



INSIDE: Focus On Brazil

www.shareagfoundation.org

## COFFEE PRODUCTION GOES ORGANIC



### LEFT

Mariano (centre) gives farmers a tour of his organic coffee farm at SHARE's Organic Growers' Conference. Many participants travelled over 25 hours by bus to learn how to apply the principles of organic farming.

### ABOVE

Antonio, (right) along with 130 other attendees participated in the 8th annual SHARE Organic Growers' Conference in Brazil. The conference was conceived by Bob Thomas (left), SHARE's South American project manager.

### BY LAURIE WEBER

Organically certified coffee presents new opportunities for small farmers in Bahia State, Brazil. SHARE helps many coffee farmers to achieve organic certification for coffee by providing training and on-farm consultation support. Organic production involves three years of not using pesticides or synthetic fertilizers plus other practices outlined by the certification board. After this three year period, the crop can be

officially certified organic. Each year an inspector visits the farm prior to harvest to collect and analyse soil and crop samples.

Organic coffee fetches double the price of non-organic. Prices for organic produce are more stable from year to year and the cost of production is about 30% less since no pesticides are purchased. This is balanced, however, with reduced yields.

SHARE technicians facilitate discussions with farmers in neighbouring communities who hope to improve their

bargaining power in marketing produce.

The reasons for growing organic are not purely economic. Mariano, a third generation coffee producer understands the importance of nature: "In the beginning, my reason to start organic production was because of the market, but my mind has been changed over the past couple years as I've seen the benefits to the land and environment. I'm pleased that I am doing something good for the environment".

# SHARE BITES

## **HELPING OVER 80 TEENS GO TO HIGH SCHOOL IN BELIZE**

With ongoing strong support to the scholarship program and generous donations at the annual corn roast fund raiser at the Harmer farm near Burlington in September, SHARE has been able to add 4 high school scholarships in Belize, 2 in the indigenous Mayan area. Going to high school would not be possible for these young people without SHARE paying school fees.

## **“GERMINAR COURSES” GERMINATE IN BRAZIL**

Ricardo Javier, SHARE’s Brazilian co-ordinator, adapted the Germinar (meaning to germinate) courses for training groups of farmers that receive land through the Brazil Land Reform program. These popular courses, funded by SHARE, involve topics such as leadership, setting and achieving objectives, working cooperatively together, money management and conflict resolution.

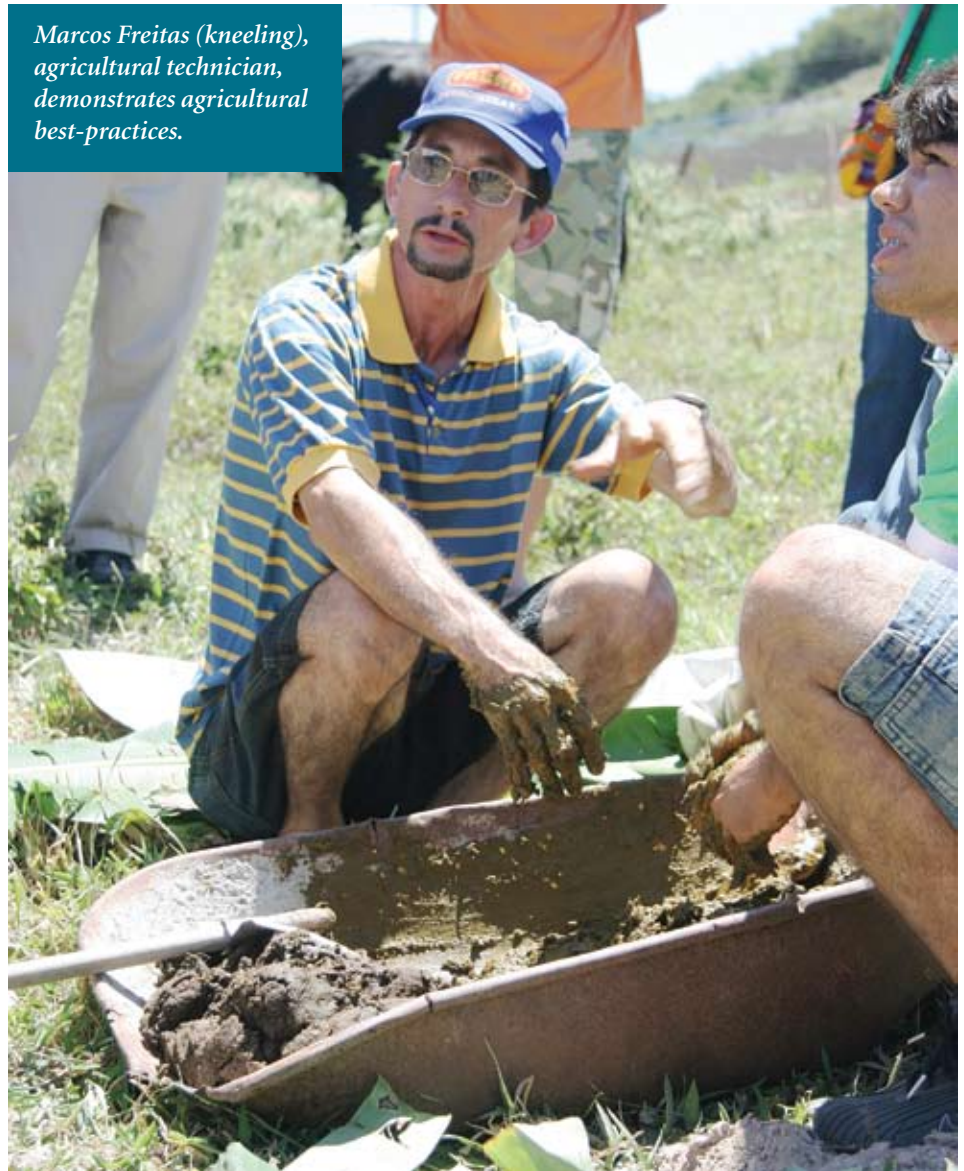
## **A WISH LIST FOR BRAZIL**

A model research and training facility, where SHARE’s ‘ag tech’ Fabiano works, received funding for a wagon, a small planter, a water cistern and other inputs. In another area funds were provided for 100 of those “antique-style” hand seed planters (similar to what our ancestors used) to enable small farmers to double acreage planted by hand in a day.

## **“TEACHER AT HOME” PROJECT IN HONDURAS**

A rural education program that included literacy, business training and health knowledge has recently been completed in Honduras with SHARE’s help. Texts and supplies were funded for youth who are too remote to attend high schools. Information was received via radio tutorials in this “Teacher at Home” project.

*Marcos Freitas (kneeling), agricultural technician, demonstrates agricultural best-practices.*



## **The Three Keys to SHARE’s Success**

**BY STEPHEN HOOD**

I am convinced that SHARE’s projects are successful for three reasons. These became obvious to me during my recent monitoring trip to Brazil.

SHARE’s projects are integrated. SHARE is flexible. SHARE listens.

First, SHARE has an integrated approach to projects. SHARE often funds projects in communities where SHARE also sponsors agricultural technicians, first building on small successes and then encouraging larger projects. The agriculture technicians keep projects moving along smoothly by providing expert agricultural and business advice. This makes a big difference in isolated rural communities.

Second, SHARE is flexible enough to accommodate changing needs. In one village SHARE approved funds for a milk cooler. When a government grant provided funds for the milk cooler, SHARE reallocated the money to materials for a building to house the cooler.

Third, SHARE listens. SHARE asks groups what they need or want. SHARE consults. People feel ownership in a project when it is their idea. I saw firsthand the problems that happen when groups are not consulted. In one village, a mesh greenhouse, constructed by a NGO to grow peppers for export, sat empty because no one thought of the logistics of transporting the peppers to market. SHARE listens and asks questions to ensure plans make sense, and then facilitates and monitors to ensure success.

I have seen firsthand why SHARE’s projects are successful: integrated projects, flexibility, and a consultative approach.

## SHARE'S AGRICULTURAL TECHNICIANS ENSURE SUSTAINABILITY FOR BRAZILIAN FARMERS

SHARE funds four agricultural technicians in three states of Brazil to perform an agriculture extension role badly needed in remote rural areas to assist with the nutrition and health problems of livestock (usually goats and sheep), cropping advice to overcome drought, fertilization, storage and marketing. Because many campesinos are illiterate, these 'ag techs' assist in completing government paperwork for grants and other programs.

### SHARE INTERVIEW WITH YOUNG BRAZILIAN FARMER

## Ronivon

**Q: How has SHARE assisted you to become a better farmer?**

**Ronivon:** Over the past two years, SHARE's agriculture technicians have been a great resource to my father and me. I took a course on sheep production and learned new methods at the course. For example, I learned that many native plants such as sisal silage can be used for feed. The agriculture technicians continue to be a resource, and quite often we discuss new ways to increase production. We've also worked on becoming organic using their expertise.

Now that we have more experience and are more successful, we can live off farm income. Until recently, my father had to work off the farm; this is the situation for many people in my community.

**Q: If you weren't farming, what are your other options?**

**Ronivon:** Many of my friends have gone to other states to harvest sugar cane. The money isn't good and it's far from home. Other friends work for the big farms. However, I know of five young farmers that are staying here and farming themselves, I hope because of my example.

**Q: What is your biggest challenge?**

**Ronivon:** Marketing. I sell to a wholesaler/broker nearby but I don't have many options since there is only one wholesaler.

**Q: What are your plans for the future?**

**Ronivon:** I plan to continue to increase production by buying more sheep. We calculate our land can hold 100 sheep so we will work towards that.



*Ronivon, a 19 year old organic farmer gave SHARE visitor, Laurie Weber, a positive testimonial about the value of SHARE's agricultural technicians' work on the recent SHARE monitoring trip. Ronivon recently attended the SHARE's Organic Growers' Conference where he was exposed to many new ideas and farming practices by SHARE's 'ag techs'. Ronivon farms sheep, bananas, various vegetables, with his father.*

### BUILDING A BETTER FUTURE FOR RURAL YOUTH IN GUATEMALA

SHARE collaborated with Horizons of Friendship to provide funds for remote schools in Mayan communities in rural Guatemala. Quality of education and health were improved and community leadership fostered. Our SHARE funds were matched three to one on this project by CIDA funding.

### AGRISKILLS PAIRS WITH SHARE

Upgrades to a building housing an oil extraction machine with funds from AGRISKILLS (supported by the Ontario Federation of Agriculture) and SHARE will help bring cash to the research facility and to area farmers. The sunflower or soybean oil produced will be bought by the government's No Hunger program.

### A GIFT OF HOPE - REBUILDING ON NEW LAND

After months of living 'hand to mouth' in a compound, 130 Salvadorian families have gone from despair to rejoicing with SHARE's help. These families lost everything in the Santa Ana volcanic eruption and Hurricane Stan in October 2005. SHARE, our partner in El Salvador, ANTA, and other sponsors are facilitating the creation of a brand new community. The displaced families are unable to rebuild their lives on the volcanic rubble but will build Comunidad Fundacion SHARE in a new location with sustainable, productive enterprises: a bakery, a day care centre, and a sewing centre.

### A "HAND UP" TO A JOB, A BETTER LIFE AND FOOD FOR FAMILIES IN EL SALVADOR

Teachers, agriculture technicians and supplies have been funded by SHARE in two large literacy and agricultural training projects in remote areas of El Salvador for 800 campesinos. The focus is on ecological farming, diversification of rural family micro businesses as well as raising education levels in economically depressed areas.

## LET SHARE HELP WITH YOUR GIFT GIVING

For the people on your gift giving list who already have everything, consider buying a gift from SHARE's list. Your gift be a 'Hand Up' to someone who has very little, multiply many times over with SHARE's 'Pass on Principle' and help needy families become self sufficient. SHARE will send out a card if you give us the information needed.

Contact us: **1.888.337.4273** or **info@shareagfoundation.org**

> A GOAT	\$150
> SET UP FOR A SMALL ENTERPRISE WITH HENS OR RABBITS	\$150
> INPUTS FOR A FRUIT AND VEGETABLE GARDEN FOR	\$150
> HIGH SCHOOL TUITION FEES	\$300
> ORGANIC TRAINING COURSES BY A SHARE 'AG TECH'	\$150
> A COW FOR IMPROVED FAMILY NUTRITION AND INCOME	\$700
> ADULT LITERACY CLASSES	\$100
> A SMOKE FREE ENVIRONMENTALLY FRIENDLY STOVE	\$100

**RIGHT** Gifts from generous donors help subsistence farmers feed their families.



## UP FOR THE CHALLENGE

SHARE supporters have held garage sales, dinners, concerts, open houses, plant sales and more to meet the challenge by Honorary Patron Mark Cullen to raise additional money this year to support our projects. Oliver and Lacey, SHARE's youngest supporters, worked in their parents' garden centre to earn money to donate to SHARE.

Can you help us meet the challenge to raise an additional \$50,000 this year? Mark Cullen continues to donate one dollar from the sale of each copy of his new book *A Sandbox of a Different Kind*. Thanks Mark.

*SHARE's youngest supporters, Oliver and Lacey presented chair of SHARE's board, John Webster, with a cheque to help pay for a young man's agricultural education in Brazil and for goats.*

### **NOTE CHANGE OF ADDRESS**

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**SHARE News is published twice a year**

**NOTIFICATION OF BYLAW CHANGE:** The Board of Directors recommends the following bylaw change. Bylaw # 8 from - The head office of the corporation shall be located at the city of Brampton, in the Regional Municipality of Peel and Province of Ontario, at the place therein where the business of the corporation may from time to time be carried on. To read - The head office of the corporation shall be located in the town of Caledon, in the Regional Municipality of Peel and Province of Ontario, at the place therein where the business of the corporation may be carried on.



## S.H.A.R.E. AGRICULTURE FOUNDATION COMING EVENTS

### **Sat. Nov. 3 – SHARE Annual Dinner Dance**

Speranza Banquet Hall, 510 A Deerpark Dr., Brampton. ON.  
Tel 905-793-3458 • Doors open – 6:15 pm • Dinner – 7:15 pm  
Call 905-838-0897 for details and tickets.

### **Fri. Nov. 9 – Scholarship Benefit Concert**

Canadian Male Orpheus Choir, St. Luke's Anglican Church,  
1382 Ontario St., Burlington, Call 905-335-3730 or see web site.

### **Sat. Jan. 19, 2008 @ 1:15 pm – SHARE Annual General Meeting**

Mayfield United Church, 12496 Dixie Road, north of Mayfield Road

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT A DIRECTOR OR CHECK THE WEBSITE  
**WWW.SHAREAGFOUNDATION.ORG**