Working with the Foods Resource Bank, Central New York dairy farmers have formed the New York Growing Project to raise funds to help poor families in Guatemala grow their own food and diversity their diets. Funds are used by non-profit organizations to introduce new crops and agricultural techniques such as greenhouse vegetable production and terracing for soil conservation.

Several years ago, the farmers, working with local churches, raised funds through an “Adopt a Cow” project. The funds raised helped re-establish cattle in Mozambique in eastern Africa. After taking a break, several members realized that they wanted to continue to share their resources and choose programs benefiting the families of their Guatemalan employees.

**What is the Foods Resource Bank?**

Responding to world hunger, Foods Resource Bank (FRB) provides education and support to small farmers around the world. Overseen by Christian organizations, FRB teaches new farming techniques and forms marketing cooperatives.

After United State partners raise support funds, FRB distributes the monies to programs and oversees their progress towards food growing goals. With this partnership, FRB operates very cost effectively. Last year FRB reached 500,000 people.

Information about fundraising projects and recipient programs is shared through their website **[www.foodsresourcebank.org](http://www.foodsresourcebank.org)**.

**What is a Growing Project?**

Growing Projects are the local fund raising partners for Foods Resource Bank Programs in developing countries. Community members come together to share their gifts, time, resources and expertise in unique ways. Started in the Midwest, many projects grow corn or soybeans, designating the (cont’ on page 2)
(cont’ from page 2) proceeds for FRB food-growing programs. Others have planted vegetables gardens, shared profits from a wind farm, and baked pies for community auctions.

In its first year the New York Growing Project steering committee raised funds through an auction and direct donations from farmers and agribusinesses. As they move into their second year, they are looking for cooperators to grow and acre or two of a crop, raise calves for beef, or any other innovative project that can be turned into funds to support the programs in Guatemala. The projects usually work best with church or community partners who help organized awareness, raise matching funds, and host harvest celebrations for the community to learn more about local agriculture and life in Guatemala.

How Do I Get Involved? Contact Kathy Barrett, kfb3@cornell.edu, 607-229-4357 or Diane Conneman, dyk2@cornell.edu, 607-257-1470 for more information on how to organize a project OR Write a check to the NYS FFA LTF, New York Growing Project, 774 Fire Lane 7, King Ferry, NY 13081.

Highlights from the 2014 Becker Forum

The 2014 Becker Forum was held on January 20th, 2014 at the Doubletree Hotel in East Syracuse, NY. In attendance were many people representing the fruit and vegetable industries, with a smaller portion representing the dairy industry. A wide variety of speakers discussed different aspects of how current immigration policy affects agriculture every day, and a group of producers spoke in a panel discussion to share some of their experiences.

Rachel Steinhardt, Deputy Director of Welcoming America, gave a very insightful presentation on welcoming the immigrants who live in our communities. She started out by using an analogy that was more than fitting for the audience: seed and soil. Traditionally, the focus on helping immigrants is the seed: providing job opportunities, English classes, etc. to new immigrants. The soil, or the community in which the immigrant will grow, is often ignored. Welcoming America is an organization that focuses on helping natives in communities where new immigrants live to meet and learn to appreciate their new neighbors.

Steinhardt referenced the Social Contact Theory, which states that regular contact decreases anxieties and leads to trust. Basically, the more you can get people together, the more comfortable they will become with one another. She offered examples of activities that could help our communities to accept Hispanic immigrants, such as potlucks, volunteer projects, arts, sports tournaments and community gardens. Basically,
Many dairy farms have been placing an emphasis on employee safety over the past few months. While safety always has been and always will be important on dairies, the recent increase in trainings probably has something to do with the Occupational Health and Safety Administration’s (OSHA) announcement last fall of a Local Emphasis Program (LEP) in New York state.

Beginning in the summer of 2014, OSHA officials will be conducting surprise inspections on dairy farms. In the past these inspections were only conducted on a programmed basis, due to complaints or referrals, or when there was a catastrophe, fatal accident or imminent danger on the farm. It’s important to note that only farms with more than 10 total employees (not including immediate family members), and/or those that provide housing on the farm to temporary labor can be subject to an LEP inspection. If a farm that is inspected is not up to OSHA standards, heavy fines are possible.

What can you as an employee do to help your farm be OSHA compliant?

1. Attend all farm safety trainings, pay attention, and put everything you learn into practice.
2. Report any unsafe employee behavior to your supervisors.
3. Report any unsafe working conditions to your supervisors. (Broken or missing PTO shields, exposed electrical wiring, uncovered electrical switch boxes, broken ladders, unlabeled chemicals, etc.)
4. If you are given any paperwork from people that deliver chemicals to the farm, make sure to hand them in to your supervisor. Safety Data Sheets must be kept on record.
5. Immediately contact a supervisor or farm owner if an unknown person shows up at the farm.

Seguridad en la Finca para los Empleados

Muchas fincas lecheras han puesto un énfasis en la seguridad de los empleados en los últimos meses. Mientras la seguridad siempre ha sido y siempre va a ser de mucha importancia en las lecherías, el subido reciente de los entrenamientos probablemente tiene algo que ver con el anuncio en el otoño del año pasado de la Administración de Seguridad y Salud Ocupacional (la OSHA por sus siglas en inglés) sobre el Programa de Énfasis Local (LEP) en el estado de Nueva York.

Empezando en el verano de 2014, oficiales de la OSHA empezarán a realizar inspecciones sorpresas en fincas lecheras. En el pasado solamente realizaron estas inspecciones en una manera programada, a causa de quejas o referencias, o cuan-do había una catástrofe, accidente fatal o peligro inminente en la finca. Es importante saber que solamente las fincas con más que 10 empleados en total, excluyendo los miembros de la familia inmediata, y/o los que proveen casa en la finca para labor temporal pueden ser sometidas a una inspección LEP. Al inspector una finca que no cumple con los requisitos de la OSHA, multas pesadas podrían ser posibles.

¿Qué puede hacer Usted como empleado para ayudar a su finca cumplir con los requisitos de la OSHA?

1. Asistir a todos los entrenamientos de seguridad en la finca, prestar atención y poner en practica todo lo que aprende.
2. Reportar cualquier conducta peligrosa por parte de los empleados a su supervisor.
3. Reportar cualquier condición peligrosa en el lugar del trabajo a su supervisor. (Protectoras del eje de transmisión rotas o perdidas, cable eléctrica expuesto, cajas de interruptores eléctricas expuestas, escaleras rotas, químicos sin etiqueta, etc.)
4. Si la gente que entregan los químicos a la finca le dan papelera, hay que entregarla al supervisor. Hay que guardar las hojas de datos de seguridad (MSDS o SDS).
5. Contactar inmediatamente al supervisor o el dueño si llega un desconocido a la finca.
For most Americans, Cinco de Mayo is just an excuse to eat delicious Mexican food. Ever wondered what it's all about?

Mexico was greatly weakened by the Mexican-American War (1846-48), as well as the Mexican Civil War (’58) and the Reform Wars (’60). In 1861 the Mexican president issued a moratorium to suspend payment of all debts to foreign countries for two years. The French invaded shortly thereafter, forcing the Mexican army to retreat. Yet only a few months later, on May 5, 1862, the Mexicans crushed the strong French army, which hadn’t been defeated for nearly 50 years and had twice the troops.

Unfortunately, only a year later the Mexican army fell to the French who installed an emperor and ruled Mexico for three years. They retreated when the U.S. came to the aid of Mexico.

Today, Cinco de Mayo is more of a celebration of Mexican culture and heritage than of the victory over the French. It’s a national holiday in Mexico, but excitement over Independence Day (September 16th) surpasses celebrations on May 5th. In the U.S. some cities with large Mexican American populations celebrate with parades and concerts. For the rest of us, it’s an opportunity to learn a little more about Mexican culture.

Ask your employees how they celebrate Cinco de Mayo in Mexico, what their favorite Mexican dish is, or what type of Mexican music they like.

Click here for a 4 minute video by the History Channel.