

SAFE AGRICULTURE AND FOOD EXPORT PROGRAM (SAFE)

SEPTEMBER 2015 - DECEMBER 2023



AT A GLANCE

FUNDED BY:
U.S. Department of Agriculture
(USDA)
\$21,320,398

Individuals Benefitting:
66,000

Value of Beef and Dairy Sales:
\$60 Million

Private Sector Investment:
\$5 Million

Value of Beef Exports to U.S.:
\$10 Million

PROJECT OVERVIEW

Known locally as "Fortaleciendo la cadena de valor de la granaderia Dominicana (Progana)", NCBA CLUSA will, over the course of seven years, increase the value chains in two sectors in the Dominican Republic: beef and dairy.

This project improves agricultural productivity by increasing the use of improved techniques and technologies; improving farm management; increasing the availability of inputs and use of financial services; strengthening the capacity of government institutions and key groups; and increasing the leverage of private sector resources.

Once agricultural productivity is improved, the project also aims to expand trade and export by adding value to post-production; increasing the adoptions of standards and certifications; increasing access to markets; building linkages between buyers and sellers; improving post-harvest infrastructure; increasing the use and efficiency of post-production processes; improving the policy and regulatory framework; and strengthening the capacity of

FOR DAIRY PRODUCERS IN THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC, HIGHER QUALITY MILK MEANS BETTER LIVELIHOODS

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA)-funded Food for Progress (FFPr) Safe Agriculture/Food Export Project (SAFE) improves agricultural productivity by increasing the use of improved techniques and technologies; improving farm management; increasing the availability of inputs and use of financial services; strengthening the capacity of government institutions and key groups; and increasing the leverage of private sector resources. Known locally as the Progana Project, NCBA CLUSA set out to increase the value chains in two sectors in the Dominican Republic: beef and dairy.



Workers pasteurize milk at the Pasturizadora Agampta, a local partner.



CREATING ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES



Stanley from AGASAR (left) assists a member at AGASAR's input supply store.

The Association of Cattle Ranchers of Santiago Rodríguez (AGASAR), was founded in 1977 in the municipality of San Ignacio de Sabaneta. The association works as a collection center for milk producers in Santiago Rodríguez, Dominican Republic. It has 65 members, 54 of which actively support themselves by delivering their milk production to this collection center.

After more than 40 years of service, the association has also served as a matrix and training school for the emergence of other organizations within Santiago Rodríguez, thus shortening the distances and delivery time of milk from producers.

AGASAR currently receives a daily average of 4,000 liters of milk, which are sold to the Nestlé Dominican company and the Agricultural Cooperative of Cattle Ranchers from the Northwest (COOPFEDEGANO), of which it is a member.

In August 2019, AGASAR confronted a challenge that was causing discomfort and great disillusionment among its producers: the quality of the milk produced ranged between grades B and C, and to a greater extent, grade B, instead of the highest priced grade A. This limited members' income because Nestlé and COOPFEDEGANO paid a low price for lower grade milk.

The Association sought the support of Safe Agriculture/Food Export project, known as Progana in Spanish, in the form of a 1-year matching grant for a total of US\$10,400 to reduce the AGASAR's financial risk to establish a private extension system that will improve their members' dairy quality and production, as well as demonstrate the profitability of such systems to other producer organizations.

Progana is a seven-year project funded by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) implemented by NCBA CLUSA that seeks to strengthen the quality, production, and marketing of the Dominican beef and dairy value chains. To date, Progana has supported 25 farmer organizations with similar matching grants to establish private extension systems.

With this support, AGASAR established its extension services by hiring Stanley Bernard, a young local livestock technician, with the aim of achieving a lasting and sustainable improvement in its members' milk production and quality, and the Milk Collection Center's income after Progana assistance ends in November 2020. Bernard, with the support of Progana's technical team, visits to AGASAR's members' farms to provide technical recommendations and maintain close communication with each producer. Through these site visitations, they identified the need to apply the following actions to improve milk quality:

Livestock Farmer Field School Sessions. Every two weeks, groups farmers learn through practical and shared experiences, facilitated by Stanley or a Progana technician, how milk quality is closely related to milking techniques and hygiene. This on-farm practical training program was originally created by the FAO about 30 years ago and was adapted for the Progana livestock program.

Best hygienic milking practices. Raise awareness of the need to follow a step-by-step routine during milking, to ensure hygienic and sanitary milking.

Sterilization of milking containers. The implementation of a routine review and thorough washing and sterilization of the containers used to transport milk from the farms to the collection center.

Detect the presence of mastitis. Producers were taught to detect the presence of mastitis in their cows, the main cause of lower milk quality and yield. For this, milk samples were performed with the use of the CMT (California Mastitis Test).

Identify the most vulnerable ranchers. Individual milk samples were tested at AGASAR's laboratory to identify the farmers who require the most technical support. These tests were supported by the Technical Assistance Unit of the National Council for the Regulation and Promotion of the Dairy Industry (Conaleche).

Establish harmony. Thanks to Stanley's dedication and follow-up, there is more cohesion between AGASAR's suppliers, farmers and employees.

NCBA CLUSA was founded in 1916 and is the primary voice in the United States for people who use cooperatives to build a better world. We currently work in Africa, Asia and Latin America building resilient communities, creating economic opportunities and strengthening cooperatives and producer groups.

NCBA CLUSA

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