

**EVALUATION OF COOPERATIVE COST  
SHARING GRANT:  
FARMER-TO-FARMER  
PROGRAM**

Earl Jones  
Karen Anderson  
Norman Ward

Submitted by:

**DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATES, Inc.**  
2924 Columbia Pike  
Arlington, VA 22204

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>PAGE</u>
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS . . . . .	1
LIST OF TABLES . . . . .	v
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY. . . . .	vi
<b>CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION</b>	
A. Legislative and Agreement Provisions. . . . .	1
B. Program Expansion . . . . .	3
C. VOCA: Structure and Staff . . . . .	3
D. Program Performance . . . . .	4
E. Evaluation of the Farmer-to-Farmer Program. . . . .	4
<b>CHAPTER II: STUDY METHODOLOGY</b>	
A. VOCA and Host Organization Processes. . . . .	7
B. Need and Delivery of Technical Assistance . . . . .	9
C. Communications Linkages . . . . .	10
D. The Study Samples . . . . .	10
E. Survey and Case Study Instruments . . . . .	12
F. Analysis and Reporting. . . . .	13
G. Limitations to the Evaluation . . . . .	13
<b>CHAPTER III: PROCESSES</b>	
A. Host Organizations in the Program . . . . .	14
B. The Volunteers. . . . .	18
1. Recruitment. . . . .	19
2. Placement. . . . .	21
3. Suggestions on Recruitment and Placement . . . . .	24
C. Orientation of the Volunteers . . . . .	25
D. Host Organization Facilitation of Volunteers' Work. . . . .	29
E. Program Reports . . . . .	30
F. Subcontractor Operations. . . . .	32
G. Financial Documentation . . . . .	33
H. Host Country Farmers to the United States . . . . .	34
I. Process Lessons Learned . . . . .	36
<b>CHAPTER IV: RESULTS OF THE VOLUNTEER WORK</b>	
A. Need for the Program. . . . .	39
B. Transfer of Agricultural Technology . . . . .	42
C. Establishment of US and Host Country Farmer Relationships . . . . .	49
D. Unintended Outcomes . . . . .	51
E. Program Cost Results. . . . .	53

**CHAPTER V: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

A. Performance Summary . . . . . 55

    1. Process Performance. . . . . 55

    2. Results of the Volunteer Work. . . . . 56

B. Program Recommendations . . . . . 58

**APPENDICES:**

A. Interview Instruments. . . . . 63

B. Examples of Work Plan for the Volunteer  
    and Volunteer Farmer Report. . . . . 83

C. Examples of Special Communications . . . . . 88

## LIST OF TABLES

	<u>PAGE</u>
1. Number of Completed Interviews by Respondent Type and Host Country . . . . .	11
2. First Source of Information about the Farmer-to-Farmer Program . . . . .	14
3. First Recruitment Source of the Sample Volunteers . . . . .	19
4. Proximity of Arrival Date of Volunteer to Date Requested, according to Host Organization. . . . .	21
5. Appropriateness of Length of Volunteer Stay in the Country, according to Host Organization and Volunteer. . . . .	22
6. Host Organization and Volunteer Suggestions for Improvement of the Recruitment and Management of Volunteers . . . . .	25
7. Distribution of Ratings by Host Organizations and Volunteers on Sufficiency of VOCA Orientation on Host Country. . . . .	25
8. Distribution of Ratings by Host Organizations and Volunteers on VOCA Orientation on the Country Customs and Culture . . . . .	27
9. Distribution of Ratings by Host Organizations and Volunteers on Orientation on Agriculture . . . . .	27
10. Distribution of Ratings by Host Organizations and Volunteers on Orientation on the Work to be Done by the Volunteer. . . . .	28
11. Organizational Problems in Locating Satisfactory Housing for Volunteers. . . . .	30
12. Percentage of Opinions on Bringing Host Country Farmers to the United States, by Host Organizations and Farmers, and Volunteers. . . . .	34
13. Comparison by Percentages of Types of Volunteer Assistance during the Farm Visits and the Farmer Reported Learning. . . . .	43
14. Distribution and Means of Host Organization Ratings of Volunteers' Performance . . . . .	48
15. Indications of Organizations to Continue with the Farmer-to-Farmer Program, by Percentage . . . . .	49

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The US Agency for International Development negotiated a cooperative agreement with Volunteers in Overseas Cooperative Assistance (VOCA), to conduct a pilot Farmer-to-Farmer program in 1986 to send US farmer volunteers to the Caribbean, and to Central and South America. Although the Farmer-to-Farmer program has been authorized for some time under Section 406 of PL 480, this pilot project was the first time the program had been funded. The program will be expanded to Asia and Africa during the coming year under a new grant with the Bureau of Food for Peace and Voluntary Assistance. VOCA and three subcontractors recruited had placed 65 farmers, their spouses, an extensionist, a veterinarian, and processing plant personnel through September 1986. A Bureau for Private Enterprise evaluation was conducted on samples of volunteers, host country organizations and farmers, and the VOCA management in six of the countries served.

The sample volunteers gave technical assistance to farmers in dairy, beef, swine, poultry, corn, and vegetable production. Additionally, they shared their expertise with host organization vegetable packing sheds and milk processing plants. The interviewed farmers and host organization officials recited a long list of lessons learned from the US farmer volunteers and these were verified on site by the study team specialists. More important, at the time of the study, many farmers had already modified their farming practices and many of these changes were showing greater financial returns:

- Changes to milking machine vacuum lines increased production 20% within a week.
- Replacement of worn teat cups on milking machines raised production and decreased mastitis infections.
- Purchase of new milking machines raised production 25%, allowing rapid repayment of the investment.
- Improved hygienic milking practices stopped milk rejection by the processing plant.
- Covered calf pens on platforms eliminated deaths from diseases.
- Improved ventilation in broiler houses greatly reduced bird mortality.
- Substitution of cut green grass for half the ration lowered hog fattening costs and reduced the fat proportion, yielding higher prices.

- No cost changes in peanut planting raised production 25%.
- Soil testing plus purchase of the correct formula decreased fertilizer costs for vegetable farmers.
- Reduced planting distances increased yields of cabbage and corn.
- Identification of a severe fusorium infestation and proper spraying saved most of an asparagus crop.
- Silage kept milk production high in the dry season.
- New varieties of peanuts and corn increased yields.
- A simple drying method saved losses of corn grain at harvest time.

The US volunteer also engendered beneficial improvements in packing and processing plants through their work in the host countries:

- Simple equipment adjustments improved potato washing.
- Grading out small potatoes for specialized restaurant trade increased returns from all sizes and grades.
- Demonstrations led a cheese plant to begin making cottage cheese.
- Installation of cooling tanks allowed a milk plant to purchase more milk and make more cheese in a second shift.
- Adjustments to tractors and equipment made it possible for an operator to utilize old, unused machinery instead of purchasing new machines.

The study team conservatively estimated that the increased incomes already achieved, or apparent at near harvest time, on the sample farms alone, were at least double that of the cost of the entire Farmer-to-Farmer program.

One volunteer wife and two women without spouses gave direct technical assistance. Most host organizations expressed complete satisfaction with women as volunteers. Even when wives do not perform direct assistance services, it was recommended that they be allowed to accompany their spouses to enhance recruitment.

Communications between US farmers after completing their stays, and their host country counterparts were found to be substantial. Letters, additional technical information, shipment of seeds and small equipment had already occurred and more was planned. Eleven host organization officials and farmers had already visited and studied in the United States with the volunteers at host organization or farmer expense. More visits are being planned.

Unplanned outcomes included considerable learning and acquisition of technical skills by host organization personnel; assessments of farm problems not recognized by hosts or farmers; improvement in host institution extension methods; and planning procedures for utilization of consultants. US volunteers learned about the host countries, peoples, and agriculture. They also became aware of "how fortunate we are to be Americans," and that "if host country farmers can succeed under their terrible conditions, the US farm problems can be resolved."

VOCA recruitment and placement of volunteers was found excellent in most cases. International travel was termed perfect. Orientation to the host country, its agriculture, and culture was good, lacking only more specific information on the particular areas where the volunteers were to work. VOCA volunteer debriefing reports and other documents reporting to AID were well done. Subcontractor reporting was not always complete, but VOCA has instituted procedures to remedy that. VOCA average cost per directly placed volunteer was about \$8,000; a subcontractor, Christian Mission of Pignon, averaged just under \$1,500; the average for all volunteers was \$5,231, which was less than half that anticipated.

Host organizations usually furnished adequate local transportation, translation, and introduction to farmers, however, some small organizations were unable to provide full time facilitation. It was recommended that VOCA investigate each case and pay those expenses not possible for such institutions. Cost sharing per volunteer by host organizations was estimated between \$200 and \$800 depending upon length of volunteer stay and services provided.

Over half of the host organizations had already requested services of another volunteer farmer and over 80% stated their intention of requesting another. These institutions rated the performance of the US farmers as very good. These demonstrated the very useful performance of the US farmers. These indications demonstrate high acceptance of the program. That acceptance, plus the large amount of learning and income increase by host country farmers, led the study team to recommend the continuation and expansion of the Farmer-to-Farmer program.

## CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

The Farmer-to-Farmer program was initiated as a vehicle to provide expert technical and managerial assistance in developing countries at a "people-to-people" level. By recruiting experienced US farmers to work as volunteers, the program was designed to supply a high degree of expertise at moderate cost. The program's secondary objective was to create ongoing friendships between US and host country farmers. The Farmer-to-Farmer program was authorized in Section 406 of the Agricultural Trade Development and Assistance Act of 1954 (PL 480), as amended. However, it did not receive funding until the initiation of a pilot program in mid-1985, followed by enactment of legislation in December of that year to fund a permanent program. The first volunteer was placed in January 1986.

### A. Legislative and Agreement Provisions

Under a cooperative agreement dated July 1, 1985, the Agency for International Development (AID) provided core grant funding of \$400,000 to Volunteers in Overseas Cooperative Assistance (VOCA) to conduct the Farmer-to-Farmer pilot program. The cooperative agreement initially covered the period beginning July 1, 1985, and ending June 30, 1986; this term was later amended to extend the pilot program through December 31, 1986. Activities for the pilot program were limited to Latin America and the Caribbean. Authority for administering the pilot program was given to AID's Bureau for Private Enterprise.

According to the cooperative agreement's program description, VOCA was to "...provide managing responsibilities for the Farmer-to-Farmer Program which will send US farmers as volunteers to selected developing countries in Central America and the Caribbean for short term assignments. The mission of the volunteers will be to assist small farmers with immediate agricultural problems...and to develop friendships that might provide continuing contacts between the Americans and host farmers."

The objectives of the program were further detailed:

1. To provide direct technical assistance to LDC farmers in Central America and the Caribbean in the practical aspects of increasing food production and distribution for individual farmers or groups of farmers and improving the effectiveness of their farming operations;
2. To help create conditions conducive to the establishment of ongoing "people-to-people" relationships.

The subobjectives of the program were:

1. For US farmer volunteers to learn about the conditions affecting the small agricultural producer in these LDCs;
2. To transfer appropriate technical knowledge to farmers and/or organizations of farmers; and
3. To establish lasting friendships which may lead to continued exchanges after the project is completed.

In support of these objectives and subobjectives, VOCA's tasks, as described in the cooperative agreement, were to recruit, train, and process US farmer volunteers for short term assignments (normally 2 to 12 weeks) in Central America and the Caribbean. VOCA was to recruit teams of farmers, veterinarians, extension agents, physicians, physicians' assistants, and land grant university personnel, as appropriate, to match the needs of each project. Other tasks included project approval and design, and orientation and debriefing of US volunteers.

The original cooperative agreement limited VOCA's direct involvement in presenting projects and supplying farmer volunteers to 25% of the program's total budget. The remaining 75% was to be allocated to projects managed by other US private voluntary organizations (PVOs) acting as subcontractors to VOCA.

This provision was later amended to eliminate limitations on the number of direct VOCA projects, due to lack of PVO interest because no overhead could be charged for the service. At the same time, the geographical area covered by the program was expanded to include all of the Latin American countries served by AID.

B. Program Expansion

Expansion of the Farmer-to-Farmer pilot program, and its extension to a permanent, world wide program, was mandated under Section 1107 of PL 480, 99-198, enacted December 23, 1985. Section 1107 specifies that funding be allocated to the Farmer-to-Farmer program to include "...not less than one-tenth of 1% of the funds available for each of the fiscal years ending September 30, 1986, and September 30, 1987, to carry out the Agricultural Trade Development and Assistance Act of 1954 (the Food for Peace Act, PL 480)." In fulfillment of the terms of this legislation, AID has provided VOCA with a new grant of \$1,747,700 to conduct the expanded program during the period from September 23, 1986, through February 22, 1988. Under the new grant, administrative responsibility for the Farmer-to-Farmer program has been transferred from the Bureau for Private Enterprise to the Bureau for Food for Peace and Voluntary Assistance within AID. Geographical coverage has also been increased to include Asia and Africa.

C. VOCA: Structure and Staff

VOCA was organized in 1970 as a cooperative development organization (CDO) to provide cooperative expertise in international development efforts. As do the other CDOs, VOCA receives an institutional support grant from AID to maintain a headquarters staff to conduct international cooperative projects in LDCs. Since its establishment, VOCA's function has been to provide cooperative business executives, often retired, whose skills match requests submitted by cooperatives in developing countries. VOCA volunteers have supplied assistance in fields including cooperative management, finance, member participation, organization, and operation.

To manage the two separate core grant and Farmer-to-Farmer programs, VOCA was equipped with a staff of six persons, but no staff time was charged to Farmer-to-Farmer.

Two of these were field representatives. Three additional field personnel will be in place by November 1986. Under the provisions of the expanded program agreement, VOCA will be able to charge staff time devoted to Farmer-to-Farmer. The expanded Farmer-to-Farmer program requires the staff additions because of the much larger volume of work.

D. Program Performance

As of October 1986, 41 US volunteers placed directly by VOCA had completed Farmer-to-Farmer assignments, 10 were currently overseas, and 15 had been accepted for volunteer assignment. In addition, 28 volunteers placed through subcontractors had completed assignments, and 24 had been recruited and were either overseas or scheduled to depart on assignments before the end of November 1986. VOCA had received a total of 62 applications for assistance from potential host organizations as of October 1986, including those already filled. It is currently seeking volunteers for the remaining organizations.

Farmer-to-Farmer projects were completed or are underway in Belize, Costa Rica, Honduras, and Panama in Central America; Barbados, Dominica, Haiti, Jamaica, and St. Vincent in the Caribbean; and Bolivia and Ecuador in South America. In addition, projects are planned in Antigua and St. Kitts.

According to the terms of the cooperative agreement, VOCA was to place the US farmer volunteers in ongoing projects conducted by other development organizations. The types of host organizations included national "umbrella" associations with memberships representing several types of agricultural producer groups; specialized organizations representing, for example, dairy and cattle farmers; host country based private voluntary organizations, and private companies, including farmer share holder enterprises.

E. Evaluation of the Farmer-to-Farmer Program

The Bureau for Private Enterprise planned its evaluation of VOCA's Farmer-to-Farmer pilot program in order to assess the program's effectiveness in meeting the objectives of the cooperative agreement. The timing of the evaluation was particularly significant, coinciding with the enactment of the permanent Farmer-to-Farmer program and the transfer of program authority from the Bureau for Private Enterprise to the Bureau for Food for Peace and Voluntary Assistance, still within AID. Lessons learned in the pilot program could be applied in the establishment of the permanent program at its inception in January 1987.

The Bureau for Private Enterprise contracted with Development Associates, Inc., to perform the Farmer-to-Farmer evaluation under an Indefinite Quantity Contract (IQC). The team leader is an agricultural economist with experience in tropical crops and data collection. The second Development Associates consultant is an international agricultural specialist with particular expertise in livestock management. The third member of the evaluation team is a long term contractor for program evaluation to the Bureau for Private Enterprise.

The period allotted for the Farmer-to-Farmer evaluation was August 26, 1986, through December 25, 1986. The contract specified that both the management and the performance were to be assessed.

## CHAPTER II: STUDY METHODOLOGY

The Farmer-to-Farmer pilot project, as detailed in the previous chapter, had been in effect only nine months at the time of the study. For that reason, the main thrust of the evaluation was necessarily a preliminary assessment of its effects on three groups: those farmers who had received help from the volunteers, their host organizations, and the US farmers who had donated their time to the program. The study, therefore, concentrated on the following components:

- Process utilized by the grant institution, Volunteers in Overseas Cooperative Assistance (VOCA), in recruitment, orientation, transportation, and the utilization of lessons learned during the pilot project.
- Cooperation of the host country organizations in the countries in facilitating the work of the volunteers.
- Apparent need for direct assistance to the farmers in the host organizations.
- Technical assistance tendered to the host country farmers by the volunteers, its appropriateness to the situation, and some possible impacts.
- Communications links established by the volunteers with the host organizations and the farmers for possible future interchanges.
- Contributions to host country farm family wellbeing by the volunteers and their spouses.
- Utilization of the skills of women volunteers in the program.

Three subcontractors have participated in the program so far during the pilot phase. The subcontractor that had provided the largest number of volunteers, Christian Mission of Pignon (now functioning through the World Christian Relief Fund), was included in some of the study components. Finally, an examination of the VOCA accounting procedures was carried out to assist that organization with its reporting functions to AID.

### A. VOCA and Host Organization Processes

The study of the organization's file documentation was vital to the procedural assessment. Applications for assistance from the host country institutions, VOCA submissions to AID, and placement announcements were examined for the

initial process. The debriefing reports completed by VOCA with the volunteers upon their return were important as a process document and as a guide to the assessment of the work of the volunteers. Financial statements were analyzed, not as an audit but as a part of the documentation required to meet the conditions of the grant and to establish the baseline for a determination of the relative costs of furnishing the assistance.

Information on the recruitment of volunteers was obtained from discussions with VOCA personnel and from direct questions to the volunteers in the case studies of that group. Similarly, the adequacy of the volunteer performance was assessed through interviews with the host organization officials and the volunteers, as an indication of the relative efficiency of the recruitment process.

The perceived appropriateness of the orientation given to the volunteers by the VOCA personnel (and in some cases by the subcontractor) was obtained from two perspectives: the volunteers and the host organizations. Four major topics were included - information on the host country and the area to which the volunteer was to go, the agriculture of that area, the tasks that were to be undertaken by the volunteer, and the customs and traditions of the people that might affect the work of the US farmer in his efforts to provide assistance.

The host organizations also have responsibilities in the orientation of the volunteer; these were studied through questions to the organizations and to the volunteers. The provision of international and local transportation, housing, the work plan, contacts with host country farmers, and translation aid when required were the important elements, whether made possible through VOCA or the host institutions. In some cases, other institutions participated in facilitating the work of the volunteers or in intensifying the potential impact; these services, too, were examined.

Several other documents were also useful in this portion of the assessment. When they existed, written work plans, programs for farmer meetings, and personnel activity reports helped to illustrate the processes. Each volunteer was expected to leave a final report with the host institution and furnish a copy to VOCA; all but one did. The utilization of those reports as institutional

guides to followup activities with the farmers, and as indications of how the institutions and VOCA could improve the processes, were studied. Two volunteer teams also wrote farm visit reports and left copies in the country and took copies to VOCA. The study team discussed their intended use with the personnel of the participating institution.

B. Need and Delivery of Technical Assistance

A technical assessment of the farmers' needs was made by the study team directly, and in consultation with the farmers and the personnel of the host organizations. The volunteers' final and farm visit reports were of material help in this element. Host country farmers were also questioned about their previous practices when changes had already been effected, since pre-post observations were impossible.

The assistance that had been rendered by the volunteers could often be determined in the field through observations by the study team. That information was supplemented by interviews with the volunteers, the host country farmers, and the personnel of the host institutions. This multiple thrust allowed for cross checking and for information on tasks that might have been forgotten by any of the interviewed groups.

The potential impact of the technical help given by the volunteers was determined, when possible, through the professional assessments of the team members. Because little time had passed, and farm improvements generally require more time before their impact is evident, only the potential impact could be described. In a few cases, production had already increased, efficiencies had been attained, and some economic changes were described. Information from the host country farmers and their organizations added measurably to the data on potential impact of any changes that had been made as a result of the volunteers' work. When some of the production was processed through packing sheds, slaughter houses, and milk plants, some further corroboration was found. The study team was, of course, unable to visit every country and site where volunteers had performed their services. The descriptions by the volunteers were helpful in suggesting some impacts in those areas.

C. Communications Linkages

The Farmer-to-Farmer program designers had anticipated that an important benefit from the program would be the friendships developed between US and host country farmers. Communications between the volunteers and the farmers they visited and with their local organizations, could serve in the future as additional sources of the transfer of knowledge and technology. This special objective was analyzed by ascertaining what mail, telephone, and other contacts had occurred after the volunteer left the site. The volunteers, host organizations, and local farmers were asked whether they had had any subsequent contacts, their nature and content, and plans for future communications.

A further indication of potential transfers was also inferred from communications between the host organization and VOCA. The linkages established, additional requests for information, and/or requests for volunteers would demonstrate some effects of the previous volunteers' efforts. Although not originally contemplated as a communications link, volunteer visits and discussions with the host country missions of the Agency for International Development were also found. Other organizations, too, both in the United States and in the host countries, have made contacts with VOCA and the host organizations to obtain information about the program; these were documented as potential continued communications and additional transfer of knowledge and skills.

D. The Study Samples

The number of volunteers in the VOCA implemented Farmer-to-Farmer program (excluding subcontractors) was relatively small (23) since little time had elapsed since its beginning. It was therefore important to maximize the number of sites visited if the information were to reflect the reality of the efforts so far. In a preliminary examination of the number of volunteers and where they had worked, and in keeping with the financial resources available for the evaluation, Development Associates, in collaboration with AID and VOCA, selected five countries: Barbados, St. Vincent & the Grenadines, Panama, Costa Rica, and Honduras. Sixteen volunteers had worked or were on site during the period of study by the team. These represented 69.5% of the 23

volunteers placed to that date (again excluding the Christian Mission of Pignon). All of these volunteers were interviewed. On site volunteers were interviewed in place, the others by telephone. To broaden the base for the volunteer experience, four volunteers from other countries, not studied by the team, were added. Similarly, four of the Christian Mission of Pignon volunteers were interviewed. These groups combined for a total of 24 interviewees. (See Table 1.)

There were 11 host organizations in the five countries in the main study; one of these had had three volunteers and another had two. The Christian Mission of Pignon was added. A questionnaire was completed by the host organization for each volunteer, for a total of 15 host organization interviews. The general data form was utilized for each area in which volunteers worked in a country. These totalled 13.

Table 1: Number of Completed Interviews by Respondent Type and Host Country

Country	Host Organization	General Data Forms	Farmers	Volunteers	Total
Barbados	3	2	11	3	19
St. Vincent/Grenadines	2	2	13	2	19
Panama	2	2	7	2	13
Costa Rica	4	4	32	4	44
Honduras	3	2	22	5	32
Other countries*	1	1	0	8	10
TOTAL	15	13	85	24	137

\* Bolivia, Belize, Ecuador, Haiti

In most instances, the study team obtained, from volunteer final reports, a list of the farmers with whom the volunteers had worked. In a few cases, no list was available and the farmers' names were provided by the host organization. Plant managers were interviewed using the farmer questionnaire. The number of farmers varied from 3 to 14. When the number was small, the interviewers attempted to find all of them, although that was never possible due to absences from the farm. When the numbers were 10 or more, at least a 50% sample was attempted and achieved. In one case, a volunteer was not accompanied by a representative of the host organization. Since the volunteer did not include a list of contacts, the search for those farmers was very difficult and resulted in only two interviews. There was a total of 85 farmer/plant manager interviews, estimated to represent about 60% of those receiving substantial visits by the volunteers.

The host organization, data sheet, and volunteer instruments completed represent 100% of the samples for the five countries within the main study. All of the plant managers with whom substantive work was done were interviewed. High confidence can be assigned to the data from these interviewee groups. The farmers, on the other hand, were necessarily those who could be found during the study team visits; even though the total represents a high proportion of farmers, the selection process slightly reduces the confidence level of the data. Nevertheless, from the conversations with the host organization personnel and with the farmers and volunteers, there is no direct evidence of bias in the farmer sample.

#### E. Survey and Case Study Instruments

The study team, after reviewing the preliminary documents provided by AID and VOCA, prepared a draft of the instruments. These were then submitted to those two organizations for review and suggestions for improvement. The suggestions were then incorporated into the instruments and they were finalized. In addition, the team also took notes from all of the interviewees when special information was given that added to or further explained the questions in the instruments. That combination worked well. The host organization and farmer forms were prepared in both Spanish and English, and no difficulty was encountered with either language version. (A copy of each instrument is contained in Appendix A.)

F. Analysis and Reporting

Because the number of instruments was relatively small, and many of the items demanded content analyses, the tabulation was conducted manually on especially designed tally forms. Descriptive statistics were derived on those items for which sums and means were appropriate. Narratives, including examples where pertinent, were utilized. The team member assessments of appropriateness of the technical assistance given were used in conjunction with the other information. Similarly, the team determination of need was professional assessment based on extensive experience with the subject matter, observations on the farms, knowledge of other services available, and the type of service tendered.

G. Limitations to the Evaluation

The relatively small number of volunteers furnished during the pilot phase of the Farmer-to-Farmer program, together with the greatly varied services of the volunteers, obviously place severe restrictions on the generalizations that can be drawn from the present study. Too, the selection of the interviewed recipient farmers reduces some of the cross-program deductions. In the same way, had the interviews been conducted when the final production changes could have been assessed, the impact section would have been greatly strengthened; at this point, these can only be described as potential impacts.

The communications linkage data were also conditioned by the short period of time since the termination of the assistance. It is possible that with more time, more contacts will occur. Some host country farmers could not read and write so followup communications with them are likely to be few.

Despite these drawbacks, the report is seen by the team members as fairly representing the pilot project implementation at this stage of its development. The survey and case study information can help meet an important objective of the evaluation, that of helping the Farmer-to-Farmer program to improve its delivery of volunteer services.

### CHAPTER III: PROCESSES

The Farmer-to-Farmer program, as detailed in Chapter I, is scheduled for considerable expansion in the near future. The present evaluation, therefore, included a study of the processes used by Volunteers in Overseas Cooperative Assistance (VOCA) in the management of this pilot project to aid that organization with its increased activities. Data from VOCA, the host organizations, the volunteers, and the host country farmers were gathered to provide the information. Examinations of VOCA documents supplemented the data gathered from the other sources.

#### A. Host Organizations in the Program

Eleven organizations served as hosts to the volunteers included in the field study; a subcontractor furnished information on the processes. Their sources of information about the Farmer-to-Farmer program were of interest in that they would indicate ways in which VOCA could involve worthwhile hosts in the future. VOCA, itself, was the primary first source. (Table 2) Existing contacts developed during the placement of Cooperative Assistance volunteers, materially aided in finding organizations for the Farmer-to-Farmer project. Correspondence and visits by the VOCA field staff added to the communications.

Table 2: First Source of Information about the Farmer-to-Farmer Program

Source	Number	Percent
VOCA	7	58.4
AID	2	16.7
Land O'Lakes	1	8.3
Christian Mission of Pignon	1	8.3
Local organization	1	8.3
Total	12	100.0

US Agency for International Development missions in the countries supplied the information to two host organizations. Land O'Lakes, the Christian Mission of Pignon, and a local organization that had heard about the program, were the first sources for one host institution each. Subsequent to receiving the first information on the program, the potential host organization was contacted by VOCA. The staff then supplied enough details to enable the organizations to decide whether or not to apply for a US farmer volunteer.

Three major reasons were given by the host organization officials for having applied for volunteer services:

- The required expertise was not available in the area or country;
- The available specialists had been unable to convince the farmers to make changes that were needed;
- Although specialists existed somewhere in the government or other agencies, they could not spend enough time with the client farmers to accomplish the needed tasks.

The first, locally unavailable expertise, included the cultivation of an entirely new type of corn and asparagus. The second need, that of convincing the farmers to make required farm changes, was said to be related both to the time available to spend with farmers and the practical skills needed to demonstrate exactly what should be done. In all six of the countries (Barbados, St. Vincent, Panama, Costa Rica, Honduras, and Haiti), government services to agriculture have been severely curtailed because of the generally difficult economic conditions faced by these nations and their low priorities on service investments. An extension agent, then, often has an enormous territory to service; subject matter specialists cover an even wider territory. Local institutions, whether a farmer organization or a private business, have great difficulties in meeting the technical assistance needs of their members or clients. They see the Farmer-to-Farmer program as an opportunity to supplement their resources in a meaningful way.

The VOCA policies on the selection of the host organizations to receive farmer volunteers are stated as:

- Farm Size: VOCA will target those institutions that serve a significant number of small and medium sized farmers; this does not preclude working with larger operators, especially when advantages demonstrated to them will also serve the small and medium farms.
- Farmer Organizations: Cooperatives and farmer associations that include small and medium sized farmers, and that are reasonably viable institutions in serving their members, can qualify as host organizations.
- Foundations and other Non-Profit Development Organizations: Those entities of this type that primarily serve farmers within the proposed project may qualify for volunteer assistance. Church related institutions that meet these same criteria are eligible.
- Private Business: Agricultural businesses owned by share holding farmers, those whose proposed volunteer work would materially benefit farmer clients, and those in which the volunteer actions will serve as demonstration and extension to farmers, may participate in the project.

In general, purely government institutions are not considered eligible for the Farmer-to-Farmer program since these usually have other sources of technical assistance. There may be some cases in which the necessary expertise is not available, and in which the government project is so vital to the development of private enterprise, that such an organization could be considered for inclusion. None has yet been served. Combined private enterprise and government institutional development projects can qualify if the other selection criteria are met.

Requests that are primarily for help with the development and management of cooperatives or other farmer associations are handled under VOCA's Cooperative Assistance program. When combinations of direct farmer and cooperative assistance are requested, the type of technical assistance determines which program furnishes the volunteer.

An important aspect of the Farmer-to-Farmer pilot program is that the selection of host organization projects has been jointly conducted by VOCA and AID. The screening is done by VOCA and those found appropriate for the program are recommended to AID. This double scrutiny helps in choosing the projects where the volunteers' services can be utilized most effectively.

The twelve institutions that served as the host organizations to the volunteers in the main study for this evaluation fell into the following categories:

Agricultural cooperatives	3
Farmer associations	2
Foundation	1
Non-profit development institution	1
Church related organization	1
Institution serving farmer organizations	1
Farmer share holder company	1
Private agricultural enterprise	2

A government institution was a partner in one of the private enterprise projects; AID mission projects were involved with that same one and with the work in a cooperative.

During the first few months of the Farmer-to-Farmer pilot program, the activities were limited to the Caribbean and Central America, thus accounting for the concentration of host organizations in those areas. Subsequently, the program was expanded to include South America, where projects have now been conducted or are in progress. VOCA made the initial contacts with potential host organizations that had previously been identified for the Cooperative Assistance part of its operation. Since then, VOCA staff has been working in the field to expand its search for viable host institutions. During the next fiscal year, the Farmer-to-Farmer program will also serve Asia and Africa; VOCA is again contacting organizations served through the Cooperative Assistance project, seeking possible hosts through the USAID missions in the countries, and communicating with other institutions that work in Africa and Asia for help in identifying viable potential hosts for the future. VOCA personnel has also met with various USDA agencies to solicit their assistance. VOCA recognizes the greatly increased need and has begun efforts to identify worthwhile host organizations world wide.

#### B. The Volunteers

The 24 interviewed volunteers included 21 men and 3 women. One of the women was a volunteer who did work with farm wives, and the other two worked without spouses. The volunteers' ages ranged from 27 to 74, but the majority was aged 60 or more. One of the interviewed men paid his own way; the others received varying amounts of assistance through VOCA and a subcontractor. All of the

volunteers had farm experience but six also managed other businesses; one was in agricultural extension, another was a veterinarian. Only two were completely retired. The others were still active or partly active on farms, in businesses, or professions.

1. Recruitment

VOCA utilizes a wide range of sources for recruitment: previous Cooperative Assistance volunteers, US cooperatives and associations, agricultural extension services, and its subcontractors. Former Farmer-to-Farmer volunteers have also assisted with recruitment, as has AID and a US congressman's office. VOCA is now working to expand these sources through other state extension services, the USDA, and other contacts familiar with the skills and knowledge needed for the expanded program.

The first source of information about the Farmer-to-Farmer program in the recruitment process for the 24 volunteers in the case studies is shown in Table 3. VOCA, itself, and Land O'Lakes were the two principal sources. The latter, as would be expected, was particularly active in recruiting dairy farmers and those experienced with milk processing plants. Christian Mission of Pignon has recruited all of its own volunteers; the other two subcontractors also found their own but they were not included in the sample.

Table 3: First Recruitment Source of the Sample Volunteers

Source	Number	Percent
VOCA	6	25.0
Land O'Lakes	6	25.0
State extension services	3	12.0
Relatives/friends	3	12.0
Christian Mission of Pignon	2	8.2
AID	1	4.2
Congressman's office	1	4.2
State poultry association	1	4.2
Cooperative	1	4.2
Total	24	100.0

Friends and relatives of volunteers are already becoming a practical source of recruitment and as the program continues over time, these are likely to increase in importance. The USAID missions in the sample countries expressed a great deal of interest in the program and may become a greater source for the future. VOCA's increased communications with the many cooperatives, extension services, and other organizations will no doubt increase their participation.

Except for two subcontractors, the VOCA recruitment efforts have produced only one woman volunteer, a wife of another volunteer. Since many of the farmers in the English speaking Caribbean nations are women, special efforts to find qualified women will be useful. Of the 12 host organizations, only two had received assistance from women and both had high praise for their work. Eleven of the hosts stated that it would be possible to arrange work for wives of male volunteers. All twelve said they would receive women volunteers, noting that they had female staff members and that the extension and veterinary services in their areas had, or had had, women specialists who had worked well with the farmers.

An important recommendation from the host country organizations and farmers in Central America was that Spanish speaking Americans could, in many cases, make a greater contribution. Most farmers in Latin America do not speak English, or have a very limited command of it, making the exchange of complex ideas difficult. Translators, of course, help, but direct conversations are even better. VOCA would do well to make contacts with Hispanic organizations in the United States to try to identify more Spanish speaking volunteers, especially for those host organizations that do not have full time translators available.

Another suggestion made by some of the host country organizations and farmers was that more volunteers should come from small and medium sized farms. They noted that the volunteers' accommodation to the conditions in the host countries would be easier. They were also quick to point out, however, that the size of the volunteers' operations was not an absolute deterrent to good technical assistance since some volunteers from large farms had made valuable contributions. Nevertheless, VOCA should consider

this possibility. It will be difficult, of course, since small and medium sized farmers may not be able to afford the time away from their operations. One volunteer suggested that those from large operations should exercise care in talking too much about their "large" operations since the host country farmers may see their recommendations as based on "unlimited" resources rather than utilitarian ideas for farm enterprises of any size. His suggestion might be communicated to large farmers during the orientation.

## 2. Placement

VOCA achieved a high degree of success in placing the volunteers at the time requested by the host organizations. (Table 4) A full 60% arrived exactly at the specified dates and all but one of the others were very close. That is an enviable record, one greatly appreciated by the host organizations. The one placement that was not close involved a volunteer who had agreed to participate but later could not, causing VOCA to have to recruit another. Occasionally, this problem will occur.

Table 4: Proximity of Arrival Date of Volunteer to Date Requested, according to Host Organization

Proximity	Number*	Percent
Exactly	9	60.6
Close	5	33.3
Not close	1	6.7

\*Replies were obtained on only 15 of the 24 volunteers.

As would be anticipated from the data on proximity of arrival dates to the requests, the vast majority of the host country organization officials also said that the volunteer had arrived at the appropriate time of the year. One said, "too early," since the particular farm enterprise to be assisted was not yet in operation. The volunteers agreed with the host organizations totally; only one stated that he should have arrived later. It should also be noted that many host organizations and volunteers said that some of the

farm operations, such as dairying, can benefit from assistance almost any time of the year. Others, of course, are more specific, notably for crop planting times, harvesting, and marketing. VOCA has, with the one exception, managed to supply the volunteers at an appropriate time of the farming season.

The length of stay of the US volunteers in the host countries depended on two primary factors: the amount of time requested by the host organization and the time the volunteer had available. Those two conditions were reflected in the replies of those two groups on the question concerning the appropriateness of the length of stay (Table 5). Sixty percent of the hosts stated that the time was too short, while only 12.5% of the volunteers was of that opinion. The host officials commented on the amount that was accomplished during the volunteer's stay and what more could have been done with extra time. The volunteers generally noted that besides their own time limitations, there was a period beyond which the efficiency of the work was seriously reduced. One stated he had left the host country early for this reason. Others also noted that when host personnel devoted full time to assisting them, the regular office and field work was in part left unattended and in part done after work hours, creating an imposition on the staff member and/or the organization. One of the "too short" replies by a host organization occurred because the volunteer had to leave early because of problems on his own farm.

Table 5: Appropriateness of Length of Volunteer Stay in the Country, according to Organization and Volunteer

Indication	Organization		Volunteer	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Appropriate	6	40.0	21	87.5
Too short	9*	60.0	3	12.5

\*Including 2 volunteers who left early.

The volunteers in this survey had served from three weeks to three months in the host country. Except for the one who left early because "he wasn't accomplishing enough," the length of stay and the opinion about its appropriateness showed no correlation. Host organization officials were as likely to state that three months was too short as they were to say the same for three weeks. Since most of the volunteers accomplished a great deal during their stays, the likelihood is that the host organizations simply recognized their worth and wished they could have stayed longer. The volunteers, on the other hand, probably balanced their home obligations with what they thought could be done in the host country. This difference of opinion will no doubt persist when successful volunteers are recruited. It is important to note that no host or volunteer (except the one who said his assignment would have been too long had he not gone early) said the length of time was too long.

The host organizations and the volunteers were in agreement on the matching of volunteer skills with the tasks to be performed in the host country. All but three were in accord that the skills matched "exactly." Two of the exceptions stated that the skills "partially" matched the needs. It is important to relate that although neither the host organization nor another volunteer disagreed on the partial skills-needs matching, there were misunderstandings about what two volunteers were to do during their service. These cases suggest some improvement of the VOCA processes and orientation.

The volunteers stated that the transportation arrangements to Washington, DC, for the orientation and the travel onward to their host countries were handled perfectly. The host organizations said that they experienced no difficulty in meeting the volunteers at the airports (USAID assisted when volunteers landed at one city and were placed later on a connecting flight).

There were some other placement problems that arose; their incidence is noted in Table 6 in the following section. One volunteer family arrived with only two days notice to the host organization. That might not normally have been problematic except that a single person was expected and five

arrived; the major problem concerned the housing arrangements. In another case, the host organization had not known of a health problem that required specialized housing arrangements.

VOCA also informs the USAID missions in the host countries of the arrivals of volunteers. In the sample, the notices had arrived. The missions appreciated the information. Should difficulties arise or inquiries be made, the mission can assist in several ways. This was graphically illustrated in a case outside the sample. A volunteer lost his passport and money, and appealed to the mission for assistance. The VOCA telex had not yet arrived, thus USAID was placed in a difficult situation. It happens that telexes are very slow to that region; VOCA now recognizes this and will telephone when the notice time is short.

Although not mentioned by the volunteers, the host organizations described another source of problems related to recruitment and placement -- that of spouses. Two cases were cited. In one, the wife was very apprehensive of life in the host country, and was generally unhappy with the stay, according to the hosts. In another, a wife was very dependent upon her husband, somewhat reducing his activities. These situations can always occur. VOCA will need to try to resolve them during the recruitment and placement process. Unfortunately, these types of problems are sometimes not manifested during the US processes and simply must be dealt with as effectively as possible when they arise.

### 3. Suggestions on Recruitment and Placement

The preceding discussions indicate the type of recommendations given by the host organizations, and in a few cases, by the volunteers. It is important to note in Table 6 that 8 of the host organizations were satisfied with the procedures and offered no suggestions for improvement other than that a few felt that increased communications between them and VOCA would make the volunteers' visits more fruitful.

Two hosts and volunteers agreed that the selection process of volunteers needed improvement. The host officials also commented that "a medium sized

farm operator could probably have accomplished more." One host organization requested that it be allowed to suggest volunteer candidates. The interviewee said only that her organization had contacts with some potential volunteers and could be of assistance.

Table 6: Host Organization and Volunteer Suggestions for Improvement of the Recruitment and Placement of Volunteers

Suggestion	Organization		Volunteer	
	Num-ber	Per-cent*	Num-ber	Per-cent*
No suggestions	8	30.8	20	83.3
More communications with VOCA during process	7	26.9	0	0
Improve volunteer selection	3	11.5	2	8.3
Resolve spouse problems before assignment	2	7.8	0	0
Provide information on potential health problems	2	7.8	1	4.2
Earlier arrival notice	1	3.7	1	4.2
Allow hosts to propose some candidates	1	3.7	0	0
Volunteer agrees to work plan before assignment	2	7.8	0	0
Totals	26	100.0	24	100.0

\*Calculated on number of suggestions.

The suggestions on health information, from the viewpoint of the host organizations, included a diabetes case requiring special facilities, and a pregnant wife going to an isolated, mountainous section of a country. VOCA did not know about the diabetes problem but has stated that it will make inquiries and advise the hosts in the future of this or any other conditions with special needs. It did know about the pregnancy but did not expect it to be a problem. That type of case, too, will be communicated to the host organization prior to arrival.

C. Orientation of the Volunteers

VOCA conducted the orientation for most of the volunteers. The World Christian Relief Fund provided it for some of its volunteers, VOCA the rest. The orientation usually lasts only one day, and gives pertinent information on the

host country, sometimes the specific area to which the volunteer is going, some facts and impressions about the agriculture that will be encountered, and a short briefing on differences in culture and custom thought to be important to the work.

The orientation on the host country was seen as good to excellent by more than half the organizations and three-fourths of the volunteers. The only complaints were that insufficient information had been given about the specific area where the volunteer worked. (Table 7) In two cases, the host organization noted that the volunteer did not understand some important points about the economy, banking practices, and land ownership patterns.

The average ratings on host country orientation were: host organizations 3.47 (about half way between fair and good) and volunteers 4.00 (an exact average of good). Considering the quite short orientation time, these probably constitute a reasonable accomplishment for VOCA.

Table 7: Distribution of Ratings by Host Organizations and Volunteers on Sufficiency of VOCA Orientation on Host Country

Rating	Organization		Volunteer	
	Num-ber	Per-cent*	Num-ber	Per-cent*
1 Very weak	0	0.0	0	0
2 Weak	3	20.0	1	4.2
3 Fair	4	26.7	5	20.8
4 Good	6	40.0	10	41.7
5 Excellent	2	13.3	8	33.3
Average Rating	15	3.47	24	4.04

\* NOTE: Not every organization nor volunteer answered all of the rating items.

The judgments on the customs and culture orientation were higher for the host organization than for the volunteers although the difference was small: 4.07 to 4.00, respectively. (Table 8) Both approximate good on the scale. Each country, of course, has many customs that vary from those in the US. While they are interesting, they were said by both groups to have had little effect on the work of the volunteer.

Table 8: Distribution of Ratings by Host Organizations and Volunteers on VOCA Orientation on the Country Customs and Culture

Rating	Organization		Volunteer	
	Num-ber	Per-cent	Num-ber	Per-cent
1 Very weak	0	0	0	0
2 Weak	0	0	0	0
3 Fair	2	13.3	5	20.8
4 Good	10	66.7	14	58.4
5 Excellent	3	20.0	5	20.8
Average Rating	15	4.07	24	4.00

One tradition was related by some dairy organizations that could have an effect when the wife expects to join in as a specialist. Officials noted that their wives have little to do with dairying operations. On the other hand, they stated that women could work with the farmers when they are qualified. The volunteer's wife who worked in dairying, devoted her time to the processing plant and to working with the wives of the dairymen.

Table 9: Distribution of Ratings by Host Organizations and Volunteers on Orientation on Agriculture

Rating	Organization		Volunteer	
	Num-ber	Per-cent	Num-ber	Per-cent
1 Very weak	0	0	0	0
2 Weak	2	13.3	3	12.5
3 Fair	4	26.7	4	16.7
4 Good	6	40.0	10	41.7
5 Excellent	3	20.0	7	29.1
Average Rating	15	3.67	24	3.88

The average ratings on agricultural orientation were lower: host organization 3.67 and volunteers 3.88. Those who judged the orientation as weak gave the same criticism as for the country - not enough information on the agriculture of the area in which the volunteer worked. (Table 9) It must be noted that the

Christian Mission volunteers to the Haiti project gave higher ratings on this component than did those recruited by VOCA; the Christian Mission provides a great deal of information on the agriculture in Pignon. Since those volunteers always go to the same area of Haiti, it is obviously easier for this subcontractor to furnish more detailed information. Even with that advantage, however, two of these volunteers said that it was impossible to totally prepare a US farmer for the primitive conditions in Pignon.

Table 10: Distribution of Ratings by Host Organizations and Volunteers on Orientation on the Work to be Done by the Volunteer

Rating	Organization		Volunteer	
	Num-ber	Per-cent*	Num-ber	Per-cent*
1 Very weak	0	0	0	0
2 Weak	2	14.3	2	8.3
3 Fair	1	7.1	3	15.5
4 Good	6	42.9	10	46.4
5 Excellent	5	35.7	9	37.5
Average Rating	14	4.00	24	4.08

In one case, the work plan changed while the volunteer was in transit and no rating is given.

The VOCA orientation to the work to be done by the volunteer received an average rating of good (4.00 and 4.08) by both groups. (Table 10) Two of each group chose weak as the reply; one case was that of a disagreement of the volunteer with the work plan; the other case was that of a volunteer who couldn't seem to find where or how to do the work.

The suggestions of the host organization officials and of the volunteers were those that emanate from the previous discussions. Host organizations insisted that the volunteer agree to the work plan before assignment and that more information be given to the volunteer on the specific area and its agriculture. The volunteers agreed with the recommendations. A common suggestion among members of both groups was that the orientation should be longer so that more information could be given. The study team echoes that idea, especially for the coming Asian and African placements. While

differences are important between the US and Latin America and the Caribbean, the variations are less in degree than those that will be encountered in Asia and Africa.

One volunteer encountered a potential problem and strongly recommended that VOCA clearly state the information to all future volunteers - that many chemicals banned in the United States, because of their direct toxicity or because they have been found to be related to cancer, are used in most of the host countries. VOCA agreed with the volunteer and has prepared a written statement on the subject for each volunteer and will emphasize caution during the orientation.

D. Host Organization Facilitation of Volunteers' Work

All of the host organizations furnished some services to facilitate the work of the volunteers. In most cases, they were responsible for the local transportation, finding suitable housing, arranging for translation when required, and conducting some orientation on the local area and its agriculture. These services involved expense to the organizations. In most cases, the costs were borne by the host organization from its operational budget. Two USAID mission projects provided the transportation for volunteers. Individual farmers transported volunteers some of the time at most of the sites. Farmers and the organizations also supplied some of the meals, thus reducing the charges to VOCA. Translation was usually provided by the host organization - some assistance was even required in the English speaking Caribbean because of differing accents - but some farmers helped other farmers and volunteers with this facilitation by restating the conversations in standard English.

Housing for the volunteers was usually paid for by VOCA and was located by the host organization. Most of the volunteers were satisfied with the housing and few host organizations noted difficulties in locating suitable places (Table 11). One interviewed volunteer lived with a farm family. Plans had been made for that in another instance but the size of the family dictated that other arrangement be made. Half the volunteers lived in hotels and found them satisfactory. Only one volunteer requested a housing change.

Table 11: Organizational Problems in Locating Satisfactory Housing for Volunteer

Problem	Number	Percent
None	11	73.2
Had to revise because spouse objected	1	6.7
Had to revise because of volunteer health problem	1	6.7
Two days notice that volunteer bringing children	1	6.7
Didn't know VOCA was to pay housing	1	6.7

As shown in Table 11, there were some housing problems at the beginning but these were resolved suitably to meet the volunteer's needs, even though they occasioned difficulties for the host organizations. The final item in the table, that the host organization did not know VOCA paid for the housing, suggests that greater care will be needed in communicating this information.

Transportation furnished by the host organization was considered adequate in most of the cases, as was that donated by AID. Generally, one of the persons responsible for field work accompanied the volunteer and often drove the vehicle, relieving the volunteer of that responsibility. At the same time, the staff member gave assistance through introductions to the farmers and translating when required. It must be pointed out, however, that some host organizations were unable to provide full time transportation. The small institutions with little transportation and very limited field staff suffered great difficulties, and often the volunteer was without transportation during some days or parts of days. Those same hosts found it impossible to provide full time translation services. These problems need to be addressed by VOCA.

E. Program Reports

The volunteers are expected to write a final report, leave a copy with the host organization, and file a copy with VOCA. All but one complied; he said during the interview that he would do so when possible. Two teams of volunteers also prepared reports on service visits to the farms; these were translated to

Spanish and the field man, during the interview period, was making visits to the farmers, explaining the recommendations, and leaving a copy with the farmer. (See example in Appendix B.) These were written simply but received favorable response. Farmers that had not yet received theirs were telephoning the host organization to ask for them. They were seen as useful by the farmers and by the host organization as a basis for followup technical assistance services. VOCA has attempted to keep the reporting requirements for the volunteers to a minimum. That is reasonable since the volunteer receives no pay. Nevertheless, the potential for additional technical assistance, based on their expert assessments, is a worthy goal. Site visit reports should be considered for all volunteers.

One host institution, on its own, prepared a draft plan of work prior to the arrival of the volunteer. That was reviewed and amended with the volunteer. While, necessarily, modifications must be made during the course of the service, that simple document was noted by two volunteers and by the host organization as very useful. (Copy in Appendix B.) The plan assured adequate visits to the farmers wanting assistance and better utilization of the volunteer's time.

Almost all of the volunteers return to the United States via the VOCA offices in Washington, DC. During a one-day session, the volunteer's expense reports are processed, general impressions are exchanged, and VOCA conducts a formal debriefing. The resulting information is entered on a form by VOCA personnel. Debriefings are conducted by telephone when volunteers cannot pass through Washington, DC, on their return. These reports add information to the files on volunteers and host organizations, as well as furnish valuable input for the summary VOCA reports.

VOCA supplies AID with a considerable amount of material on each volunteer assignment: the application for assistance from the host organization, information on proposed volunteers, and an assignment document. Following the volunteer's service, a copy of his final report is forwarded, together with a copy of the debriefing report. VOCA also furnishes periodic summaries of completed activities, applications approved and pending, and beginning searches for volunteers. It also publishes a newsletter for its cooperative members and other interested parties, which gives summary data and stories from the

Farmer-to-Farmer and its Cooperative Assistance experiences. Monthly expense statements and requests for reimbursement are tendered the appropriate offices of AID.

The study team examined all of the documentation pertaining to the interviewed VOCA volunteers and found it complete and acceptable except for the one volunteer who had not submitted a final report to VOCA or the host organization. The files also contain pertinent correspondence and other explanatory material useful to future operations. The documentation is practical, not an undue burden on the volunteers, and should serve well for future efforts in recruitment of volunteers and their assignment to host organizations.

F. Subcontractor Operations

Through September 1986, VOCA had utilized the services of three subcontractors:

- Florida Association for Volunteer Assistance (1 volunteer);
- World Christian Relief Fund, formerly through Christian Mission of Pignon (22 volunteers) to a single site/host organization;
- Partners for Productivity (1 volunteer).

All three had successfully completed one or more recruitment and placement efforts. They reported no special difficulties with the recruitment or placement and stated that the work had been useful to their organizations as well as to the farmers in the host countries. They also expressed their appreciation for the simple procedures involved and the assistance VOCA rendered in easing the administrative burdens.

The past arrangements did not require that full documentation be provided to VOCA by the subcontractors. Since the subcontractors assume a considerable portion of the responsibility (recruitment, arranging for transportation, advancing travel expenses from money advanced to the subcontractor from VOCA, preparation of expense reports), that agreement provision seems reasonable. Some field reports from volunteers have been forwarded to VOCA and filed accordingly. It is not clear, however, whether final volunteer and debriefing reports are always written and maintained by

the subcontractors. While it is important to interfere as little as possible with subcontractor procedures, VOCA, in some cases, has too little information for determining the lessons learned. If such reports are not available from the subcontractor, it would seem advisable that VOCA conduct a telephone debriefing of each volunteer so that its files contain enough information on which to make judgments about future placements through the subcontractor or to the host organization.

G. Financial Documentation

The parameters of the present evaluation did not contemplate an audit of the VOCA accounts within its scope of work. At the request of AID, the team did examine of the financial reporting with VOCA officials and their accountants, FGS Main Hurdman. That examination showed that totally separate accounting records and bank accounts are kept for the two VOCA programs, Farmer-to-Farmer and Cooperative Assistance, and that:

- The accounts were current and accurate;
- There were no charges made to Farmer-to-Farmer from expenses incurred under the other program or from general operations.

The backup documentation was studied and only one type of document was missing from the direct VOCA operations for Farmer-to-Farmer. VOCA has now instituted a procedure wherein those documents are now being submitted.

The financial records maintained on the subcontractor operations, however, did contain some deficiencies. The VOCA officials agreed that the present system for subcontractor financial reporting needed improvements. VOCA has prepared guides for inexperienced subcontractor use: an agreement form and volunteer expense forms to provide the necessary documentation.

It is important to state that for those subcontractor statements now processed, there was no doubt about the legitimacy of the claims nor the amounts. Only the documentation needed improvement.

H. Host Country Farmers to the United States

At the time the evaluation was designed, a proposal was being considered by AID that would expand the Farmer-to-Farmer program to include study visits of host country farmers to farms in the United States. That proposal was not approved for inclusion in the new grant agreement. The information gathered from the interviews is nevertheless presented in case such a proposal is revived.

When asked if host country farmers should have the opportunity to visit US farms under the Farmer-to-Farmer program, just over half the host organizations indicated a clear yes. A very high proportion of the host country farmers gave that reply - 88%. (Table 12) Not one volunteer, however, responded unequivocally in the affirmative.

Table 12: Percentage of Opinions on Bringing Host Country Farmers to the United States, by Host Organizations and Farmers, and Volunteers

Opinion	Organization	Farmer	Volunteer
Yes	58.4	88.1	0
Conditional Yes	33.3	3.4	75.0
No	8.3	8.5	25.0

A third of the host organization interviewees, a few farmers, and 75% of the volunteers gave a conditioned yes to the inquiry. The conditions essentially stated:

- Only if the host country farmer is at a sufficient technical level to be able to comprehend US farming;
- Only if they could be placed on farms near their technical level;
- Only if they could be placed at a time and place so they could learn a specific set of skills.

The latter suggests a different framework than the first two; it is reasonable in that it implies advantages for a few farmers who might thus be able to

immediately apply the acquired skill on their own farms in a relatively short time. The condition would rule out generalized visits to a farm or farms in favor of a specific learning situation.

The first two conditions, on the other hand, imply that few host country farmers are in a position to benefit materially from such an exchange, that is, that the difference between the technological levels of most US and host country farmers is too great and would result in little practical knowledge being transferred. The volunteers and some host organization officials expressed a fear that the visits might, for most host country farmers, result in frustration, that many might not want to return home after the visit. Several also stated that "visits without learning" could deter progress rather than foster it.

Several volunteers also related experience with farmer exchange programs and what they saw as relatively low success and the generation of some seriously negative feelings. They also pointed out that VOCA might be placed in a very delicate position in trying to select those who would come, and the VOCA staff work would be at least tripled in the placement operation if they were to avoid the pitfalls inherent in them.

Many of those who gave a conditional yes, and some who said no, also noted that many of the farmers who meet the technical level condition can pay and are paying for such visits. (Eleven farmers and host organization officers have already visited the returned volunteers.) The opinion is that these visits should not be financed under the Farmer-to-Farmer program. There would then be only a small number who would be technically eligible and who could not afford the trip. These farmers, when sufficient evidence for probable success can be presented, should be dealt with on a case by case basis should such a program be instituted. As some noted, the "politics" of who comes and who doesn't might become bitter, endangering the work of the host organization and the Farmer-to-Farmer program.

A few of those who flatly said "no" discussed the same problems given by those tendering a "conditional yes." Most, however, spoke about particular farmer situations: illiteracy, unusually primitive conditions, and inability to comprehend what they would see.

## I. Process Lessons Learned

When viewed as a pilot effort, the processes used by VOCA to carry out the Farmer-to-Farmer project would have to be termed practical and operational. The volunteers were recruited, placed in host organizations, most completed their service as planned, and most of the facilitation by VOCA and the host organizations was satisfactory. Many of the problems encountered are inherent in this type of program. Still, improvements can always be achieved and the information gleaned from the observations and interviews suggested that:

- Greater specification of the skills requested should be made so that the few cases of less than total skills-needs matching can be avoided.
- Host organization resources should be examined carefully to determine what local housing, transportation, and translation they can supply; small organizations will need more assistance than others.
- The orientation of volunteers should be increased to provide the opportunity to give more information on the local area and farming conditions; an alternative would be to obtain an agreement with the host organization that it would provide that orientation before the volunteer begins work.
- Notification of volunteer arrivals was occasionally received by the host organizations with only a few days for preparation; when there is any doubt about other forms of communication, telephone notices should be used.
- USAID missions must be notified prior to a volunteer's arrival in case emergency situations arise that require their assistance.
- Host organizations need to know in advance of any unusual conditions pertinent to health, work restrictions, and family that need to be taken into account.
- The volunteer and the host organization must be in agreement on the plan of work before the volunteer arrives in the country; this should be accomplished before the volunteer leaves his home.
- The instances of a written plan of work developed mutually by the host organization and the volunteer are exemplary; they should be requested in the future.
- The concise farm visit reports with recommendations prepared by two volunteers were eagerly received by the host country farmers; they should at least be recommended as a potential tool for further transfer of technology.
- The subcontractor efforts on behalf of Farmer-to-Farmer appear laudable; some additional volunteer reporting to VOCA would improve the planning effort.

During the verbal debriefings with VOCA officials, these were discussed. VOCA has already prepared some materials and modified its procedures to utilize these lessons learned and others that during its own operations, had become obvious. These improvements suggest that the VOCA processes will be even more effective in the future, resulting in more successful placements.

#### CHAPTER IV: RESULTS OF THE VOLUNTEER WORK

The Farmer-to-Farmer program was created to provide technical assistance to the host country farmers; the major anticipated impact was to help farmers produce more food efficiently and thus increase their incomes. Corollary to that, processing and distribution operations could be improved, therefore the quality of the produce would be higher, and appropriate distribution would help small farmers realize a greater profit. Evidence of these technical impacts was found.

Another important aspect of the program was the expectation that the US farmer volunteers would establish friendships with the host country farmers and their organizations that would have the potential for later technology transfer. Too, the friendships themselves were deemed valuable in this people-to-people project. Indications of these factors were positive.

Quite aside from these outcomes, the study team also discovered some unintended outcomes. Host organization staff members acquired some knowledge and skills that can be applied in the future to help their organizations and farmer members. Further, the work with the volunteer gave useful indications to organization staff members on the ways to work with farmers, which will potentially improve their services.

In summary, the evaluation of the pilot phase of the Farmer-to-Farmer program showed a considerable success. The volunteers had worked hard, imparting practical knowledge and useful skills. Many host country farmers learned, applied some of the information to their farming, and a few had already realized greater financial returns due to the changes. Some strong friendships were developed and transfer of technology, beyond that occurring during the volunteers' visits, is in evidence. Most organization staff members learned from the volunteers. These program impacts, detailed in this chapter, indicate a useful addition to AID's development activities.

##### A. Need for the Program

The study team examined the technical assistance available to the farmers with whom the volunteers worked to determine if a need existed for the volunteer

services. Three of the 12 host organizations had no professional agricultural personnel on their staffs. The remaining nine had from one to three professionals, mostly general agriculture graduates. Three had full or part time veterinarians. The hosts cited two important factors regarding the staff they had available:

- Most were generalists rather than specialists in the field for which the organizations requested assistance; and
- Their specialists were responsible for very large numbers of farms, ranging from 150 to 630, with therefore little time for each one.

It was clear that both factors were inhibiting the amount and types of technical assistance that could be rendered to the farmers.

The host country governments had some crop and livestock personnel to serve in all except one of the areas where volunteers worked. The hosts pointed out, however, that their governments were economically depressed and this had necessitated considerable reductions in the number of extensionists and specialists, that some had no transportation, and that others with vehicles had no money for gasoline, tires, repairs, and meals. The government staff were also responsible for hundreds of square miles and many thousands of farmers. It is patently impossible for them to visit farmers even once a year or to spend any concentrated amount of time on each farm.

Only a few other organizations had technical personnel that might be available to the host organization farmers. In two cases, the USAID mission had specialists in the region but their activities were restricted to the particular project being sponsored. Only two host organizations were able to obtain the USAID specialist services. Some commercial supply houses had technical staff members but farmers stated that the firms' major concern was sales.

When asked to describe the technical assistance given by the volunteers in comparison to that available locally, every host organization rated the volunteers' work and knowledge as superior on the specific problems to be resolved. Further, they said that the volunteer skills were more practical

than those of the local technicians. The major aspect expressed by the hosts, however, was that the volunteer could spend enough time on each farm to properly identify the problems, and recommend how the farmer might remedy them within his economic situation. When needed, the volunteer returned to help the farmer with additional information or demonstration.

The crop and livestock specialists on the study team examined the conditions on a sample of the farms where the volunteers had worked. They also talked with the host organizations' technicians and with some of the technicians provided by the government or other institutions. The team was convinced that the reasons given for requesting the volunteers' services were genuine, and that there was, indeed, a specific need for the services of the volunteers.

Except for private veterinarian services, no farmer ever paid directly for whatever technical assistance he received from the host organization, government, or other institutions. Indirectly, of course, they paid through taxes, the prices they paid for supplies and equipment, and either through organization membership fees or deductions from earnings on products marketed through the host organization.

The services of the volunteer farmers were not totally gratis since the host organizations incurred costs in facilitating the work of the volunteer and these were, for the most part, met through their operating budgets. None of the organizations kept a separate accounting of these costs so the study team could not calculate them with any precision. A staff member of one host organization kept a mileage record for the vehicle used to transport the volunteer and his time sheet for the hours utilized. The total miles, including airport transfers many miles away, were 761. The organization reimburses personal car use at US \$.30 per mile, thus \$228.30 was expended. Three weeks of the staff member's time cost \$104 in salary. The executive director stated that some courtesy meals for the volunteer were paid by the organization; while he refused to state how much they cost, the volunteer estimated US \$50. These estimates then would total about US \$382. The executive director objected to such an accounting, pointing out that the field staff member "learned a great deal," that "he had also performed some

organization services during the visits," and that "we see the volunteer as a special member of our staff." In any event, the total was not an unreasonable expense for this host organization since its volume of business was substantial.

Some organizations spent less than the amount in the previous example, judging from the services rendered to the volunteer. Distances were shorter; the salaries for field personnel were less. When the volunteer stayed longer than the three weeks in the example, the costs to the host organization were higher. In most cases, the costs appeared to be reasonable burdens for the host organizations. Two organizations could not provide full time transportation and field staff assistance to the volunteers; they did not have the vehicles and personnel to do so. The officials stated that the organizations could not afford to furnish these services full time. It must be assumed, therefore, that the financial burden was too great in their view.

B. Transfers of Agricultural Technology

The US volunteers had worked for from 3 to 12 weeks each with:

- 161 farmers on their farms;
- 3 host organizations in their processing plants;
- 1 organization in its cooperative supply store; and
- 2 host organization demonstration farms.

Additionally, eight volunteers and the wife of a volunteer participated in farmer meetings and conferences, usually near the completion of their stay in the various areas.

The evaluation team asked the volunteers to describe the kinds of assistance that had been given to the farmers during the farm visits, and asked the farmers what they had learned from those visits. A comparison of those replies is provided in Table 13 under general headings.

The interview technique, on the spot recall, of course, played a part in what items were related by the farmers. Nevertheless, the coincidence between the volunteer lists and the items cited by the farmers as learned from the farm visits is surprising. The farmers were able to discuss the particular

**Table 13: Comparison by Percentage of Types of Volunteer Assistance during the Farm Visits and the Farmer Reported Learning from Them**

Subject of Assistance/Learning	Volunteer Reported Assistance	Farmer Reported Learning
Dairy management and operations	38.0	33.0
Crop management and practices	18.0	26.7
Poultry practices	8.2	9.0
Use of fertilizers and farm chemicals	8.2	7.1
Beef cattle practices	3.3	4.5
Swine practices	4.9	4.5
Marketing, packing, grading	4.9	2.7
Cooperative participation/management	4.9	1.8
Generalized management ideas	3.2	1.8
Planning of buildings and plants	3.2	*
Record keeping	3.2	*
Nothing	NA	8.9

\* These were discussed in meetings with the organization officials and were listed by them.

recommendations or demonstrations in considerable detail, showing that their replies were not just "polite" responses but that they had indeed learned. Too, as will be shown in a later section, at the time of the interviews, some farmers had already made changes based on the knowledge acquired from the volunteers.

The practices learned in dairying included sanitation in milking, care of the milk, pasture improvement, silage making, caring for calves, adjusting vacuum line arrangements, replacing worn teat cups, adaptations to allow combining two milking systems into one, castration methods, feed formulas, testing for and treating diseases, and improved care of semen for artificial insemination. The list is impressive but it is of even greater potential consequence when coupled with the enthusiasm with which the descriptions were given by the farmers and the host officials assisted.

The crop practices were also well remembered by the farmers. Note that a higher proportion reported learning than the volunteer reported. Again, although the details in the list could not be reproduced therein, they involved such practices as planting depth and spacing, soil preparation, varieties for higher yields, correct fertilizers for the soils, cultivation methods, tractor and equipment adjustments and adaptations, harvesting methods, post harvest care of the produce, grading, washing, and packing. The study team saw many of these crops growing in the fields and agreed that the imparted information had materially assisted the farmers.

Poultry, swine, and beef technical assistance was provided by fewer volunteers and thus there was less opportunity for larger numbers of farmers to learn. Nevertheless, they named many learned practices: poultry feeding, ventilation, culling, litter management, and egg handling; swine farrowing pens, clipping needle teeth, composition of feeds, utilizing home grown feeds to reduce costs, and sanitation. Beef producers mostly talked about pasture improvement and the possibilities of green feed cutting and silage. The farmers felt that the lessons learned were important.

It is also important to note that there was a small percentage of farmers who said they had learned nothing. While even that portion is regrettable, the short time the volunteers had worked with the farmers, the short time that had passed, and the high sophistication of a few farmers who gave this reply, easily account for this group. The percentage is, in fact, lower than that found for some long term technical assistance programs.

The farmers who attended the meetings and conferences in which the volunteers participated were asked if they had learned anything. Nearly 79% said yes and they described content from the volunteers' presentations. As would be expected, the items listed nearly paralleled what they had learned from the farm visits but they added some new ones: the importance of working together in a cooperative, their role in cooperative management, and the value of providing extension training to the work of the cooperative or association.

Even though the time between the technical assistance given by the volunteer and the study team interviews was short, the study team asked farmers if they were doing anything differently as a result of the volunteers' work - 82% said yes and that was verified by on site observation. The vacuum lines for milkers had been lowered, teat cups replaced, a new spray to wash cows had been installed hand milking were hygienic practices demonstrated, a raised calf raising barn had been erected, cabbages were planted closer together and properly fertilized, peanuts had been planted properly, a new corn variety had been planted, needle teeth had been clipped on pigs, guard rails installed in farrowing pens, drip irrigation was being installed, two farmers had purchased new milking systems, ventilators were being adjusted in a broiler house, fertilizers of the correct formula had been purchased. That is to say, in a very short period of time, direct changes had resulted from the volunteers' work. The farmers also reported that they would make other changes during the coming year.

Some highly visible processing plant modifications had also come about as a result of the volunteers' work: modified potato washer, adjustments to the grader, sacking cauliflower with the heads faced inward, increased cooling capacity for milk was being installed in a cheese factory, and a milk plant had doubled its sampling proportion for milk testing. A cooperative supply store had been shown how its lack of inventory controls was reducing profits and had requested a VOCA Cooperative Assistance volunteer to help set up a system. A dairymen's association was discussing how to convert itself into a cooperative after two volunteers had impressed them with its need. In another case, a volunteer knew of an important study done in the immediate area on pasture management some years before. He obtained a copy and the milk plant is having it translated to Spanish for the area dairymen. None of them had known about the study.

Most modifications in farm practices require at least some months before increased income can be realized; the study team made no attempt, therefore, to make such a calculation. It is useful to point out, however, that some income increases were already in evidence:

- A dairyman lowered the vacuum line for his milking machine on the advice of a volunteer and his milk production increased nearly 20% within a week, just as the US farmer had predicted.

- Another dairyman discarded his worn out milking machine, purchased a new one, and raised his milk production sufficiently to pay for the investment in about six months, as a volunteer had told him.
- A tropical area dairyman with many disease problems in small calves built individual calf sheds on a platform designed by a volunteer and eliminated the deaths previously experienced.
- A dairy herd that had had many cans of milk rejected for foreign matter and high bacteria counts changed the washing and other hygiene practices under the direction of a US farmer; no more milk was rejected.
- Two dairy farms that always had had a 50% drop in milk production during the dry season made silage with an inexpensive method counseled by a volunteer; the dairymen estimated nearly no loss of production in the present season.
- Peanut growers planted according to the instructions of a US farmer and estimated at least a 25% increase in yields; the new methods cost nothing.
- Using a new variety of corn and planting at reduced spacing was expected to yield a 100% increase over the previous experience; the volunteer had convinced the grower to make these changes over many objections from other growers.
- Broiler losses dropped 50% with some simple modifications of the ventilation system recommended by a volunteer.
- A hog grower reduced feed costs drastically and obtained higher prices at market from lowered percentage of fat to meat by following the advice of a volunteer to utilize cut green grass as half the ration.
- On the recommendation of a volunteer, a cabbage grower reduced planting distance and changed the formula of fertilizer used for one that was correct and less expensive, and the crop was estimated to yield at least 30% more than that of his neighbors.
- US dairyman volunteers advised many host country dairymen to discard old teat cups that had become inflexible and cracked for new ones on their milking machines (at a cost of a few cents); the substitution almost immediately raised milk production and reduced mastitis infections.
- The second day on site, a US farmer identified a serious fusarium infestation in asparagus, supervised spraying the third day, and saved most of the crop.

These changes in farm practices had been made quite recently and the effects were just showing results at the time of the study team interviews. While no monetary value could be calculated, the economic returns, in the opinion of the team experts, were large.

Three processing plants of the host organizations were also served by US volunteers. A cheese making operation was, during the time of the study team interviews, being remodeled and expanded per a volunteer's recommendations so that greater milk production could be accommodated; cooling tanks were being installed so that milk could be held over for a second cheese making shift. In another milk processing plant, the volunteer suggestions for doubling the quality sampling of milk delivered was already being realized. He and his wife had demonstrated the making of cottage cheese, not previously a product of the plant, and the host organization was planning to include it in the near future.

A volunteer who had worked extensively with a packaging plant for vegetables had made adjustments to the potato washing operation, substantially improving the cleaning. He also urged the inclusion of a grading screen to remove the very small potatoes for special restaurant marketing; that was being implemented during the study visit. The US farmer had also recommended a completely different system for drying the washed potatoes to avoid the double sacking operation and the plant was seeking funding to install the new system.

Still another US farmer had been instrumental in helping an organization utilize old sugar plant machinery and equipment in corn cultivation; the hosts stated that without his vast knowledge of machinery, their operation would have been greatly curtailed. The volunteer also helped devise an inexpensive drying shed system for the corn so that it could be harvested before the rains caused mold and sprouting of the grains on the stalks.

These activities by the US farmer volunteers materially improved the operations of the plants. The savings and improved quality of the products would result in higher returns to the farmer clients of the processing plants.

The study team must note some failures with the successes. One volunteer's work was never cited as having produced learning or change. The work of two others was cited only twice. Such circumstances do exist and always will in a volunteer program. Overall, the volunteers produced far more farming practice changes than is generally experienced in the majority of technical assistance programs.

**Table 14: Distribution and Means of Host Organization Ratings of Volunteers' Performance**

Performance Category	Percent Each Rating					Mean
	Very Weak	Weak	Fair	Good	Excellent	
Work with organization officials	0	6.7	26.7	13.3	53.3	4.13
Work with farmers on farms	0	6.7	0	53.3	40.0	4.27
Work with farmers in meeting/seminar*	0	0	9.1	54.5	36.4	4.27

\*Only 11 volunteers participated in meetings or seminars.

Finally, the officials of the host organizations were asked to rate the work of the volunteers. Since the hosts had requested the volunteers to perform a certain service, it was postulated that the host judgments would be indicative of the work done. The Table 14 data summarize their opinions.

The host organizations facilitate the services of the volunteers. The cooperation between them, then, is an important element in the general acceptance of the US farmer efforts. The hosts judged that more than half of the volunteers had maintained excellent working relationships with the organization officials; another 13% was rated good. A third of the volunteers was classed as fair or weak in this regard, and the comments involved resistance to the work plan, changing plans for non-work related reasons, and "going off on their own." It must be emphasized that, according to the hosts, two-thirds of the volunteers maintained good to excellent relationships with their hosts, which is well above average for a volunteer program.

The host organization judgments about the work on the farms showed the strength of this part of the program - 93% rated good to excellent - confirming the strong indications of learning listed by the farmers. The US farmers worked well with the host country farmers. Those volunteers who participated in farmer meetings and conferences received almost the same favorable judgment; nearly 91% of the hosts placed that work in the good and excellent categories. Again, when US farmers worked with host country farmers, their performance was rated very strong.

The mean ratings in the right hand column of Table 14, an average for each type of volunteer work, show that the host organizations judged the volunteers, as a group, higher than good (above 4.00). This finding is an important measure of the US farmer services to the host countries.

Table 15: Indications of Organizations to Continue with the Farmer-to-Farmer Program, by Percentage

Indication	Yes	No	Undecided
Organization has requested another volunteer	53.3	46.7	NA
Organization likely to request another	80.0	6.7	13.3

A further indication of the appreciation of the work of the pilot project volunteers is embodied in the host organization desire to continue with the Farmer-to-Farmer program, shown in Table 15. More than half the organizations have already requested another volunteer. Eighty percent expect to do so in the future. Only one organization stated that it would not request another volunteer and that was explained as due to internal operational changes in the host organization; it had nothing to do with the performance of the previous US farmer. Another host organization placed itself in the undecided category because of organizational problems that were not related to volunteer performance. The other "undecided" said that it had special needs and would like to have a volunteer to help with them but that it would make a request only if VOCA could meet those needs. The responses demonstrate a clear commendation for the work of almost all of the volunteers during the pilot stage of the Farmer-to-Farmer program.

C. Establishment of US and Host Country Farmer Relationships

The program designers had seen the possibility of continuing opportunities for transfer of technology via the relationships established between the US and the host country farmers and, of course, with the host country organizations. Indications of continuing contacts were sought by the study team during the on site interviews within the host countries and through the case studies with the returned volunteers.

Three volunteers were still in the host country when the study was completed; one husband and wife team, both of whom worked on a project, had just returned to the United States. The work of one host organization is entirely with illiterate farmers, severely limiting the written communications that can be utilized. Setting aside these exceptions, all of the volunteers stated that they had written to the host organizations and 12 of the 15 had sent letters to one or more farmers. Further, four of the 15 had sent packages of seeds, publications, and small equipment to the host organizations for use by the farmers. Two others were in the process of obtaining publications and equipment to be shipped as soon as arrangements could be made. One of these had obtained the help of a US company in donating some equipment for the host country farmers. The volunteers were initiating communications that in many cases assured some transfer of technology beyond their immediate stays in the countries. (See sample letters and publication articles in Appendix C.)

All but one of the host organizations had received at least one letter from the volunteers; that one case was apparently due to postal delays since the volunteer reported having written and sent packages. Nine of the host organizations had already responded to the volunteers' letters, generally expressing appreciation for the volunteers' services. Three had also written a request for additional information on farming problems. While only 21% of the interviewed farmers had received a letter directly from the volunteers, more than half stated the intention to write to the volunteers. Considering the relatively short time between the departure of the US farmers and the evaluation, the overall aspect of continuing correspondence appeared good.

A further sign of ongoing transfer of technology and of good relationships is revealed in post volunteer visits. One US farmer volunteer, while en route to another assignment, took time out to travel some extra distance to spend two days with his former host organization and farmers. The host country group was surprised and impressed with this second contact with the volunteer. Equally important, 11 host organization officials and farmers had already come to the United States to work and study with three volunteers. One other attempted to spend time with the volunteer but schedules did not permit at that time. Volunteers and host country farmers described future plans for exchange visits. In all of the cases of host country people coming to the United

States, the trips were paid by the host organizations or by the farmers themselves. No expense to the program was involved. These instances of continued contact between the US farmer volunteers and the host country farmers suggest that the potential technology transfer will be far greater than just the immediate effects of the work of the US volunteers.

D. Unintended Outcomes

The study team was prepared to search for any outcomes other than those that were proposed in the legislation, even though there was no documented evidence that any had occurred. Three different kinds of results were found: the transfer of technology to host organization personnel, lessons learned by the host country organization in maximizing the benefits from a volunteer's work, and some very special volunteer feelings engendered from their experiences.

In all of the projects, some of the host organization personnel accompanied the volunteer at least part of the time while he worked. In most countries, one of the field personnel worked continuously with the volunteer. The study team also traveled with those staff members. In all but one case, the persons related the vast amount of information they had learned and most talked about new skills they had acquired from the volunteer assistance. The US farmers knew a great deal about the farming operation, possessed well developed skills in the work, and both explained and demonstrated those during the farm visits and the reviews of plant operations. In a high proportion of these occasions, the staff member translated the volunteer's information and explanations from English to Spanish, or re-expressed the ideas in the English commonly spoken by the Caribbean island farmers. That exercise created an unusually strong learning opportunity for the staff members. They voluntarily pointed out what they had learned, and expressed appreciation for the opportunity. The transfer of technology was not just farmer to farmer, but was also farmer to staff members.

Other officers of the host organizations also described some lessons learned in addition to the technology they had acquired. The major component involved the process of working with a volunteer, or any consultant. They pointed out the benefits of technology transfer to one or more of their staff members and stated that in any future opportunities, they would assign staff members to

accompany the visitors so as to increase the amount learned. The organization that received farm visit reports from the first volunteer, after seeing the potential benefits in strengthening extension efforts, requested and received that type of report from the second volunteer. These reports were translated to Spanish and were to be given to the farmers, and the contents discussed with them individually. That procedure forms a strong followup to the activities. As noted in an earlier context, the farmers were eager to receive the reports and discuss them; they, too, found an extension benefit.

Some host organizations also acquired other process skills. The mutual preparation of a work plan, done for convenience the first time, was seen as an unusual opportunity to assess the needs of individual farmers and to plan how and when to address them. Three organizations also mentioned that the volunteer visits identified problems of which neither the farmer nor the organization was aware. They termed this identification as a vital assessment of the problems faced by their clients or members, one that would help the organizations formulate plans for their remediation.

The program objectives included some lessons the volunteers would learn: information about other countries and peoples, conditions of farmers and the organizations serving them, and some facts about agriculture in another land. All of these were listed by the volunteers when they described what they learned. There were two other important results, however, that are not specified in the program documents. The first of these, couched in the words of one volunteer, was "how fortunate I am to be an American." That and other similar expressions were characteristic of those that had never been out of the United States or had only visited other countries as tourists. It is an important outcome. One other unintended result was that several of the US farmers mentioned that they had for some time felt very discouraged with farming, and that they saw their situations as nearly impossible. They then stated that the far worse conditions of the host country farmers gave the US farmers encouragement and that it stimulated them to work toward resolution of their own problems. One said directly, "If those people can farm under their conditions, I can surely do so here." The volunteers felt that this awareness was a decided benefit to them.

E. Program Cost Results

The average cost per volunteer paid from the Farmer-to-Farmer budget amounted to \$5231. The average for the VOCA placements and that of two of the subcontractors was nearly \$8000. That of the Christian Mission of Pignon, since that organization furnishes a high proportion of the actual costs, was about \$1,500, accounting for the average low expenditure. The inclusion of South America in the expanded program resulted in higher costs than for Central America and the Caribbean, as expected, since it raised transportation expenses. Whether seen as an overall average, or even at the higher cost of VOCA and two of the subcontractors, the expenditure per volunteer is far less than the early estimate of \$14,000.

The cost sharing between VOCA and the host organizations has involved expenditures for all of the organizations. In some cases, help from other institutions had been arranged. The study team was unable to obtain concrete figures on the cost borne by the host organizations but some important indications were documented. The costs incurred by one host organization for one volunteer for three weeks (described previously) amounted to \$382, including the salary of the staff member who accompanied the volunteer. In every case, the hosts incurred some local transportation costs, generally nearly full time provision of a vehicle. The organizations did not keep track of the mileage but with gasoline prices near US \$2 per gallon, the expense was considerable, even without considering proportionate costs of tires, other replacements, and repairs. In two cases, transportation was furnished by USAID missions from special project funds. Farmers also contributed to the transport from their own funds. One volunteer rented a vehicle for a portion of the work in the country because the host organization could not supply transportation.

By far the greatest cost sharing by the host organizations was the assignment of personnel to accompany the volunteers, and usually drive the vehicles, for the farm visits. Organizations noted that the staff member gained knowledge and skills from the trips, and that the staff member was able to do some field work at the same time. Nevertheless, because of the concentration of the volunteer's work with certain farmers, the services of the staff member as driver, facilitator, and translator certainly involved program costs borne by the host organization, especially those that furnished the full time of the staff member for weeks, as was often the case.

On many occasions, farmers provided lunch for the volunteer and the accompanying staff member. In one instance, a farmer furnished nearly all the lodging and meals for the volunteer. Most organizations also paid for some other meals and those costs were large when farmer meeting and conference costs were underwritten entirely by those organizations.

Host organizations were also instrumental in obtaining greatly reduced housing costs for the volunteers; they negotiated with the home owners and managers of hotels to obtain very favorable rates. While these actions involved little cost to the host organization, they substantially reduced the costs to VOCA since that was a budgeted item for the volunteers.

## CHAPTER V: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Although authorized in 1954, the Farmer-to-Farmer program was not funded until 1985. A pilot phase was begun in early 1986, and through amendments and extensions, is to terminate December 31, 1986. The pilot included Central America and the Caribbean and then was later broadened to South America.

### A. Performance Summary

Volunteers in Overseas Cooperative Assistance (VOCA), charged with the implementation of the program, in addition to its original core grant funded program of volunteers for cooperative assistance, directly placed 41 volunteers by the end of September 1986. Three subcontractors placed 24 more, for a total of 65 farmers, their spouses, a veteran, an extension worker, and some farmers who also had processing plant experience. These were placed with cooperatives, associations of farmers, an organization that serves groups of farmers, a foundation, a non-profit institution, a church related program, and with private enterprises serving farmers. These were located in Barbados, St. Vincent, Dominica, Jamaica, Belize, Honduras, Costa Rica, Panama, Bolivia, Haiti, and Ecuador. Applications for assistance have been received from several of these same countries and from Antigua and St. Kitts. The permanent program, to begin in January 1987, will also serve Asia and Africa.

The evaluation of the Farmer-to-Farmer program included on site interviews with 85 farmers, 11 host organizations, and telephone case studies with 16 volunteers who had served in Barbados, St. Vincent, Panama, Costa Rica, and Honduras. These were supplemented with written information from another organization working in Haiti, and with eight volunteers who had served there, in Bolivia, Belize, and in Ecuador.

#### 1. Process Performance

The study of the management processes found that VOCA, in addition to its direct recruitment, had utilized a wide variety of other contacts to locate suitable volunteers; Land O'Lakes and the Christian Mission of Pignon provided substantial help. The VOCA provision of international travel, the matching of skills to needs, the arrival date of the volunteer in

comparison to that requested by the hosts, and the appropriateness of the time of year were seen by the volunteers and the host organizations as favorably executed. The orientation provided by VOCA, a one-day effort, was generally classed as well done except that more information was needed on the specific area and its agriculture where the volunteers were to work.

Housing arrangements were generally satisfactory; four host organizations experienced some difficulties with arranging housing for the volunteers. The USAID missions were appropriately notified of the sample volunteer arrivals. International and local transportation was suitably arranged by VOCA and the host organizations. Translation assistance was usually adequate.

Although a low proportion of spouses could perform assistance work, it was deemed important that they be allowed to go to facilitate recruitment of the volunteers and to ease their stays in the host countries. One accompanying wife and another relative in the study sample were able to perform direct assistance services. A wife outside the sample conducted all the translation between English and Spanish for her husband. The other spouses occupied themselves with other activities. Two female volunteers in the sample performed well and without difficulty.

## 2. Results of the Volunteer Work

The volunteers carried out a wide variety of assistance services: practical advice and demonstration on dairy, swine, poultry, peanuts, corn, vegetables, and the operation of processing plants for potatoes, milk, and cheese. The farmers reported learning a high proportion of the information given by the volunteers and a surprisingly large percentage had made changes in their operations. Several of these had resulted in higher production, notably some modifications in peanut, corn, potato, and cabbage planting, and adjustments to equipment in a packing plant, milking parlors, and calf raising installations. Changes in farrowing pens for hogs, ventilation for broiler houses, fertilizer formulas, pasture improvements, and silage making were under way and were expected by the farmers to have future economic effects. The agricultural specialists on the team verified the changes and the present and probable increases in production and income. Higher

economic returns were already evident from increased milk production; higher peanut, corn, asparagus, and cabbage yields as viewed at or near harvest time; and greater savings from processing plant modifications. Because of the short time between practice change and evidence of the results, the team was unable to calculate the exact economic benefits. However, the team's specialists conservatively estimated financial returns to at least double the entire cost of the Farmer-to-Farmer program, considering only the sample farms visited.

The examinations of the establishment of friendly relationships between the US and host country farmers found modest communications so far for about half the cases. In the other half, however, strong ties were identified. US farmers had written some farmers and had sent packages of seeds, useful publications, and small equipment. One volunteer, with help from a manufacturer, was arranging for the shipment of two peanut planters. Perhaps even more obviously continuing transfers of technology were evident in that 11 host country farmers and organization personnel had already visited volunteers in the United States and many others were making plans to do so.

An important unintended outcome was found in that the field personnel of the host organizations who had accompanied the volunteers on the farm visits, and in some cases translated for them, reported considerable acquisition of agricultural knowledge and skills from the volunteers. Too, they had gained experience in extension methods. Two volunteers had provided the host organization with farm visit reports; those were being translated and would be discussed individually with the farmers, furnishing a strong followup to the volunteers' work and an increased extension effort by the organization. Farmers were very favorable toward these reports and procedures.

The US volunteers reported that they learned a great deal about the country where they worked, its agriculture, and the people. In addition, however, they declared two other important lessons, expressed dramatically, as:

- I discovered how fortunate I am to be an American.
- While some of my problems with farming are severe, I concluded that if the host country farmers can manage under their conditions, I can certainly do so in the United States.

These unintended outcomes are an important result of the Farmer-to-Farmer program. Finally, nearly all of the host organization officials rated the work of the volunteers from good to excellent. This, added to the concrete accomplishments of the volunteers on the farms and in the processing plants, indicated strong acceptance and evaluation of the work of the volunteers in the Farmer-to-Farmer program.

B. Program Recommendations

The study team found that usually when a host organization was large enough to have personnel who could work almost continuously with the volunteer, and could provide the transportation, translation, and introduction to the farmers, the volunteer accomplished more work and engendered more beneficial changes. Or, to state the same conversely, small organizations and their volunteers achieved less. This is not to suggest that viable small organizations should be excluded. Instead, the team recommends that:

- While VOCA should continue to seek host organization contributions via sharing the local costs, when those organizations cannot supply full time assistance and transportation, these costs should be borne by the program.

Further, whether the organization was large or small, a concrete work plan for the volunteer always helped to maximize exposure of host country farmers to volunteers.

- Written work plan drafts should be submitted by the organizations, agreed to generally by the volunteer before accepting the assignment, and then modified as needed during the stay in the country.

The study team, some volunteers, and one host organization found that when many farms were visited for short periods, volunteer effectiveness was reduced.

- The work plan for the volunteer should specify a reasonable number of farms to be visited so that substantial time can be devoted to the resolution of problems and to demonstrations of skills.

It was also apparent that facilitating the work of the volunteers in the country demands a great deal of time and effort by the personnel of the host

organizations. It would seem advisable, then, to:

- Limit a placement of one volunteer to an organization during one time period unless a team of perhaps two are to work on different phases of a single problem; even then, caution is advised.

Concentrated facilitation of the volunteer's work is preferable to dispersed efforts of the personnel of an organization.

While the recruitment of volunteers by VOCA was usually deemed excellent in terms of their skills matching the needs of farmers and host organizations, three partial matchings resulted in greatly reduced practical work on the farms. VOCA should therefore avoid these situations even if it means delays in placement. Unforeseen circumstances will occur; volunteers should be instructed to communicate these to VOCA as soon as possible so that modifications can be effected in the work plan.

VOCA should also delve deeper into potential health and other problems of the volunteers prior to assignment and communicate these clearly to the host organizations with sufficient lead time so that the organizations can make suitable arrangements or, if necessary, decline the volunteer. In addition, some volunteers found unforeseen potential health hazards in some sites, primarily occasioned by the use of chemicals in the host country that are banned in the United States. VOCA has worked out a written statement on this for volunteers and will caution them about it during the orientation.

The VOCA orientation of the volunteers was generally judged to be satisfactory but some improvements were suggested:

- VOCA should provide more information on the specific area in a country where a volunteer will work and on the agriculture of that region.
- VOCA should also negotiate with the host organizations to furnish a part of that orientation.

The first of these recommendations will probably require a longer period of orientation time. If so, increased orientation time is recommended.

Most host organizations felt they had too little communication with VOCA during the process of recruitment and assignment, and urged that more contacts be made. Three also suggested that some host organization communication with the volunteer prior to arrival in the country would increase the potential benefits from the stay.

- VOCA should facilitate pre-visit communications with the host organizations, and between hosts and volunteers.

Recognizing that the volunteers perform their services gratis, as do some of the subcontractors, VOCA has wisely reduced the reporting burdens placed upon them. Some small additions, however, would enhance the results of the work and responses to AID reporting requirements. The first set of recommendations is applicable to the volunteers:

- Volunteers should be requested to write farm visit reports and recommendations for use in the followup extension activities by the host organizations and others.
- Volunteers supplied by subcontractors should, at a minimum, be debriefed via telephone by VOCA: written final visit reports would be preferable.

To improve the VOCA financial record keeping:

- Some additional trip expense documentation from volunteers is needed.
- Fuller documentation by subcontractors is also advised.

VOCA has prepared suitable forms and instructions to remedy these deficiencies.

The study team found substantial success in both the processes and the results of the VOCA managed Farmer-to-Farmer pilot program. The improvements engendered by the volunteers in farm and processing plant practices were substantial. The team recommends that:

- An expanded Farmer-to-Farmer program be implemented.

The present costs per volunteer are low in relation to the achievements and are less than those budgeted. The changes in farm practices, resulting in increased production, and the potential future changes through further US and host country farmer contacts, are substantial and surpass the expectations for the Farmer-to-Farmer program.

**APPENDIX A**

**Interview Instruments**

Development Associates, Inc.

FARMER-TO-FARMER  
General Data Sheet  
(1 for each organization)

Int \_\_\_\_\_  
Date \_\_\_\_\_

A. Identification

- 1. Name of organization \_\_\_\_\_
- 2. City \_\_\_\_\_ Area \_\_\_\_\_ Country \_\_\_\_\_

B. Technical Assistance

- 1. What agriculture/livestock specialists do you have on your staff?
  - a. Type \_\_\_\_\_ Farmers served \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. Type \_\_\_\_\_ Farmers served \_\_\_\_\_
  - c. Type \_\_\_\_\_ Farmers served \_\_\_\_\_
- 2. What agriculture/livestock specialists does the government have in this area?
  - a. Type \_\_\_\_\_ Farmers served \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. Type \_\_\_\_\_ Farmers served \_\_\_\_\_
  - c. Type \_\_\_\_\_ Farmers served \_\_\_\_\_
  - d. Type \_\_\_\_\_ Farmers served \_\_\_\_\_
- 3. Is there any other organization or agency that can provide technical assistance to farmers in this area? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_ (If yes)
  - a. Agency \_\_\_\_\_ Type \_\_\_\_\_ Farmers served \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. Agency \_\_\_\_\_ Type \_\_\_\_\_ Farmers served \_\_\_\_\_
  - c. Agency \_\_\_\_\_ Type \_\_\_\_\_ Farmers served \_\_\_\_\_
- 4. Do organizations or the farmers pay for the technical service they receive?
  - a. Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_ Explain: \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. Do the farmers pay for technical assistance? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_ Explain: \_\_\_\_\_
- 5. Please describe the quality of technical assistance available locally as it relates to the needs of your farmers. \_\_\_\_\_

C. Farmer-to-Farmer Assistance

- 1. Why did you request technical assistance through the Farmer-to-Farmer program?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 2. How would you compare the technical service of the volunteer with that which is available locally. \_\_\_\_\_

FARMER TO FARMER PROGRAM  
Host Organization Questionnaire  
(complete one for each project)

Int \_\_\_\_\_  
Date \_\_\_\_\_

A. Identification

- 1. Name of Organization \_\_\_\_\_
- 2. Location: Town/city \_\_\_\_\_ Country \_\_\_\_\_
- 3. Name of Interviewee \_\_\_\_\_ Position \_\_\_\_\_
- 4. Project \_\_\_\_\_

B. VOCA Processes

- 1. How did you know about the volunteer program? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 2. a. About how close to your requested arrival time did the volunteer arrive?  
\_\_\_\_\_
- b. Was the volunteer with you during the most appropriate time of the year for the work? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_ Comments: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- c. Was the length of time the volunteer worked the amount that was needed? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_ Comments: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- d. In your opinion, how could the request to volunteer arrival processes be improved? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

C. Local Arrangements

- 1. What difficulties, if any, did you have with the following arrangements?
  - a. Meet at airport \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. Lodging \_\_\_\_\_
  - c. Transportation \_\_\_\_\_
  - d. Orientation of the volunteer to the tasks \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
  - e. Meetings with farmers \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
  - f. Activities for the wife (if applicable) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 2. How did your organization pay the costs of working with the volunteer? \_\_\_\_\_

D. Preparation of the Volunteer for the Work

1. Please rate the following factors (1=very weak, 2=weak, 3=fair, 4=good, 5=excellent) and comment if you feel it will be helpful:

a. Information about the country (1 2 3 4 5); comment \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

b. Information on agriculture in your country (1 2 3 4 5); comment \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

c. Orientation to the work to be done (1 2 3 4 5); comment \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

d. Customs and cultural aspects of your people (1 2 3 4 5); comment \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2. What suggestions do you have to improve the preparation of the volunteer for the work? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

E. Performance of the Volunteer

1. Please rate the following aspects of the performance of this volunteer in the work:

a. Working with you and other officials of the organization (1 2 3 4 5);  
comments \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

b. Working with farmers on their farms (1 2 3 4 5); comments \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

c. Help in meetings or seminars (1 2 3 4 5); comments \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2. What did you learn from working with this volunteer on how to improve the performance of such volunteers in the future? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

F. Did the volunteer leave a written report with the organization about the work and recommendations for the future? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_. Comments \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

G. Communication with the Volunteer

1. Have you received any correspondence or other contact with the volunteer since he/she left the country? Yes\_\_ No\_\_ What was the nature of the contact?\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2. Have you contacted the volunteer? Yes\_\_ No\_\_ Nature of contact\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

3. Do you plan any (or any other) contact? Yes\_\_ No\_\_ Probable nature of the contact\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

H. Future Plans

1. Have you made another request for a volunteer? Yes\_\_ No\_\_ Comment\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2. Do you think your organization is likely to request another volunteer in the future? Yes\_\_ No\_\_ Comments\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

I. Other Program Information

1. Did the wife of the volunteer accompany him? Yes\_\_ No\_\_ What did she do?\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2. Is there a possibility that in the future a wife could perform some useful service? Yes\_\_ No\_\_ Comments\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

3. If VOCA suggested a woman as a volunteer, would your organization accept if she knew the technical subject and had the desired experience? Yes\_\_ No\_\_ Comments\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

J. Is there anything else we have not discussed that you feel is important to understanding your organization and the work of the volunteer here? Yes\_\_ No\_\_

Comments\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

K. There has been a suggestion that some farmers from the host countries go to work with and learn from farmers in the United States.

1. What is your opinion of such a scheme? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2. If such a program were approved, what should the farmers from here learn from those in the United States? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

L. Determination of Need for Assistance

1. Your organization asked VOCA to provide a volunteer to help solve some farm problems. How was that problem or problems identified?

a. What did farmers do or say? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

b. What did your organization do? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

c. Was anyone else or any other organization involved in determining the need? Yes\_\_ No\_\_ (If yes) Who or what organization? \_\_\_\_\_  
What did they do? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2. If the identification process might sometimes be different than in this case, please explain how it might differ.

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

PROGRAMA DE AGRICULTOR-A-AGRICULTOR  
Cuestionario para la Organización Local

A. Identificación

1. Nombre de la Organización \_\_\_\_\_
2. Ubicación \_\_\_\_\_ País \_\_\_\_\_
3. Nombre del Entrevistado \_\_\_\_\_ Puesto \_\_\_\_\_
4. Proyecto \_\_\_\_\_

B. Procedimientos de VOCA

1. ¿Cómo supo Ud. de este programa con voluntarios? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. a. ¿Llegó el voluntario para el período pedido? Sí \_\_\_ No \_\_\_ (Si no) Favor explicar: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- b. ¿Fue apropiado el período del año para el trabajo? Sí \_\_\_ No \_\_\_  
Comentarios: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- c. ¿Fue suficiente la estada del voluntario? Sí \_\_\_ No \_\_\_ Comentarios: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- d. En su opinión, ¿Cómo podrían mejorarse los trámites desde hacer el pedido hasta la llegada del voluntario? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**C. Arreglos Locales**

1. ¿Qué dificultades, si hubiesen algunas, ha experimentado Ud. en hacer los siguientes arreglos?

a. Encontrar al voluntario en el aeropuerto \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

b. Alojamiento \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

c. Transporte \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

d. Orientación del voluntario para el trabajo \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

e. Reuniones con agricultores \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

f. Actividades para la esposa (si se aplica) \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2. ¿Cómo financió la organización los costos de trabajar con el voluntario?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**D. Preparación del Voluntario para el Trabajo**

1. Favor clasificar los siguientes aspectos (1 = muy débil, 2 = débil, 3 = regular, 4 = bien, 5 = excelente) y comentar sobre ellos para ver como se podría mejorar la preparación del voluntario.

a. Información sobre el país ( 1 2 3 4 5 )

Comentarios: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

b. Información sobre la agricultura aquí ( 1 2 3 4 5 )

c. Orientación en cuanto al trabajo ( 1 2 3 4 5 )

Comentarios: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

d. Costumbres y aspectos culturales de la gente ( 1 2 3 4 5 )

Comentarios: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2. ¿Qué sugerencias tiene para mejorar la preparación del voluntario para trabajar aquí? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

E. Realización del Trabajo del Voluntario

1. Favor clasificar los siguientes aspectos de trabajo del voluntario:

a. Su trabajo con Ud. y otros oficiales de la organización ( 1 2 3 4 5 )

Comentarios: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

b. Su trabajo con los agricultores en las fincas ( 1 2 3 4 5 )

Comentarios: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

c. Su ayuda en reuniones o seminarios ( 1 2 3 4 5 )

Comentarios: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2. ¿Qué aprendió del trabajar con este voluntario que podrá mejorar el trabajo con futuros voluntarios? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

F. ¿Dejó el voluntario un informe escrito sobre el trabajo con recomendaciones para el futuro? Sí\_\_\_ No\_\_\_ Comentarios: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

G. Contactos con el Voluntario

1. ¿Ha recibido alguna correspondencia u otra comunicación del voluntario? Sí\_\_\_ No\_\_\_ Tipo de comunicación: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2. ¿Ha hecho contacto la organización con el voluntario? Sí\_\_\_ No\_\_\_ Tipo de comunicación: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

3. ¿Planea Ud. algún (otro) contacto con él en el futuro? Sí\_\_\_ No\_\_\_ Comentario: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

H. Planes para el Futuro

1. ¿Ha pedido la organización otro voluntario para un nuevo trabajo? Sí\_\_\_ No\_\_\_ Comentarios: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2. ¿Es probable que la organización solicite otro voluntario en el futuro? Sí\_\_\_ No\_\_\_ Comentarios: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

I. Otra Información sobre el Programa

1. ¿Vino la esposa del voluntario? Sí\_\_\_ No\_\_\_ ¿Qué hizo ella? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2. ¿Existe la posibilidad que en el futuro, las esposas podrán ayudar en un proyecto? Sí \_\_\_ No \_\_\_ Comentarios: \_\_\_\_\_

3. Si VOCA sugiriera una mujer experta en la materia, como voluntaria, la aceptaría esta organización? Sí \_\_\_ No \_\_\_ Comentarios: \_\_\_\_\_

J. ¿Hay alguna otra cosa sobre su organización o el trabajo del voluntario que debería de ser notado? Sí \_\_\_ No \_\_\_ Comentarios: \_\_\_\_\_

K. Han habido sugerencias de llevar algunos agricultores de aquí a los Estados Unidos para trabajar conjuntamente con los agricultores norteamericanos, y así aprender de los mismos.

1. ¿Qué opinión tiene Ud. en cuanto a esta idea? \_\_\_\_\_

2. Si se realizara un programa así, ¿Qué quisiera que aprendieran los agricultores en las fincas en los Estados Unidos? \_\_\_\_\_

**L. Determinación de la Necesidad de Asistencia**

1. Su organización solicitó un voluntario de VOCA para resolver algunos problemas en las fincas. ¿Cómo se identificó el problema?

a. ¿Qué hicieron los agricultores en este trámite \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

b. ¿Qué hizo la organización? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

c. ¿Estuvo envuelto en el trámite algún otro grupo u organización?

Sí \_\_\_ No \_\_\_ (Si es así) ¿Quiénes (o cuáles)? \_\_\_\_\_

¿Qué hicieron? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2. Si en el futuro el trámite de identificación podrá ser diferente, favor explicar. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Int \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

FARMER-TO-FARMER PROGRAM

Farmer Questionnaire

A. Identification

- 1. Name of volunteer \_\_\_\_\_
- 2. Project activity \_\_\_\_\_
- 3. Volunteer: worked with farmer on farm? Yes\_\_ No\_\_ In meeting? Yes\_\_ No\_\_

B. Work with Farmer on Farm

- 1. What did the volunteer do when he visited your farm? \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_
- 2. What did you learn from the visit? \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_
- 3. Are you doing anything different now as a result of the visit? Yes\_\_ No\_\_  
 What? \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_
- 4. What is your opinion of the work done by the volunteer? \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

C. Meetings or Seminars Attended

- 1. What did the volunteer do in the meeting (seminar) you attended? \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_
- 2. Did you learn anything new at the meeting? Yes\_\_ No\_\_ What? \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_
- 3. What is your opinion about the volunteer's work in the meeting (seminar)?  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

D. Communication with the Volunteer

- 1. Have you had a letter or other contact with the volunteer since he left the country? Yes\_\_ No\_\_ (If yes) What did he say? \_\_\_\_\_

2. Have you written or otherwise contacted the volunteer? Yes\_\_ No\_\_ What about? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

3. Have you heard anything through your organization about the volunteer? Yes\_\_ No\_\_ What about? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

E. Future Volunteers

1. Do you think your organization should bring more volunteers? Yes\_\_ No\_\_  
Comment \_\_\_\_\_

2. (If yes) How could such volunteers help you? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

3. How could the farmer-to-farmer program improve? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

F. Is there anything else you want to say about the volunteer or the idea of bringing US farmers here to help? Yes\_\_ No\_\_ Comments \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

G. There have been some suggestions that farmers from here should also be able to go to the United States to work with farmers there?

1. What is your opinion of such a scheme? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2. If that type of program were started, what would you like to learn on a farm in the United States? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Ent \_\_\_\_\_

Fecha \_\_\_\_\_

DE AGRICULTOR-A-AGRICULTOR  
Cuestionario para Agricultor

A. Identificación

1. Nombre del voluntario \_\_\_\_\_
2. Actividad del proyecto \_\_\_\_\_
3. Voluntario trabajó con el agricultor en la finca? Sí \_\_\_ No \_\_\_  
En reuniones? Sí \_\_\_ No \_\_\_

B. Trabajo con el Agricultor en la Finca

1. ¿Qué hizo el voluntario cuando vino a su finca? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. ¿Qué aprendió Ud. de la visita? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. Está Ud. haciendo algo diferente como resultado de la visita? Sí \_\_\_ No \_\_\_  
¿Qué? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. ¿Qué es su opinión del trabajo hecho por el voluntario? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

C. Reuniones o Seminarios

1. ¿Qué hizo el voluntario en la reunión (o seminario)? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2. ¿Aprendió Ud. algo en la reunión? Sí \_\_\_ No \_\_\_ ¿Qué? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

3. ¿Que opinión tiene Ud. sobre el trabajo del voluntario en la reunión  
(o seminario)? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

D. Comunicación con el Voluntario

1. ¿Ha recibido Ud. una carta u otra comunicación? Sí \_\_\_ No \_\_\_ (si es así)  
¿Qué dijo? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

2. ¿Ha escrito Ud. una carta o en alguna otra forma hizo contacto con el  
voluntario? Sí \_\_\_ No \_\_\_ ¿Sobre qué? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

3. ¿Ha oído algo sobre el voluntario a través de su organización? Sí \_\_\_ No \_\_\_  
¿Cuáles temas? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

E. Voluntarios en el Futuro

1. ¿Cree Ud. que su organización debería traer otros voluntarios? Sí \_\_\_ No \_\_\_  
Comentarios \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

2. (Si es así) ¿Qué tipo de ayuda podrían estos voluntarios ofrecer a Ud.?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

3. ¿Cómo podría mejorarse este programa de voluntarios? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

F. ¿Hay algo más que quisiera decir Ud. sobre el voluntario o la idea de traer agricultores para ayudar? Sí \_\_\_ No \_\_\_ Comentarios: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

G. Han habido sugerencias de llevar algunos agricultores de aquí a los Estados Unidos para trabajar conjuntamente con los agricultores norteamericanos, y así aprender de los mismos

1. ¿Qué opinión tiene Ud. en cuanto a esta idea? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2. Si se realizara un programa así, ¿Qué quisiera Ud. aprender en una finca en los Estados Unidos? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

FARMER-TO-FARMER PROGRAM  
Volunteer Questionnaire

Int \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

1. How were you recruited for the program (organization that contacted you, VOCA calls, others)?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. Please briefly describe your orientation for the work. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. What is your opinion on the preparation the orientation gave you for the following: (1=very weak, 2=weak, 3=fair, 4=good, 5=excellent)
  - a. Information on the country (1 2 3 4 5) Comments: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
  - b. Information on agriculture (1 2 3 4 5) Comments: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
  - c. Information on customs and culture that could affect your work (1 2 3 4 5) Comments: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
  - d. In your opinion, how could VOCA improve the orientation? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. How would you rate the travel arrangements VOCA made for you? (1 2 3 4 5) Comments: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. Please tell us about how well your skills matched those needed for the project. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
6. No one can ever do everything that needs to be done but in general, was the time you had in the country adequate to the work? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_ Comments: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
7. Was the time of year you went the right time for the work you were to do? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_ Comments: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

8. Cooperation from the Host Organization

. Please rate and comment on the following aspects of cooperation

a. Lodging (1 2 3 4 5) Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

b. Information needed for the work (1 2 3 4 5) Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

c. Transportation (1 2 3 4 5) Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

9. Project Impacts

a. In your opinion, what did the farmers learn as a result of  
of your work? \_\_\_\_\_

b. What did the host organization learn from your work? \_\_\_\_\_

c. What did you learn from the work? \_\_\_\_\_

10. Post Visit Communications

a. Have you received any letters or other communications from the  
host organization or the farmers? Yes\_\_ No\_\_ Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

b. Have you written or otherwise contacted the host organization  
or any of the farmers? Yes\_\_ No\_\_ Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

11. Possible Future Activities

a. If you had the opportunity, would you like to volunteer again  
to this organization and country? Yes\_\_ No\_\_ Perhaps\_\_  
Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

b. There is a proposal just now under consideration to bring some  
farmers from the country here to work with US farmers. What  
is your opinion about such a proposal? \_\_\_\_\_

12. Participation of Women

a. Please briefly describe any project related or other development activities your wife was able to do (if applicable).

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b. What suggestions do you have for development activities in the program?

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13. Is there any other information about VOCA, the host organization, the farmers, or volunteers that you think would be useful to the program?

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**APPENDIX B**

**Examples of Work Plan for the Volunteer  
and Volunteer Farm Report**

PLAN DE TRABAJO PARA LAS TRES SEMANAS DE VISITA DEL SENOR ROBERT WHITEHURST DEL PROGRAMA "VOCA".

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MIERCOLES 13 AGOSTO 1986

Visita a finca de ERNESTO ALEMAN y PRUDENCIO ALVAREZ

JUEVES 14 AGOSTO 1986

Visita a finca de CESAR RODRIGUEZ, JOSE BONANNO, OLGA DE MAYES Y  
DANILO ZALDIVAR.

VIERNES 15 AGOSTO 1986

Visita a Finca de RAFAEL ARDON FUENTES, IVETH DE PONCE y  
CESAR VALDEZ.

SABADO 16 AGOSTO 1986

Visita a Finca FRANCISCO VEGA y JORGE ARTURO ARGUETA.

DOMINGO 17 ABRIL 1986

Día de descanso para los esposos Whitehurst. El ingeniero Cárdenas los atendió, llevándolos al Rio a pasar la tarde.

LUNES 18 AGOSTO 1986

Visita a finca de ORLANDO JAVIER y MARCO A. PONCE

MARTES 19 AGOSTO 1986

Visita a finca de LUIS ESPINOZA y RICHARD SWASEY.

MIERCOLES 20 AGOSSTO 1986

Planta Leyde. Trabajos de Oficina y conocer instalaciones.

JUEVES 21 AGOSTO 1986

Visita a BISHARA KAWAS

Planta Leyde, consultas sobre aspectos de producción.

VIERNES 22 AGOSTO 1986

Visita a finca de JOSE BONANNO

Visita a finca de IVETH DE PONCE (almuerzo)

SABADO 23 AGOSTO DE 1986

Planta Leyde. Trabajo de Oficina.

DOMINGO 24 AGOSTO 1986

Reunión en el Golf Club con el señor Reynaldo Canales, pláticas acerca de diversos negocios.

LUNES 25 AGOSTO 1986

Visita al señor BISHARA KAWAS (a la tienda)  
Planta Leyde, trabajo de oficina.

MARTES 26 AGOSTO 1986

Prueba de elaboración de Queso Cottage.  
Trabajo de oficina.

MIERCOLES 27 AGOSTO 1986

Visita a la finca de Don DANILO ZALDIVAR.  
Reunión con el Consejo de Administración de Leyde (plantear observaciones importantes).

JUEVES 28 AGOSTO 1986

Trabajo de Oficina.  
Despedida.

VIERNES 29 AGOSTO DE 1986

El señor y Señora Whitehurst , viajaron a Ruinas de Copán en compañía de Arnaldo Burgos (conocido de ellos). Posteriormente viajaron hacia los Estados Unidos.

FINCA DEL SEÑOR ERNESTO ALEMAN

Visita: 13 Agosto 1986

70 vacas en ordeño  
680 Litros diarios  
10 Litros / vaca/ día.

RECOMENDACIONES:

- 1) Seguir al pie de la letra las normas y procedimientos para un ordeño manual sanitario.
- 2) En la zona en que habitamos la humedad juega un papel importante en la nutrición bovina. El contenido de humedad encontrado en el pasto verde nos limita la cantidad de materia seca que el animal consume.  
Esta es una de las razones por la baja producción de leche.  
Un mayor consumo de materia seca elevaría la producción. Actualmente las vaquillas y terneras son alimentadas con heno de Alicia. Creemos conveniente darle también a las vacas en producción.
- 3) El uso de melaza y urea, puede ayudar a completar las exigencias de proteína y energía que tienen las vacas productoras de leche.
- 4) La producción de leche de cada vaca es importante saberla, puesto que así determinamos cuanto concentrado le daremos. Una vaca que no esté produciendo la cantidad mínima aceptable, debe ser eliminada y sustituida por otra que si cumpla con este requisito.

Se ha observado que las vacas en esta finca si tienen el potencial genético para producir mas leche. Esto constituye una ventaja que debe explotarse

- 5) Para facilitar la labor de almacenamiento de heno, se le recomienda al señor Alemán hacer una adquisición de una empacadora de heno.

IMPORTANTE:

Esta finca es una de las modelos de la zona. El señor Alemán administra la finca netamente en base a costos. Su ganado tiene gran encaste hacia pardo suizo. Esto lo ha conseguido mediante un sistema altamente eficiente de inseminación artificial. En la finca se llevan registros ordenados de la reproducción, cosa que no se hace en muchas otras fincas.

Durante el ordeño se da concentrado con melaza a las vacas. En el futuro piensa implementar una máquina de ordeñar.

Don Ernesto se ha dedicado a cortar pasto Alicia de 23 días de recuperación, secarlo al sol, almacenarlo y dárselo a sus vaquillas y terneros. Este es un sistema que creemos dará buenos resultados si se utilizara para las vacas en producción.

Creemos que bajo la administración de don Ernesto Alemán, esta finca va a seguir incrementando su producción y seguirá siendo muy rentable.

**APPENDIX C**

**Examples of Special Communications**



STATE OF ARKANSAS

*Arkansas Senate*

GENERAL ASSEMBLY

LITTLE ROCK, ARKANSAS 72201

**STEVE LUELF**

Senator, 3rd District

Baxter, Boone and Marion Counties

521 W. Wade

P. O. Drawer 447

MOUNTAIN HOME, ARKANSAS 72653

COMMITTEES

Education

Aging and Legislative Affairs

August 26, 1986

Mr. Bill O'Callagon  
VOCA  
1800 Massachusetts Ave. NW  
Washington, D.C. 20036

Christian Mission of Pignon, Haiti

Dear Mr. O'Callagon:

For the period July 24 - August 1, I worked as a VOCA Volunteer on the Christian Mission of Pignon farm at Pignon, Haiti.

We built fence and installed a drip irrigation system for the production of vegetables. We also worked on a pig barn.

The natives took interest in our project and hopefully will learn from it. The farm already has successful goat and hog projects.

We felt good about what we accomplished at Pignon both in terms of helping agricultural development and fostering of mutual understanding and friendship.

I hope your agency will continue to support this type of worthy activity.

Very truly yours,

  
Stephen W. Luelf



**ARKANSAS  
DIAGNOSTIC LABORATORY  
OF THE LIVESTOCK AND  
POULTRY COMMISSION**

Taylor H. Woods, D. V. M.  
State Veterinarian—Director

August 21, 1986

Little Rock Laboratory  
P.O. Box 5497  
One Natural Resources Drive  
Little Rock, Arkansas 72215  
Phone (501) 225-5650  
H. M. Ghorl, D. V. M., Ph. D., Director  
James I. Cornelius, D. V. M., Diagnostician  
Lloyd D. Keck, D. V. M., Diagnostician

Mr. Bill O'Callagan  
VOCA - Farmer to Farmer Program  
1800 Mass. Ave. NW, Suite 301  
Washington, DC 20036

Dear Mr. O'Callagan:

I am a veterinarian who recently returned from Pignon, Haiti. My week's work was made possible in part through your Agency's contributions to the Christian Mission of Pignon.

My week was spent evaluating the swine and goat production units on the mission farm. In addition to performing physical examinations and treating some cases with the help of native Haitians, I also tried to teach basic husbandry procedures such as proper feeding, housing, neonatal pig care and record keeping through a hands on approach.

Although the ultimate test of success will be time, I feel a lot was gained by this approach toward exposure of natives to more progressive and productive agricultural practices.

I want to express my appreciation for the opportunity to contribute in this program.

There are many other efficient, modern animal husbandry and agronomy practices that could be initiated in Haiti to help establish a self-sustaining base to feed an expanding population. It is my hope that additional support can be given toward meeting this goal.

Sincerely,

Lloyd D. Keck, DVM

LDK:fm

cc: Ms. Nancy Massey  
Christian Mission of Pignon  
2311 Biscayne, Suite 150  
Little Rock, AR 72207

Commission Members • Devoe Bellinger, Chairman, Heratie  
Lee Gilbert, Vice-Chairman, Pleasant Plains • Jim B. Baker, Conway • Dearl Dixon, Austin  
John D. Anderson, Rover • Hillman Koen, Hope • Paul Henry, Batesville

THE NORFOLK VIRGINIA PILOT

June 14, 1986

# Farmer shares peanut expertise with islanders

By GREG SCHNEIDER  
Staff writer

SUFFOLK — Retired farmer Edgar P. Savage has become an agricultural missionary of sorts, taking the gospel of the peanut to the black volcanic beaches of a Caribbean island.

Last month, Savage was sent by the Volunteers for Overseas Cooperative Assistance to St. Vincent, 100 miles west of Barbados, to teach the natives how to farm peanuts.

VOCA is a national agricultural group based in Washington.

There were yellow ribbons around some of the trees at Savage's house when he returned June 4 — his old friends were glad to have him home. But the new friends he left behind were sorry to see him go.

"We'll miss them," Savage said. "We'll miss them terribly."

He and his wife, Almeda, a nurse at Louise Obici Memorial Hospital, spent five weeks touring small island farms and sharing their experience. At 66, Savage has been working the land more than half a century.

VOCA sought help in Suffolk because of the city's

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*"They wanted somebody that knew how to do it the hard way. There weren't many around that had any more years in it than I have."*

Edgar P. Savage,  
retired peanut farmer

---

reputation for peanuts, said Tom B. Wheeler, manager of Southern States Suffolk Cooperative Inc. Wheeler nominated Savage for the job.

Savage can remember the days when Nansemond County farmers picked peanuts by hand, and figures it was his knowledge of the old-time methods that qualified him for the trip.

"They wanted somebody that knew how to do it the hard way," Savage said. "There weren't many around that had any more years in it than I have."

The islanders farm everything by hand, preparing the land with a hoe and a pitchfork, he said. A modern American farmer uses more than \$200,000 worth of equipment for the same task.

The Savages lived in the village of Prospect on the southern tip of the island, which is the primary peanut-growing area. Peanuts are not exported, but are eaten by the islanders and sold to tourists, Savage said.

St. Vincent's cash crops are bananas and coconuts, most of which are exported to England.

Because the 133-square-mile island is mountainous, farms usually are small and sloped. Peanuts are grown on lots ranging in size from a quarter of an acre to five acres, a fraction of the 113 acres of peanuts Savage once cultivated.

With Prospect as a base, Savage made his rounds in the company of a local woman, who served as a guide. The islanders speak English.

He found that the islanders were not planting deeply enough and weren't firming the soil over the seeds. The plants didn't germinate properly, and lay in the dust until it rained or until they were eaten by birds.

Savage took a small plot of land near his cottage and planted peanuts his way. They came up in five days.

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Please see FARMER, Page B3

# Indies island to get local seed planter

By GREG SCHNEIDER  
Staff writer

SUFFOLK — Agricultural globetrotter Edgar P. Savage was "some kinda happy" this week. He got a new peanut planter, free, from Ferguson Manufacturing Co. Ferguson's vice president, L. Quimby Hines is an old friend, but Savage wasn't taking the freebie for himself. It's for the people of St. Vincent, a tiny island in the West Indies.

Savage and his wife Almeda visited St. Vincent in May on behalf of the Volunteers for Cooperative Overseas Assistance, based in Washington. Their mission: to teach the islanders how to farm peanuts more efficiently.

A goober farmer for 50 years, Savage was able to clue in the natives to old-time secrets that cost little but improve production.

He left the island with concern, though, because the primitive peanut farmers have no machinery to aid them. Every seed is planted by hand, one at a time.

Savage made up his mind to buy them a planter and ship it out of Florida through a relative of one of the islanders. After a newspaper article about his trip caught Hines's eye, though, Savage could put away his checkbook.

"We just thought it would be good for Mr. Savage to have one and have a local product down there," Hines said.

And the businessman envisions a return on his investment. "Hopefully," he said, "it'll end up they'll want a whole lot more of them down there."

If purchased one at a time, the wood-and-metal planter costs \$350. They almost never are sold individually, though, and cost less in bulk, Hines said.

Another planter has been donated to the cause by Powell Planters of North Carolina, but it has yet to arrive.



Edgar Savage, left, examines a peanut planter that L. Quimby Hines of Ferguson Manufacturing Co. donated to the St. Vincent island project.

Now Savage must arrange to ship the equipment to Florida, where his contact will provide free transportation to the island. The Suffolk farmer is willing to foot the bill for the overland transport, but hopes he might line up some more aid.

Savage is unsure whether he will return to the island in 1987. VOCA is willing to send him and his wife again, but they must be invited by the peanut farmers of St. Vincent.

The free equipment is to be shared by all who need it. Savage said he will be joined by his wife and two children when he returns to St. Vincent. "It'll be a big help to my friends down there," he said. "You can imagine, when they are going along planting row by row

with their hands and covering up with their feet, how much difference a planter will make."

## LOCAL NEWS



Edgar P. and Almeda Savage in a peanut field.

Staff photo BY MARK MITCHELL

### FARMER

continued from Page B1

In Suffolk the plants would have come up in about 10 days, but on St. Vincent the warm weather draws them out sooner. The islanders, who normally wait weeks for the plants to sprout, were amazed by Savage's results.

He remembers one man who worked three acres by hand and got a small yield. Savage told him how he thought it should be done, and when he returned in four weeks, the man had raised his germination from 10 percent to 95 percent.

"He just shook my hand and grinned like he thought I just told him something he never dreamed of," Savage said.

The islanders plant two crops a year, often following peanuts with peanuts. The dark volcanic soil is not ideal, and Savage said the natives should rotate their crops to cut down on disease and insects.

His observations were compiled in reports on each farm visited and in a 10-page summary prepared at the end of the stay.

After five weeks, the Savages were ready to come home. They said goodbye to legions of island admirers, and returned with armfuls of gifts and souvenirs.

Soon Edgar will travel to Washington to make a full report to VOCA, and he hopes to return to St. Vincent next year to see the results of his work.

Meanwhile, Savage is working on a project of his own to help the people of St. Vincent. He's trying to locate a one-row peanut planter to send back to his island landlord, who has agreed to share it with his neighbors. The man has a relative in Florida who can ship it to him.

The trip to St. Vincent had a deep effect on both Savages, but it took Almeda to sum it up for her husband. When VOCA first asked them to go, she said "No, no way," but Edgar convinced her they should do it.

"He said, 'You know, I guess this is my greatest wish in life, to be able to help other people and have them do as well as I have in life,'" she remembers.

Savage smiles when asked about the success of his mission. "I feel like I've helped a lot," he said.