist

PERIOD: January 27-31, 1981

Terms of Reference

The National Seed Commission requested that Mississippi State University/Seed Technology Laboratory (MSU/STL) send this consultant to Costa Rica to visit their various new facilities and review their program. Since MSU/STL has been associated with the seed program in that country since 1968, Dr. L. N. Wise, vice president of MSU for Agriculture, Forestry and Veterinary Medicine and State Representative Charles W. Capps made an inspection visit at the same time to review MSU involvement in international agriculture.

Actions

A detailed itinerary and list of key people contacted is attached. A conference on 28 January with the National Seed Commission and their field inspectors indicated that the proportion of the rice crop planted

to certified seed increased from 1½% in 1977 to almost 30% in 1980. At this same time the seed quality standards were tightened from allowing eight red rice per kilogram of seed to two per kilogram. They credit much of their success to techniques learned from MSU/STL and in visits to MSU. Their chief inspector and two of their directors were trained in field inspection by Mississippi Seed Improvement Association inspectors.

Foundation seed fields were visited at Experiment Station Enrique Jiminez. Seed quality was improved by head-to-row selections and transplanting seedlings to insure pure stocks for breeder's seed.

The seed drying-conditioning facilities of the Consejo Nacional de Produccion were reviewed. Ing. Raoul Guillott indicated that the facility produces about 20% of the seed for the country with the private sector accounting for 80%.

The president of the Republic of Costa Rica granted an interview to the group. In this meeting he expressed a strong desire for MSU to cooperate with the University of Costa Rica in developing a graduate program in agronomy-seed technology. If accomplished it would become the first such program to be offered in the Spanish language. The president was hopeful that the task could be implemented under the concept of "Universities for Peace" as endorsed by the United Nations. Dr. Wise agreed to recommend this program to the president of MSU who has since agreed in principle. Details are yet to be worked out but the opportunity for significant progress is so great that we expect to accomplish the task.

Dr. Ronald Echandi coordinated arrangements in Costa Rica and is due much of the credit for the success of the visit.

List of Key People Contacted

President Carazzo	President of the Rep. of Costa Rica
Dr. Hernan Fonseca	Minister of Agriculture
Ing. Alberto Vargas	Chief operations, MAG
Dr. Ronald Echandi	Director, Grain and Seed Lab University of Costa Rica
Ing. Carlos Molina	Secretary, National Seed Commission
Ing. Victor Witte	Chief, Seed Section Consejo Nacional de Produccion
Ing. Raoul Guillott	Chief, Seed Conditioning Plant Consejo Nacional de Produccion
Ing. Manuel Rodriguez	Manager, Basic Seeds Project
Sr. Federico Alvarez	Costa Rican Ambassador to Honduras
Ing. Jorge Munoz	Central Agricola, Cartago C. R.
In. Rodrigo Rojas	Semillas Primavera, Heredia, C. R.
Dr. Larry Leaird	USAID/Costa Rica
Dr. Bob Julian	Feed and Grain Institute Kansas State University

Itinerary while in Costa Rica

Jan 28	0900	Meet with National Seed Commission
	1130	Lunch with: Minister of Agriculture Rural Development Officer, USAID Representative of President of Costa Rica Director of CIGRAS
	1500	University of Costa Rica Seed and Grain Laboratory
Jan 29	0730	To Pavas airport
	0830	Travel to Canas
	1000	Inspect facilities and basic seed fields Experiment Station Enrique Jimenez
	1200	Lunch at La Pacifica, Canas, CR with representative of MAG, CNP, and private growers
	1300	Travel to Barranca
	1500	Inspect CNP seed drying and conditioning facilities
	1730	Travel to San Jose
Jan 30	0900	President of the Republic of Costa Rica
	1000	Central Agricola, Cartago, CR
	1200	Lunch with private producers in San Jose
	1430	Semillas Primavera, Heredia, CR