

Monthly News Letter - March 1948

Our job immediately after Commencement (28 February) was to get the graduates headed for home, and assist some of them in finding suitable jobs. It is interesting to note - and this observation is based upon experience of the past three years - that many of the boys whose families own farms prefer to get jobs elsewhere, rather than to return home to work. We have received letters from quite a few of our earlier graduates who had gone back to their own farms, and who had become discouraged because their parents did not support them in their desire to implant the modern methods they had learned here. These boys have told us that they preferred to get agricultural positions away from home until such time as they had sufficient money and experience to strike out on their own.

Beginning about the tenth new students began to arrive, and at the end of the month there were 33 on the campus. One of the most interesting cases is that of a boy from San Francisco de la Paz in the Department of Olancho, Honduras, who had not previously been in contact with us - that is, he had not been offered a scholarship. He came on foot to Tegucigalpa with a man who was driving pigs to market - a trip of twelve days, he told us - and then walked out to Zamorano to see if he could enter the school. We are giving him a chance.

Toward the end of the month we opened the new silo, which was filled last October with sweet sorghum of a variety obtained in Florida. Food value and palatability of this silage is equal to locally grown corn silage and the yield per acre is at least five times that of corn. Taking for comparison three commercial dairies in this valley which do not as yet have silos, we can conservatively state that our increased production due to the use of silage is 200 bottles (of 1/5 gallon) per day. The present price of milk locally is 22-1/2 cents U. S., which means a daily increase in value of \$45.00. Our two silos will furnish ample feed for six months, the maximum length of our dry season. Our estimate of total cost of filling these two silos (if labor was paid for) is \$450.00. Our neighbors here in the valley are now planning to construct silos before the next dry season.

We now have 38 half-breed heifers milking, several of which are daily producing ten quarts of milk, and even more in some cases.

During the month we received 800 day-old Plymouth Rock and 200 Rhode Island Red chicks from Louisiana. We have decided to replace our White Leghorns with Plymouth Rocks, a meat and egg breed which will be more useful to us. Under our conditions we have found the Leghorns have produced very few more eggs than Rhode Island Reds.

Immediately after Commencement students began to harvest the cane crop and make "panela" or crude sugar. At the end of the month more than 5000 lbs. had been turned out. A collection of avocado varieties was received from Florida, and budded on stock plants in our nursery. Plants of a form of sour orange reputed to be superior as a rootstock for Citrus, were received from Cuba. Many grafted roses were distributed from the nursery.

Toward the end of the month, four members of our staff - Mr. Hogaboom, Mr. Villegas, Mr. Herrero and Mr. Fiester, went to David, Panama, to act as judges at the National Agricultural Fair.

There were many visitors during the month. Dr. E. J. Wellhausen, head of the Rockefeller Foundation's agricultural program in México, came on the 1st for an overnight stay, accompanied by Dr and Mrs Dera H Langham of the Ministerio de Agricultura y Cria in Venezuela. Dr Langham is well-known as the originator of several very valuable corn varieties, -Venezuela Nos. 1, 2, and 3. Dr. Norman E. Borlaug, one of the technicians of the Rockefeller Foundation, was also a member of this party. Mr. John Hoilman and Miss Sue Taylor of the U. S. Department of Agriculture were here on the 3rd, also Mr Stacey, chief engineer of the Chiriqui Land Co. Mr and Mrs Wm. Sterling Youngman Jr., of Washington D. C., were here on the 5th. On the 7th, Mrs Doris Stone brought out Mr Joel Canby, an archeologist who is undertaking work for the Peabody Museum of Harvard in the Comayagua valley of Honduras under the direction of Mrs Stone. On the 8th, Dr Hartley Rowe and Mr Fletcher A Hatch of the United Fruit Company spent the night with us. Mr Charles Breitenbach, a plant breeder of the Venezuelan Ministry of Agriculture, stayed overnight on the 10th. Dr Samuel C. Lothrop and wife were here at the same time. Dr Lothrop, who works under the auspices of the Peabody Museum of Harvard University, is one of the outstanding authorities on tropical American archeology. Judge John J. Burns of Massachusetts, accompanied by Mrs Burns, spent two days with us. Mr. Colin Shaw, Superintendent of Agriculture for the Grenada Company in the Dominican Republic, spent a week here, accompanied by Mrs Shaw. At the same time we had with us Dr Floyd A. McClure and family. Dr McClure, who represents the Office of Foreign Agricultural Relations of the U. S. Dept. of Agriculture, is probably the world's greatest authority on bamboos, their taxonomy, culture and utilization. He gave us many valuable suggestions regarding the culture of bamboos in this region. On the 13th and 14th we had the pleasure of entertaining Mr Nelson Rockefeller and Dr Robert Russell of New York. Mr. Rockefeller was interested in getting information to be used in connection with the extensive program he is organizing in several South American countries. Harlo A. von Wald, chief engineer of the Magdalena Fruit Company, paid a short visit to the school on the 14th - a visit which was of particular interest because of the fact that Mr. von Wald was employed by the United Fruit Company from 1942 to 1944 to build this school. On the 19th the Hon. Rees Fowler, His Britanic Majesty's Minister to Honduras, brought out the Very Reverend Douglas Wilson, Bishop of Honduras, for the day. Robert K. Shellaby, who handles Latin American news for the Christian Science Monitor of Boston, stayed overnight on the 25th, while on his way to report the Bogotá conference for his newspaper. Mr Thomas Jefferson Coolidge of Boston, Chairman of the Board of Directors of the United Fruit Company, accompanied by Mrs Coolidge, their three children, and Timothy Gunningham, spent three days here toward the end of the month. And on the 31st, Dean Knowles Ryerson, of the California State College of Agriculture at Davis, arrived to spend several days.

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