



MONTHLY NEWS LETTER

SEPTEMBER 1956. We have just read, with interest, the Sixth Annual Report of "STICA" (Servicio Técnico Interamericano de Cooperación Agrícola). Similar "Servicios" operate in a number of other tropical American countries, and Escuela Agrícola Panamericana takes pride in the fact that in nearly all of them its graduates are taking practical information to the farmer. Thirty-two of our young men are working with STICA in Honduras, several of them occupying important administrative positions, most others being Extension Agents or Assistant Extension Agents. Others are with the Banco de Fomento and the SCIDE.

One of our graduates (Luis Tirado) is Director General of Agriculture in the Dominican Republic. Another (Gustavo Pérez) is Director of the school of vocational agriculture operated by the government of Honduras at Catacamas; another (Abelardo Bú) is presently Acting Director of the same institution while the Director is studying on a scholarship in the United States. Ricardo Granada and José R. Calvo, both of whom earned B.S.A. degrees at the University of Florida after finishing at Zamorano, have been appointed as teachers in the recently-inaugurated Escuela Nacional de Agricultura in El Salvador - which country has many of our young men in its Extension and other government services. And so it goes. Zamorano is well represented in Guatemala, Nicaragua, Costa Rica, Panama, and several other countries.

We are enthusiastic regarding the work being done by STICA and similar agencies. If we may be allowed to express an opinion - an opinion with which we do not believe many will disagree - it is that an excellent way to commence extension work in tropical American countries is through the distribution of improved varieties of standard crops and, in many instances, new or little-known crops. We ourselves emphasized this feature when we commenced work at Zamorano, and it gave us profound satisfaction a few years later to be able to assist in the work of STICA by supplying planting material for distribution. There has been a keen demand (which we here at the school are still attempting to meet in part, though STICA is carrying most of the load) for cuttings of superior varieties of sugar cane and yuca; for seed of the Gainesville sweet sorghum, used for ensilage (and here we can mention that we have not been very successful with the combine types of grain sorghum); for seed of the gandul, or pigeon pea, useful as ensilage and also as grain and green manure; for the Puerto Rico sweet potato, definitely superior in quality to the varieties which have commonly been grown in Central America; for an improved red bean, developed by George Freytag, here at Zamorano (to our everlasting shame we lost our stock and had to beg STICA to give us a fresh start); numerous grafted varieties of citrus fruits, avocados, and mangos; and so on. Improved corn varieties, from the Rockefeller Foundation and several other sources should of course be given first importance in any program of plant introduction and improvement.

Finally, we cannot resist referring to our herd of dairy cattle which we have often mentioned in our News Letters. It has taken 13 years to bring up this herd to 3/4 blood, Guernsey, Jersey and Holstein, and it is a source of pride to us that we have been able to distribute a number of heifers as well as bull calves to various government agencies as well as private individuals in several countries.