

TRIP REPORT

DESTINATION COUNTRY	: United States of America
DATES	: November 17th-23rd.
PARTICIPANTS	: Rein van der Hoek : Martin Mena Urbina
SCHEDULE	: November 17th : Managua – Starkville, Mississippi November 20th: Mississippi – Gainesville, Florida November 23 rd : Gainesville-Managua

TRAVEL PURPOSE:

- Exchange between CIAT forages program and US Universities on forages research (as part of CRP Livestock & Fish)
- Follow up and planning activities for USAID Linkage Fund project "Sustainable grassland intensification through ecosystem services and improved grazing management strategies" implemented by CIAT, University of Florida (UF) and Mississippi State University (MSU)

PEOPLE MET

Mississippi State University

- Dr. Rocky Lemus. Plant and Soil Sciences, Mississippi State University. E-mail: RLemus@pss.msstate.edu
- Dr. Gregory A. Bohach. Vice President. Division of Agriculture, Forestry and Veterinary Medicine. MSU. E-mail: gbohach@dafvm.msstate.edu
- Dr. Jon Rezek. Interim Associate Vice President International Program & Interim Executive Director, International Institute. E-mail: jon.rezek@msstate.edu
- Dr. George Hopper. Dean and Director. College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, College of Forest Resources. Email: ghopper@cfr.msstate.edu
- Dr. Bill Herndon. Associate Vice President, Division of Agriculture, Forestry and Veterinary Medicine. Email: herndon@dafvm.msstate.edu
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- Dr. Wes Burger, Jr. Associate Director. Forest and Wildlife Research Center. Email: wburger@cfr.msstate.edu
- Dr. Reuben Moore. Associate Director. Forest and Wildlife Research Center. Email: reubenm@mafes.msstate.edu
- Dr. Mike Phillips. Department Head, Plant and Soil Sciences. Email: jmp657@msstate.edu
- Dr. David Lang. Plant and Soil Sciences, Mississippi State University. E-mail: dlang@pss.msstate.edu
- Dr. Bisoodat Macoon. Plant and Soil Sciences, Mississippi State University. E-mail: bmacoon@ra.msstate.edu

- Mr. Jesse Morrison. Plant and Soil Sciences, Mississippi State University. E-mail: jim46@pss.msstate.edu
- Mr. Jacob Mcgehee. Farmer. Mississippi Cattlemen's Association President.

University of Florida

- Dr. Yoana Newman. ycnew@ufl.edu
- Dr. Nick Place. Dean for Extension and Director. Florida Cooperative Extension Service. Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences (IFAS) nplace@ufl.edu
- Dr. Walter Bowen. Director. International Programs (IFAS Global). Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences (IFAS) wbowen@ufl.edu
- Dr. Mary Duryea. Associate Dean for Research & Associate Director Florida Agricultural Experiment Station. IFAS. mlduryea@ufl.edu
- Dr. Kenneth Quesenberry. Department Head. Agronomy Department. clover@ufl.edu
- Dr. Patricio Muñoz. Research Assistant Scientist. Agronomy Department. pmunoz@ufl.edu

REPORT SUMMARY

Mississippi State University. November 18th-19th

Experiments were visited at Mississippi Agricultural and Forestry Experiment Station (MAFE). They include different experimental plots with grasses for biofuel (*Panicum virgatum* and giant *Miscanthus*), cool season grasses (Ryegrass) and legumes (Alfalfa and White clover).

Objectives, outcomes and implementation of the US-Linkage project was discussed with Board members of the Division of Agriculture, Forestry and Veterinary Medicine. It was recommended to involve mainly graduate student to do research thesis on farms in Nicaragua. The project considers participation of Nicaraguan Universities, mainly the National Agricultural University (UNA), for this contact will be sought with the International Cooperation Department of UNA.

It is proposed that USA graduate students will be in Nicaragua during the growing season (June to October), whereas Nicaraguan students would be in US from January-May for training on research methodologies and return to Nicaragua to do their research and thesis in June-November.

A prairie research station and a private farm were visited to get an idea on research and extension work on forages.

A seminar was held in which the part of the CIAT forages program most relevant to the US-linkage project was presented (title: Innovative Pasture and Forage Management Concepts for Dual Purpose Cattle Systems, presentation available on request). Together with some bilateral meetings (e.g., with Dr. Michael Phillips, head of the Department of Plant and Soil Sciences this led to an interesting exchange between CIAT and PSS Staff and students. Specifically, MSU requested cold tolerant legume germplasm, this will be taken up with our ILRI colleagues in Addis Ababa.

University of Florida: November 21st – 22nd

A seminar was held with Agronomy Department staff and students (see above) to exchange experiences between CIAT in Central America and the Caribbean, and UF.

During a meeting with Board members of IFAS two programs were identified that can support exchange between students from Nicaraguan and USA Universities: National needs fellowship

program and USAID linkage funds. The presence of UF in Central America through an office in Honduras was also mentioned and it was recommended to establish contact.

Additionally, a UF research station, two large dairy farms and one small farm were visited, to exchange experiences on germplasm and feeding systems.

Conclusions

- MoUs between CIAT and MSU/UF have to be revised or established
- UNA (Nicaragua) will be involved in establishing contacts with MSU and UF.
- Clear definition needed of kind of students (graduate or undergraduate, from both US and Nicaraguan universities) will be involved in the project.
- Clear definition needed of the role of the US-Linkages project and the universities in funding tuition etc. of the students
- Definition of periods during which Nicaraguan students will be in US and US students in Nicaragua
- Interaction between the Nicaraguan and US students in the project will be a key component