

## **IPM CRSP Trip Report Dominican Republic**

**Country(s) Visited:** Dominican Republic

**Dates of Travel:** July 18 – July 21, 2010

**Travelers Names and Affiliations:** Beth Gugino and Ed Rajotte, Penn State; George Norton, Virginia Tech

**Purpose of Trip:** To review IPM CRSP program in the DR and help plan for IPM CRSP research program on vegetables for the following years.

**Sites Visited:** Santo Domingo: 1) IDIAF administration and the Centa research center; 2) Ocoa Valley: The Savana Larga research station and farms near San Jose de Ocoa

### **Description of Activities/Observations:**

July 19 -- We met with Teresa Martinez, Site Coordinator for IPM CRSP in the DR and with Rafael Duverge, Executive Director of IDIAF, Fabio Frias, Ramon Arbona, and Luis de Los Santos to discuss the IPM CRSP program and the purpose of our visit. They are very interested in training and plant diagnostics in addition to research. We went with Teresa to the Agricultural Technology Center of IDIAF (CENTA) and met with the Director, Modesto Valentin. CENTA is the principal laboratory facility for IDIAF and is where most but not all of the scientists working on the IPM CRSP are located. Ing. Reyes gave us a powerpoint presentation on how he sees the IPM CRSP program developing in the DR. We toured the facilities of CENTA and found relatively new laboratories for the various disciplines and are currently undergoing a certification process. After lunch we met with 10 scientists from IDIAF at CENTA. George presented a powerpoint about the IPM CRSP and outlined what is needed in the workplan. Each IDIAF scientist described their research and then Ed and Beth led a discussion on prioritization of crops, pests, and IPM practices. As part of the planning process, key pests were identified for tomato and pepper. Pest phenologies were mapped onto a crop production calendars. The pest/crop calendars will be used to direct crop management activities (planting dates, trap placement, scouting protocols, control windows, management outcome evaluations, etc.). The IPM package demonstrations as well as research activities in support of IPM package development can be developed from these calendars. George met with Cezar Martinez, the economist who will lead the baseline survey and with Maria Cuevas who will lead the gender work. They discussed the baseline survey questionnaire, of which Cezar already had a draft, and discussed gender activities and impact assessment. We all concluded with a summary discussion of what needs to be done to complete the workplan for year 2.

July 20 – Ed, Beth, and George traveled with Teresa, Cezar, Maximo, and Sardis to San Jose de Ocoa and visited the Savana Larga research station of IDIAF and three neighboring farms. We observed pepper production under greenhouse/screenhouse conditions at the station, asked questions about pests, markets, and the costs of construction and production. Viruses are a major problem, both Gemini and Tospoviruses. The station greenhouse is the same size as the farmers

use and has 4800 square meters. The houses come from Spain, both for the station and the farmers and cost about \$100,000 to construct and \$3,000-4,000 per crop. There are about 80 pepper producers in Ocoa. Many of the peppers are exported mostly to Europe and some to the U.S. We visited two farms with greenhouses, one owned by Juan Sula and the other by Griselda xx. They each sell their products to a local buyer named Junior Rodriguez. He contracts with about 50 local producers and sets the price before the season and has almost a monopoly in the Ocoa Valley. We noted that there is an interest in increasing vegetable production for the export market because of the increased price received. Importing countries have strict rules about pesticide residues as well as phytosanitary requirements. Recently, the European Union increased the stringency of pesticide residue tolerance. The desire to increase export and importing restrictions will greatly influence the type of pest management that should be implemented in DR agriculture. For some producers, a government technician aids in the hands-on diagnosis crop production problems but they pay him for specific crop management recommendations i.e. pesticides, fertilizers, etc. Although, the technician works for a government marketing program but it appears there is an incentive for him to recommend specific pesticides to the growers and the boundary between public service and private consultant are blurred. Griselda is the only female farmer out the 50 who are contracting their production. Her husband is also a farmer however he manages and sells his crop independently of his wife. They also manage their money independently. The second producer we visited produced primarily tomatoes and peppers in open fields however he was between crops at the time of our visit. It is very difficult to grow tomatoes and peppers in the rainy season without a cover. He primarily receives crop management recommendations and attends education session directly from or facilitated by the agri-chemical dealers. After returning to Santo Domingo, we had dinner with Teresa, Director Valentin, and Executive Director Duverge.

July 21 – George had breakfast with Dt. Jesus de Los Santos who is Chief of Party for a USAID agricultural diversification project designed to help farmers take advantage of rules under DR-CAFTA to increase production and exports. He is interested in collaborating where possible on IPM. Dr. Duty Greene is the person in charge of the economic growth program at the USAID mission, but there was no time to stop by the mission on this trip given that we only had 2 days of work in country.

We flew back to the States after breakfast.

### **Suggestions, Recommendations, and/or Follow-up Items:**

The DR will focus on tomato and peppers with additional work on oriental vegetables to the extent that resources allow. Teresa will send the year 2 workplan to Jeff Alwang within 10 days. Cezar Martinez will complete a 3-week training on impact assessment methods at Virginia Tech after completing the baseline survey. There may be a need to study the vegetable marketing system and the technology diffusion system as the monopoly buyer and the payments to technicians who may also be receiving funds from pesticide dealers may create constraints to IPM adoption.

List of Contacts Made:

Name	Title/Organization	Contact Info (address, phone, email)
Teresa Martinez	Scientist (Virologist) IDIAF	(I am not sure we should post this information to the web)
Rafael Duverge	Executive Director, IDIAF	
Modesto Reyes Valentin	Director, CENTA	
Jesus de Los Santos	COP, USAID project, DR	
Luis de los Santos	Planning Director IDIAF	