



Global Grant # 2012586

Habitat Puerto Rico: Sustainable-Agriculture

An Economic & Community Development Global Grant:

A Farmer, to Community, to Table - Agriculture Development & Training Project:

Recruiting, Training & Equipping: Farmers & Communities across Puerto Rico

This Project began with a Global Grant, approved in May of 2019, which by year end will support up to 50 small family farms in Puerto Rico. In February 2020, the project was recommended for a 2-3 year extension, and noted for potential to become a “Rotary Foundation Model Project for Agriculture around the world”.

The Project addresses 4 community needs: Economic, Health, Education, & Food Security.

Introduction: Following decades of losses in agriculture related jobs, as well as ongoing economic & ‘nature’ challenges and events, estimates by the Puerto Rico Department of Agriculture confirm **Less than 15% of the food consumed in the islands is currently grown in Puerto Rico by local farmers.**

Habitat PR Sustainable Agriculture creates a complete “Farm to Table” infrastructure for long term, economically sustainable, agriculture. The Project supports farmers & the communities they serve, in ways that: value & incorporate the conservation of nature in the production model, ensures sustainable practices, & provides economic self-sufficiency to farmers, their families, and surrounding communities.

The Rotary Club of San Juan, & District 7000 , PR, & The St Simons Island GA Rotary Club, joined **Para La Naturaleza (PLN)** (see info below) in developing **Habitat PR Sustainable Agriculture.**

Long term goals now involve working with 100+ farmers in 30+ communities spanning Puerto Rico. Once successfully completed, the project will ensure a permanent & thriving agro-industry in Puerto Rico.



Project Components include:

Education Providing technical support, training, & knowledge exchange opportunities to farmers including agriculture and business skills and marketing through:

- **Capacity Building** –Supportive networking and marketing partnerships by farmers & market distributors to increase business skills and sustain long term economic security.
- **Knowledge Exchange** – Farmers learn and share best (& least expensive) practices in areas including soil, water, pollinators, & air quality, plant & animal life, by mitigation of pesticides & using climate to advantage.

- **“Community Kitchens”** – Monthly workshops, open to the entire community, conducted by local leaders covering farming, marketing & cooking with fresh produce - to strengthen & foster long term sustainability.
- **“Demonstration Projects”** – The Project includes agro-ecological demonstration projects utilizing land owned & managed by PLN.

Access to Farmland: Land available within PLN agricultural areas rented at a low cost to farmers, as needed.

Access to Infrastructure: Supplying equipment: solar panels for refrigeration, refrigeration & water filtration systems, Greenhouse/Hoop Houses & farming implements, tools, & machinery, to those demonstrating need.

Targeted Reforestation through Agro-economic Planting: i.e. Shading & Tree & plant barriers to flooding.

Training & Support of Distribution Channels - Establishing the Economy of Agriculture Via:

Distribution, & Farmer’s Markets: Guaranteeing sustainability by ensuring fresh local produce from nearby farmers. **Establishment of Networking and Resource sharing/management:** Creating mentoring and peer education and creation of a Listing of Farmers & Markets, as a networking and self perpetuating training reference, & **Research:** Collection of data, for long term sustainability, via collaborations with academia.

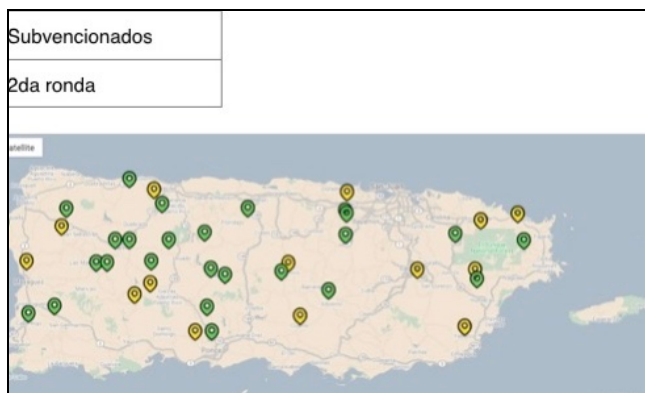
Success: Is measured in terms of Economic and Community Development impacts. The goal is to help people and communities across Puerto Rico re-establish local agriculture & continue economic recovery, by fostering long term, sustainable growth in Agriculture and Fresh Produce. It focuses on increasing the infrastructure of entrepreneurs, community leaders, local organizations, and community networks to support economic development in communities in all regions of Puerto Rico, both Urban and Rural; develops opportunities for productive work; and reduces poverty in underserved communities.

Partners:

This project is a partnership of **Rotary Clubs** in **Georgia** and **Puerto Rico** and **Para La Naturaleza (PLN)** which is a 501C3 organization and a leader in environmental conservation and historic preservation in Puerto Rico with fifty years of experience.

Budget:

The initial budget was \$289,000. The budget for a proposed ‘next phase’ multi-year Global Grant includes expanding this very successful Project “Model” into more communities, with more farmers, and may reach \$1 Million. This project may potentially become a model for Rotary GG Agriculture projects around the Globe.



Above: A Map of Puerto Rico showing the locations of Farmers, Markets, and Community Kitchens participating in the project in Year One. Noting over 3 million people live in Puerto Rico, these initial approx. 50 locations are just the beginning.



For Further Information

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