

**Final Report**  
**Farmer to Farmer Project: Vegetable Production**

**Location: Cap Haitian, Haiti**

**Thomas D. Syverud**  
**24270 Cherryville Road**  
**Ashland, WI 54806**  
**715-682-8419 (home)**  
**715-395-1515 (office)**  
**syverud@wisc.edu**

**Dates: January 5 to January 19, 2008**

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The purpose of this assignment was to provide information on managing disease and insect problems in small-scale vegetable production. As a result of field visits and discussions with producers; the workshop outline quickly grew to include information on soil fertility, composting and pesticide usage. Three workshops were given for 82 attendees; additionally field visits were conducted with 14 farmers.

Currently there is expanding production of vegetables in the Terrier Rouge area; however the distance to market is and will become more of an issue. In the Cap Haitian area, production is growing at a smaller rate, the need is a defined market. Elsewhere farmers can improve production for the home and local market. Farmers were eager participants in the Farmer to Farmer workshops I was involved in.

I recommend continued assignments in general vegetable production, there are many more areas to service and refresher workshops would be appropriate. At some time, it would be beneficial to have a disease specialist visit the major vegetable production areas. One hurdle is that not all places produce the same vegetables at the same time.

**BACKGROUND**

The purpose of this F2F assignment was to meet with Makouti Cooperative vegetable farmers, visit their and other production fields to identify, learn about and understand the production issues facing the growers. Then to develop and deliver an educational program designed to address as many of the identified issues as feasible, based upon time and this volunteers experience and expertise. During the field visits and while travel to and from those sites, information is constantly being exchanges with growers, Makouti and F2F staff, and this volunteer. Furthermore, the objectives of this assignment were to improve production efficiency and yield, improve farmer's health and environmental practices, and to improve the farmers understanding of various production issues, such as pest control, pesticide application techniques and soil fertility. Previous volunteer projects addressed IPM techniques, weed control, composting and raising seedlings and transplanting.

The current production practices of growers include furrow irrigation from large catch basins or creeks. Crops are then transplanted on each side of the ridge top of the furrow. The crops raised include tomatoes, peppers, cabbage, broccoli, cauliflower, bok choy, eggplant, onions, squash and beans. Production fields of each crop vary from 1000 to 2000 square feet to up to an acre in size. Lesser amounts of carrots, Swiss chard, lettuce and various herbs were observed. Beans, carrots and herbs are direct seeded.

Many pest problems were observed including the diseases early and late blight on tomatoes, cercospora on beans and peppers, alternaria and head rot of cabbage and blossom end rot on tomatoes., There were reports by farmers of aster yellows on carrots, tomato root knot nematode and blossom end rot on peppers and squash. Damping off was a common disease in nursery production of seedlings. Since this is the start of the dry season and the open fields were windy, insect pressure, like whitefly, was not high. Common viruses probably include bean mosaic, cucumber mosaic, tobacco mosaic virus, and several on tomatoes such as the two mosaics mentioned spotted wilt virus. Insects included numerous aphid species, cabbage the worst seen, cabbage worms, Thrips, and leaf beetles. Cutworms are known to be a seedling problem. Tomato fruit and pin as well.

## **ACTIVITIES/RESULTS**

Monday January 7, 2008

Visited Second Harvest Farm, a large missionary run vegetable production farm, located near Port au Prince. They have a modern composting operation of sugar cane waste, and large scale production of vegetables seedlings under shade cloth structures. Traveled with Benito, to Centre Cafoj, Port au Prince, to meet with Father Joe and discuss using the facilities for the planned International Bee-keeping Conference. Father Joe and I discussed the Farmer to Farmer project and visited their vegetable field.

Tuesday January 8, 2008

Went with Benito to US AID compound to meet with the new and has the F2F program in Haiti under his responsibilities. We were there early for a scheduled meeting; however he was available.

Wednesday January 9, 2008

I met with Gerard Michel Joseph (Papy), a Makouti Cooperative employee, to discuss common pest problems, vegetables raised and the products that are available for farmers to buy and use. Later Benito and I discussed the schedule and outlined the workshop content.

Thursday January 10, 2008

Went with Anderson Pierre, a Makouti Cooperative employee, and Benito to visit two fields with Hope Seeds personnel, Jacques Armand, agronomist and Enoch Frmin, Haiti Manager Hope Seeds. Saw and discussed some problems, but for the most part the plantings looked good. We also visited two fields and the nursery of the Makouti Cooperative members in Salt River. Also in attendance were several farmers.

Friday January 11, 2008

Traveled to Terrier Rouge with Benito, Gerard Michel Joseph and Anderson Pierre of Makouti. Stopped at the Centre D'Agriculture St. Barnabas, toured the facilities. This once was an active agricultural school; the hope is for it to return to that status. Meet and spent the day with David Peirre and Cheramy Vileert; Cooperative of Producers of Terrier Rouge (farmers), visited several larger production areas. We spent several hours in the field with an additional six farmers. There are 15 -17 Makouti Cooperative members/producers in the Terrier Rouge area.

Saturday January 14, 2008

Developed a power point presentation with the following topics to be covered; What Causes Diseases, Three Disease Organisms, Common Pest Problems, Cultural Practices, Using Chemicals and Composting and Soil Fertility

Sunday January 13, 2008

Met with Benito and Gerard Michel Joseph (Makouti), and Accene Augustin and Philippe Charitable (farmers) about the presentations. Make copy for Benito to translate and make copies.

Tuesday January 15, 2008

We traveled to Terrier Rouge for day-long workshop. 30 registered at the start, 1 female. Workshop lasted four hours and probably finished with 70 in attendance, including school children. Handed out the power point presentation and presented information according to the following outline. There are 15-17 producers in Makouti in the Terrier Rouge area.

Wednesday January 16, 2008

We traveled to Salt River area, to meet with a small group of farmers and University Roihenry Christof and the Cristian University of North agricultural students in the field to teach about soil fertility, plant nutrition and diseases, at a higher level. The students, of course, had a higher level technical background. There were 10 students and 4 farmers for this 5 hour workshop. All received copies of the prepared power point presentation.

Thursday January 17, 2008

We traveled to Plaisance for a workshop, presented to 28 people, 12 women and 16 men. These were vegetable producers and members of four cooperatives, including Makouti members. All received copies of the prepared power point presentation.

### **SUMMARY ACTIVITIES/RESULTS:**

During this assignment, I worked primarily with the Makouti Cooperative; however vegetable producer members of other Cooperatives, and farmers in general attended the workshops. There are 4 or 5 other cooperatives in the Cap Haitian area besides Makouti. There are approximately 25 producer members of Makouti in the Cap Haitian area. Most of these are low income small-scale producers, with the significant obstacle of distance and cost of delivery to the markets.

## **SERVICE/ASSISTANCE:**

Three workshops were held with a total of 82 in attendance, 13 women and 69 men. Attendance at the three sites was; Terrier Rouge (38 males, 1 female), Salt River (14 males) and Plaisance (16 males, 12 females). In addition, individual time was spent in the field with 12 farm cooperative members. We also meet and visited vegetable production fields with two employees of Hope Seed. Most of the workshop time was spent on understanding soil fertility and composting, disease identification, pest control and cultural practices. In the field, pest identification and control was the prime objective.

Attached, in English, is the PowerPoint presentation developed. The presentation was translated into French and distributed at the workshops.

## **OBSERVATIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS:**

The farming community that I worked with was very interested in obtaining more information about producing vegetables. There were times when some farmers really understood the material and grasped concepts that will help them in the future. The material covered moved the project one step forward, however more needs to be done. We completed our designed presentation at Terrier Rouge, however at Salt River and Plaisance, the program was not completed. I think the educational level of the audience had a bearing on that. In addition, there were many questions raised at Plaisance out of the scope of this project. Three were of real concern to the growers living at this higher elevation; A disease/root insect complex, which caused total plant collapse just prior to harvest time, A coffee bean weevil?, which lower the price received for coffee, and an ant infestation (Argentinean ant?) especially bad during rainy weather. These ants will attack vegetation, animals and people.

In the transplant beds I observed plants already affected by leaf fungal diseases. This was probably due to a combination of factors; wet weather, overhead watering, over-crowding and being grown in the shade. Shade is the obvious choice to minimize the effects of the hot dry sun. Growing under shade cloth helps, but introduced other management needs. A nut-sedge (yellow?), field infestation was apparent at the Salt River area fields.

In the future, I might recommend a different approach, a series of workshops. 1). Workshops with a smaller audience in more communities, because travel is sometimes difficult for people. 2). Shorter workshops covering some material one week and additional material the next. A volunteer with experience and a general background should be able to do this easily.

Visits at Salt River and Hope Seed, Cap Haitian confirmed that previous volunteer work done on starting plants for transplanting was being successfully implemented.

## **CONTACT INFORMATION:**

Makouti employees:

Gerard Michel Joseph (Papy), [jo06micheal@yahoo.fr](mailto:jo06micheal@yahoo.fr) , 509-732-2476

Anderson Pierre; [pierreanderson13@yahoo.com](mailto:pierreanderson13@yahoo.com) , 509-492-7853

Terrier Rouge area farmers:

David Peirre and Cheramy Vileert, Cooperative of Producers of Terrier Rouge

Grand River area farmers:

Accene Augustin and Philippe Charitable; leaders and potential mayors

Salt River area farmers:

Herve Alcinor, producer and Board of Directors

Fred Themidor, Executive Director of Makouti

Hope Seeds, [www.HopeSeeds.org](http://www.HopeSeeds.org) :

Jacqueis Armand, agronomist Cap Haitian

Enoch Frmin, Haiti Manager, 011-509-445-0984, [enoch1025@hotmail.com](mailto:enoch1025@hotmail.com)

## **FOLLOW-UP RECOMMENDATIONS:**

There is still need for many volunteers in the Vegetable Production area. When I made my presentation, it was obvious that the producers wanted this information and there are many more communities on the north side that would benefit from similar work. Similar Work could be done on the south side after a different time of year. More should be done on proper pesticide use and applications techniques.

The Rabbit Project is growing, at almost every stop; people were interested in getting started. Because this project has the potential to keep building rapidly, general rabbit production information is still needed and recommended.

The Makouti Cooperative needs to have a complete Business Plan, written in English. This is needed to apply for a loan effectively. They need a marketing strategy development plan. The information they have is a market study, about the product, they have done some label work and packaging work. They also have who they are; what they want to do and what they want to achieve in a brochure form, but it may need improvement, depending upon the intended audience. When they go for a loan, they also want to know what to ask for.

While at the Hotel Mont Joli, on a Sunday, there was a youth meeting held where participants preformed "arts" activities. This was organized by someone, just to give the youth an alternative activity. It seems to me that there is a need for an investigation of the potential for a larger Youth Development project, primarily in the city area.

## **FINAL COMMENTS:**

I stayed at the hotel Mont Joli and would recommend it, although I didn't stay at the hotel Roi Christophe. The Christophe is located downtown for convenience if the volunteer is meeting with someone. The Mont Joli is located up the hill, but is quieter, especially on the weekends. The cost difference to a Haitian traveling to Mont Joli can be as much as 100 Gourde, almost \$3.00. I didn't have any problems with food or water at the hotels or when I ate in the field. Most expenses were easily handled by credit card and US dollars are taken most places easily.

Haiti is obviously a poor country with major issues of unemployment, pollution and trash. The people I met were friendly and hard working. At no time did I feel disrespected or uncomfortable. I found the experience rewarding and challenging. Distance to travel to meetings over rough roads, time taken to translate and the range and depth of production issues facing the Haitian farmer are challenges to a volunteer. The lack of government support and of agricultural extension type education information available to the farm community are also major obstacles for the farmer. I think the Partners of the Americas Farmer to Farmer program in Washington and Haiti is run efficiently and effectively, and is making step-by-step progress in Haiti. I would be interested, in returning to the Cap Haitian area, on a future assignment.

Benito Jasmin should receive a copy of this report; he can then distribute it or share relevant information with Makouti employees, producers and other farmers, as he views appropriate.

**I am willing to be contacted by future volunteers for more information.**