

ervaUna Quarterly Reports 2006-2/3

Diversified Organic Agroforestry – an Innovation to Rural Development in Southern Bahia, Brazil

Report No. 6 1 April - 30 September 2006

14 October 2006

Authors: Richard Bolli & Barbara Suter, Swiss technical consultants, info@ervauna.org
Sources: Field Reports No. 4, 5 and personal communication by Fábio and Linde Nobre, Una

Distribution List: Donors
Vereinigung *pro mata atlântica*, CH-Engelberg
Associação dos Pequenos Produtores da Queimada Grande e Jacão, Una
W. Martin Aitken, president, and Raúl Valle, financial director, FUNPAB, Itabuna
Fábio Nobre & Linde Nobre, technical manager and coordenadora de campo, Una
Sinval da Silva, Chefe da Estação Lemos Maia ESMAl, Una
José Inácio Lacerda, Estação Experimental Lemos Maia ESMAl, Una

→ Capacity Building

→ Organic Farming

→ Diversification

→ Agroforestry

→ Rainforest Conservation

→ Medicinal Plants

Resumo

A Associação dos Pequenos Produtores da Queimada Grande e Jacão comemorou seu 10^o aniversário. O interesse e a motivação no projeto *ervaUna* diminuiu, especialmente na plantação de feijão-de-porco (9 produtores ativos) na compostagem (8 ativos; os compostos produzidos deram bons resultados na fertilização de hortas, abóbora, banana e cacau), e no cooperativismo (nenhum dia de campo). Não participaram novas famílias no projeto, porém os sub-projetos foram continuados com resultado:

O projeto galinha caipira (participam 8 famílias com 170 galinhas) está contribuindo na alimentação própria das famílias, a venda de ovos já começou e os dejetos das galinhas foram utilizados na compostagem. Foram preparados 3 hortas experimentais, assim iniciando a produção diversificada e também a metodologia da "sala de aula verde". As hortas já produzem para 4 famílias e servem para experimentar e desenvolver métodos adequados de terrassamento e adubação. Mais três sub-projetos, desenvolvidos na associação, estão na fase de aprovação: O *projeto geléia* (10 mulheres), o *projeto plantio associado* (cultura mista com banana da terra; 4 famílias) e o *projeto piaçava* (4 famílias). Todas as atividades foram financiadas por doações privadas da Suíça e arrecadadas pela ONG "Vereinigung *pro mata atlântica*".

Com uma demora de um ano, o contrato de trabalho entre a Funpab e os consultores Suíços e o pedido de visto foram apresentados ao Ministério de Trabalho em Brasília no dia 27.9.2006.

A arrecadação de fundos para a fase 1 do projeto *ervaUna* (24 meses) está terminada, os fundos garantidos.

Zusammenfassung

Die Kleinbauernvereinigung *Associação dos Pequenos Produtores da Queimada Grande e Jacão* konnte ihr 10jähriges Bestehen feiern. Während das Interesse und die Motivation insbesondere bei den Bohnenpflanzungen (9 Bauern aktiv), beim Kompostieren (8; die produzierten Komposte ergaben einen effektiven Dünger für Kürbisse, Bananen und Kakao) und bei den Feldtagen (0 durchgeführt) nachgelassen haben und auch keine neuen Familien zur aktiven Teilnahme bewegt werden konnten, sind in den Unterprojekten Erfolge zu verzeichnen:

Das Legehennen-Projekt trägt mit 170 Hühnern (bei 8 Familien) zur besseren Ernährung sowie zu Einkommen durch den Eierverkauf bei und liefert mit dem Kot einen wertvollen Kompostbestandteil. Die Diversifikation begann mit 3 Gemüsegärten. Diese versorgen bereits 4 Familien und dienen als Experimentiergärten und "lebendes Schulzimmer für biologischen Landbau", um die optimale Anlage und Bewirtschaftung in Vergleichsfeldern entwickeln zu können. Drei weitere, von den Bauern selbst entwickelte Unterprojekte stehen kurz vor der Realisation: Marmeladenprojekt (10 Frauen), Mischkulturversuch mit Kochbananen (4 Familien) und das Palmfaserprojekt (4 Familien).

Arbeitsverträge und Visumanträge für das Schweizer Projektleiterpaar wurden nach einer Verzögerung von einem Jahr am 27.9.2006 beim Ministerium für Arbeit eingereicht. Die Finanzierung der Projektphase 1 ist gesichert.

1 Smallholders' Association

Associação dos Pequenos Produtores da Queimada Grande e Jacão, Una

Community matters. The geographic mapping of the smallholdings in the Queimada Grande area is envisioned, yet not completed. The *ervaUna* coordinators have started gathering GPS data to delimitate the properties, which will be a prerequisite for the municipal electrification program to reach the Queimada Grande area. The GPS kit is lent for free by IBAMA (the Brazilian agency for the conservation of the environment, Instituto Brasileiro do Meio Ambiente e dos Recursos Naturais Renováveis), the gasoline used for collecting data is paid by the smallholders' association.

On August 20, the smallholders' association Queimada Grande celebrated its 10th anniversary (see Plate 5, Fig. 7) at the CEPLAC field station Lemos Maia.

Social life. The association celebrated mothers' day and São João/ the end of the school term at the Queimada Grande school, which also serves the association as their assembly room. They joined for a meal, sweets and singing, and pupils with regular attendance were honored.

Capacity building. Luciano, son of the association's president, has regularly accompanied the technical manager Fábio Nobre as his assistant, developing a deeper interest and acquiring much knowledge about organic agriculture. The chicken breeding program has been continued by 8 smallholder families and comprises now 170 chickens. Production has reached 6-9 eggs per hen and week. The eggs contribute to the families' diet and are sold with success (see Plate 5, Figs. 5 and 6). 7 smallholders attended a course in fish farming, which could become a new source of healthy food as well as a market opportunity (see Plate 5, Fig. 8). Alimentation of these freshwater fishes is costly and alternatives are investigated.

The local project managers and coordinators, Fábio and Linde Nobre, have once again put a tremendous effort into the *ervaUna* precursor project, in the field as well as getting through the jungle of Brazilian bureaucracy. Linde has been working on a voluntary basis for dozens of hours thoughtfully coordinating the project. We wish to thank them for their dedication and energy.

2 Organic Farming

Jack Beans Project. The planting of jack beans (*Canavalia ensiformis*) has been continued, yet with low participation of smallholders (9). Farmers who did not want to plant beans said that they had not enough time for doing it and that the weather was too cold and too rainy. Generally, the plants are developing well, however, in one area the pods did not develop properly. Production of seeds is much below expectation.

Composting. The composting activities have been continued by 5 members of the association (see Plate 5, Fig. 3 and 4). Already knowledgeable in composting, they are testing the quality of the composting process with different vegetal and animal components. The application of new components was mentored by the project manager Fábio Nobre and Luciano, son of the association's president. Compost was applied to Sr. Raimundo's pumpkin field (see Plate 5, Fig. 1), and given to corn and beans as well. After this fertilization, the development of these plants was very satisfactory. The growth of bananas has been successful as well, with the only application of compost. Details are given in the Field Report No. 5 (in Portuguese).

3 Diversification

Kitchen Garden Project («Projeto Horta Experimental»). The technical manager, together with the Lau family, prepared an experimental kitchen garden at a hillside – which represents the typical morphology of the Queimada Grande area. Plant beds were installed parallel to the hill and descending with the inclination, respectively, and vegetables were planted (see Plate 5, Fig. 2). With the aim of demonstrating the effects of different arrangement and treatment of the fields (with or without green manure/following the contour lines or descending), this experimental garden is the first "green classroom" of the Queimada Grande, where agricultural methods are discussed and developed. 3 "hortas" have been realized so far. Sr. Lau's garden already produces vegetables for 4 families. Diversification was also taken up by Sr. Raimundo, who planted pumpkin, beans and corn in a mixed-crop system (see Plate 5, Fig. 1; compare also the preparation of this field on Plate 4, Fig.1 of the Quarterly Report 2006-1).

4 Agroforestry and Rainforest Conservation

There were no activities within the period of this report.

5 Medicinal Plants

There were no activities within the period of this report.

6 Ongoing and Planned Activities from October to December 2006 (4th quarter)

Fostering and mentoring the composting activities, the jack beans project and the kitchen gardens. The local coordinator Fábio Nobre will be visiting, mentoring and monitoring the composting activities. Investigations are made towards a possible irrigation of the composts during the dry season. The planting of jack beans will be extended (only 6 smallholders are currently participating in this activity), and a number of legume species will be added to the kitchen gardens.

Field Days. It is planned to organize two field days per month, i.e., 6 field days until the end of this year.

Sub-projects of smallholders («Projeto Autoestima»). 10 women will start the "Projeto Geléia". In the experimental phase (until January 2007), they will test how jams and jellies can be made from local tropical fruits, properly preserved and sold locally. Two further sub-projects are in the phase of planning and should

get started during October: the “Projeto Plantio Associado” – a mixed-crop production area with bananas, basing the necessary fertilizer on community-own compost, and the reforestation project “Projeto Piaçava” with the aim of producing palm fiber from the native piaçava palm of the Atlantic Forest.

Monitoring the development of fruit trees. The development of the 4000 saplings of fruit trees, donated by the ESMAL field station last year, will be surveyed (compare Quarterly Reports 2005-1/2).

Completion of project formalities. The project documents and visa requests for the Swiss technical consultants were submitted to the Brazilian Ministry of Work on September 26. According to the information provided by Funpab, a formal answer can be expected in a month.

7 Problems and Setbacks

Smallholders’ participation. Obviously, the smallholders’ motivation has suffered much. Only a few families are actively participating in the jack beans project (9) or composting activities (8). Though several dates were figured out, no field day took place during the period of this report, that is, within the last 6 months! A lack of time, the world cup and heavy rainfalls were the explanations for the missing interest in the field activities of the *ervaUna* project.

Project formalities and visa for the Swiss technical consultants (Barbara Suter & Richard Bolli). Until the end of August, neither was the contract of the project signed nor the project proposal submitted to the governmental authorities in Brasilia, which caused a further 3-month delay to the official start of the *ervaUna* project. Originally it was planned to submit the necessary documents to the Brazilian Ministry of Work during fall/winter 2005.

8 Project Administration, Donor and Public Relations

The association “Vereinigung *pro mata atlântica*” (Swiss NGO and official partner of the *ervaUna* project with currently 60 permanent members) has officially been approved a charitable and tax-exempt organization, after assessment by the state of Obwalden-Switzerland (Kanton Obwalden).

The Swiss foundation “Stiftung zur Förderung der Nachhaltigen Forstwirtschaft in den Tropen” (Foundation for the Promotion of Sustainable Forestry in the Tropics, Mr. Daniel Heuer, president) made a significant contribution to the project so that the funds necessary for the first phase of the project (24 months) are now completely raised.

The company Belfor (Suisse) AG, www.belfor.ch, has made a compensation payment of CHF 2,500 for their CO₂ emissions, which will be used to plant rainforest trees within the agroforestry schemes of the association.

The *ervaUna* consultants Barbara Suter and Richard Bolli presented a slide show on the *ervaUna* project, both in Zürich (to friends and donors) and in Fulda, Germany (at the Benedictine nunnery, where they stayed a month to learn about the famous herbal preparation “Humofix”, which furthers the composting process, soil and plant health; see www.abtei-fulda.de).

9 Financial Report

The funds raised for the *ervaUna* project phase 1 (USD 235,000) are in part administered by the Swiss NGO Vereinigung *pro mata atlântica* or retained by donors until the official start of the project. Private donations raised by *pro mata atlântica* made it possible to continue the precursor project. Main expenditure was the salary of the technical manager. Within the 4th quarter of this year, the donation of the village of Kehrsiten (4000 R\$) will be spent for smallholders’ subprojects (see chapter 6 of this report).

Financial Report 1.4.2006 to 30.9.2006	<i>ervaUna</i> Precursor Project all figures are in Brazilian Real R\$	Amount (R\$)	2 nd quarter 1.4. to 30.6.06	3 rd quarter 1.7. to 30.9.06
Balance, 1.4.06		53,54		
Payment by R. Bolli / B. Suter, 17.5.06		2890,99		
Payment by <i>pro mata atlântica</i> , 29.6.06 (CHF 9480.- / € 6000,00)		16467,39		
Expenses:				
A Personnel (local salaries: project coordinator)		7872,00	3936,00	3936,00
B Field Operating (motorbike: gasoline, maintenance)		929,49	709,48	220,01
C Field Equipment (seeds, composting utilities etc.)		23,80	0,00	23,80
D Local Project Management (communication, admin., transportation)		532,02	92,84	439,18
E Charges for Services (translations, authentications)		193,04	19,00	174,04
F Expenditure for Special Projects		-	-	-
Total Expenses		9550,35	4757,32	4793,03
Balance, 30.9.2006		9861,57		1 R\$ = 0.47 USD / 0.59 CHF



Plate 5. Activities of the *Queimada Grande* smallholders' association at Una, April to September 2006

1.-2. Diversification in the *Queimada Grande*. Corn and pumpkin on a correctly terraced field, with compost used as fertilizer (1). Experimental kitchen garden, this plant bed descending with the slope of the hill. The salad is growing fairly well, yet the soil has leached significantly and yields were minor compared to the beds that have been prepared along the contour lines. 3.-4. Organic composting has become a regular practice in the *Queimada Grande* area. This compost was prepared by Senhor Carlos Henrique in his agroforestry system (3). The project manager, Fábio Nobre, instructing smallholders on composting(4). 5. Senhor Raimundo's chicken are fed. 6. The chicken breeding program is on due course with an estimated future production of more than 1000 eggs per week. 7. **10th anniversary of the Associação Queimada Grande e Jacão:** 20 August 2006. 8. Proud fishers after the pisciculture course, which was attended by 7 families of the *Queimada Grande*. Pictures taken by Fábio and Linde Nobre.