



ESCUELA AGRICOLA PANAMERICANA
TEGUCIGALPA HONDURAS

MONTHLY NEWS LETTER

OCTOBER 1954. Mid-year exams (finals for the first semester) were held during this month. Six boys in the first-year class had three F's each, which caused us to inquire, why? And to try to find out why. We talked with all six sympathetically and at considerable length. Before coming here, all of them had made satisfactory grades in our "Examen de Capacidad," which is more of an intelligence test than anything else. We do not claim that this test is infallible, but in general it works extremely well.

It seems to be the feeling of these six boys that they have never learned how to study. We are going to give them more time, and it will be interesting to watch the results. Three of them thought that another factor might be the presence of radios in their rooms. We have heard that students in the United States think they can concentrate more efficiently if they have radios turned on during their study hours. We are open minded, and would welcome comments based on experience.

There is nothing we enjoy more than having teachers come here from other agricultural schools in tropical America to "cambiar impresiones," as they say in Spanish. This month we had the pleasure of receiving a particularly interesting group from Guatemala. Ing. Francisco Rubio, Director of the Escuela Nacional de Agricultura; Ing. Oscar Florán de Leon, Professor of Dairying; Ing. Julio Rodas, Professor of Field Crops; and two students, Otto René Alvarado and Domingo Villagrán. These men went into our program from all angles: administration, curriculum, and social activities.

We think the classroom program for the new semester, which commenced 25 October, is the best we have ever been able to offer our students. Interesting features are as follows:

Walter Fick will give the second-year students one class each week in Apicultura (Bee Culture), a course which we have sometimes been able to offer but not always.

Third-year students will have two classes per week in the Conservation of Renewable Natural Resources, taught by Manuel Chávez Viaud, who has recently returned from eight months in France and North Africa, where he studied on a grant from the French government. Professor Chávez Viaud is well prepared to teach soil conservation, the use of water, and the rational management of forest resources.

We are able to give this year, for the first time, a brief course in Agricultural Extension, which will be taught by Julio Pineda. This also will be a third-year course. The large proportion of our graduates who find employment in extension work throughout Central America, and to a lesser but important extent in other parts of tropical America, has made it desirable for us to offer a course in this field. Technicians of the Inter-American Institute of Agricultural Sciences, as well as those of governmental agencies in several countries, have been urging us for several years to include such a course in our curriculum.

Dr. Louis O. Williams will give the third-year course in Production of Beef Cattle, which was given last year for the first time; and his class in English Conversation will be made more effective by bringing in several other members of the staff, so that students will become accustomed to different accents and different vocabularies.

The second semester of Agricultural Engineering (a third-year subject) will be taken over by Dr. M. J. Dijkman and Professor James W. Miller, Jr. The former will teach farm machinery and the latter technical features of tractors and tractor operation.