



Annual Country Report 2009: Brazil

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Current Status:

In this trimester we have:

- Distributed 250,000 seeds
- Started nurseries in 14 communities which contain 200,000 seedlings
- Transplanted or direct seeded 2,400 trees

Currently we are preparing for the transplanting season. The trees from last year are growing rapidly now that Brazil has received consistent rain. Luiza, Azerildo, and Fernanda say their trees have doubled in height in the past six months. It is an exciting time in Brazil with our largest transplanting season to date beginning this month. Fernanda will be visiting sites when weather permits to check on the progress of transplanting. We will use the down time in February to develop a training video to accompany the agroforestry training program. We will also develop a strategy for evaluating our project's impacts at the end of 2010 when people's trees are approximately one year old.

Overview:

Our program has expanded rapidly this year. We have distributed over 4 times the number of seeds compared to 2008 and will have approximately 30 times the number of trees transplanted in

February 2010. The new scale of our projects in Brazil has added to the difficulty of monitoring and evaluating our success. We have developed a monthly and triannual reporting system, and have attempted to gather GPS points and pictures for each of our projects. This data provides a basis for further monitoring.

Our schedule for this year changed from last year. We started nurseries in September and October based on the delay in the start of the rainy season in 2008. In 2008, we had seedlings that were too large for transplanting and had die-offs due to erratic rain at the beginning of the rainy season. This year the rain came early, which caused problems with erosion and with getting to our project sites. Hopefully the rain continues through the regular rainy season and we will have high survival rates. The trees from last year are soaking up all this rain and have bounced back after slow growth in their first six months.

The demonstration plot at the Peixoto farm has been essential in displaying the possibilities for agroforestry in Brazil. People are excited about starting their own circular gardens (a small version of forest gardens) and about opportunities to practice what they have learned.

Last year we were not able to start the Bee Association of Marília project because of seed distribution problems.

This year, however, we started this project, as well as others with the settlement movements of São Paulo and Paraná. We have also developed two more demonstration plots and will work in a *favela* (slum) in Marília to help with nutrition issues.

In the North we have the opportunity to start projects with Reaching Hearts International and the Adventist Development and Relief Agency. They are working with communities in the northeast to improve food production and restore forests that have been decimated by deforestation and overgrazing. Early in 2010 we will deliver seeds to start a live fence that will surround the whole property. After completion, we will be able to work on agroforestry systems within the property.

Overall it has been a very successful year. You can see from the numbers below how the program has grown.

| Trimester | No. of seeds distributed | No. of seedlings in nurseries | No. of seedlings from outplanting and direct seeding |
|------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------|--|
| First | 3,000 | 0 | 4,600 |
| Second | 4,000 | 4,900 | 800 |
| Third | 250,000 | 200,000 | 2,400 |
| To date in 2009* | 257,000 | 204,900 | 7,800 |

* Nursery season begins in September/October and transplanting season begins in January

Other Statistics for the Brazil Program:

Seedlings currently in nurseries: 200,000

Trainings held: 22

People trained: 175

Agroforestry Training Program graduates: 60

Communities involved: 14

Families involved: 96

People participating: 363

Nurseries started: 36

Challenges:

Rain:

Rain came early this year, unlike last year when Brazil had no rain. Rain has washed out roads and made it very difficult to reach sites.

Seeds:

We started working with species with which we had no experience. We worked with some local technicians to choose the species but they have not performed as well as we had hoped. We will probably not work with *Citharexylum micranthum* and *Croton urucurana* in 2010. Due to this setback we did not have many tall species for the middle of people's windbreaks. For 2009 we will rely on *leucaena* to fill the role. I am currently sending *Albizia lebeck* in small batches to Fernanda so we can have a stock by the time nursery season starts again. *A. lebeck* has grown well in Brazil, but we cannot find the seeds in the country. We will also start looking for another species that we can use in the middle of windbreaks.

Project setbacks:

The project with the Paraná settlement was hit by many setbacks this year. The H1N1 virus shut down the school, making it difficult to communicate with our student technicians. Then the region was hit by major storms (wind and rain). Two of the communities have been cut off because their bridges were washed out. Even if the community members continued working on the project, there is a good chance that their seeds were washed away. We will not know the result of their project until we can reach the area.

In other projects we had lower participation than we expected. In some

instances half the people who showed interest in the beginning actually followed through with projects. We are planning to branch out more in 2010 to account for low follow through. The more people we start working with, the higher the numbers we have at the end of the year even if not everyone participates.

News from the field:

Vitoria lives in the settlement in Guaranta, São Paulo State, Brazil. She produces corn, milk, and when the prices are high enough, cassava. She has endured many difficulties in establishing her farm. She spent four years camping and moving throughout the farm before she was given a title to her land. Most recently she has had setbacks due to strong winds. She had a nursery crushed by winds and has not harvested any coffee beans because the flowers are blown off the bushes before they can produce fruit. She has chosen to plant seven species of trees in a windbreak. This windbreak will not only protect her coffee flowers, it will also maintain soil moisture and will provide nutrients through the loss of leaves and small branches. She looks forward to January when she will transfer her seedlings from the nursery to the field.



Vitoria shows her moringa trees to Trees Brazil Representative Fernanda Peixoto

Elsa lives in a settlement near Guaranta, São Paulo, Brazil. The morning we visited Elsa, we found her working in her nursery. Only after talking for a while did we find out that her father passed away the day before. She decided to stick around because she knew that we planned to stop by to talk about the project. The sheer dedication of the people in Guaranta is amazing. Elsa went to Guaranta 11 years ago and squatted on the land for 6 months before the land was designated as a settlement. In that time she had to move continually. The police would arrive to get the squatters off the land and the settlers would have to grab what they could and run through the night. Somehow this was better than the low paying farmhand job she had before moving to the area. For 6 years she lived in a plastic tent waiting for the government to act. She and other residents had to buy rope to divide up the land (their way of measuring distances) and the group had to collect money to build their own dirt roads. She and the others did not start producing on the land until they had their titles in hand. This shows the importance of land tenure. They did not want to invest in the area until it was theirs. Elsa is now planting nearly 3,000 trees on her land as a windbreak to protect her crops and her home.



Elsa displays her new nursery

Project pictures:
Third Trimester



Marília Bee Association - Each of the bee association members has participated and graduated from our agroforestry training course.



Cooperativa Sul - Sr. Sebastao and his employee with seeds they received from Trees for the Future



Alvorada do Sul Settlement - Community gardens will provide seedlings for live fences, windbreaks, and for coffee shade.



Guaranta Settlement - Ursula and Pedro's nursery will provide trees for a windbreak, live fence, and fodder for their cattle.

More pictures can be found at:

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/plant-trees/sets/72157613586214961/>

Best of 2009



Peixoto Demonstration Site



Marília Bee Association - We sat with each member to discuss their needs and to determine which species and techniques they should use.



Guaranta Settlement - Vitoria's nursery will provide trees for a 300 meter windbreak. Notice how well she has protected her seedlings with bamboo.



Small Farmers Association - Paulo and Azerildo stand next to a recently transplanted line of moringa.

More pictures can be found at:

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/plant-trees/sets/72157608243462880/>