



# FEED THE FUTURE

The U.S. Government's Global Hunger & Food Security Initiative



## Small-scale community seed production to enhance the sustainability of bean improved variety dissemination: Evidence from the Western Highlands of Guatemala

Luis Flores, Salvador Castellanos, Carolina Molina, Celina Wille, Sharon Hoerr, Widders Irving



Feed the Future Innovation  
Lab for Collaborative  
Research on Grain Legumes



# The Recurring Debate

Community-based seed production characterized by:

- Threats to sustainability
  - Cost
  - Logistics
  - Access to registered seed
- Limited farmer's willingness/capacity to pay
- Most target farmers being geographically dispersed

# Discussion from previous meetings

- Improved variety production and dissemination to farmers in poverty-stricken regions highly dependent on government/development projects giving away “free seed”



# Community Seed Depots

- Recent experience in the Guatemalan highlands
- 95 established, 81 continuing
- Generating new knowledge on addressing threats to sustainability (cost, logistics, farmers seed purchasing habits, etc.)

# What are Community Seed Depots?

- Identification of farmers was preceded by massive seed dissemination
- Participating farmer carefully selected
  - Proven past experience with bean production
  - Must have land
  - Must have irrigation
  - Must know how to read and write
  - Must go through seed production training
    - Production, harvest, post-harvest
    - Environmental protection







# Results from 95 CSDs

Department	Area (m2) ++	Production Kg/Ha	Price of Grain'/Lb	Price of Seed/lb (US\$)	% Price of seed above Grain Price
San Marcos	352.2	1982	0.57	1.08	89
Huehuetenango	492.4	2019	0.56	0.74	32
Quiche	569.1	1486	0.56	0.66	17
Quetzaltenango	545.0	1749		-	
Totonicapan	448.9	2247	0.60	0.99	65
PROMEDIOS	481.5	1897	0.57	0.87	51

# Some burning questions...

- Is this sustainable?
- Is it lucrative for the producer?
- Are farmers truly differentiating seed from grain?
- Is all the seed being sold?
- Will this community market mature too quickly?



# Some burning questions (continued)

- Will this always depend from a donor-project like MASFRIJOL?
- Can seed markets be expanded beyond the community?
- How expensive is each CSD to a project?
- Can this be replicable elsewhere?
- What's the next step?

# Thanks!

