

FIRSTFRUITS NEWS

" A Quality Fruit Company Committed To Bearing Fruit That Will Last" (John 15:16)



Edgar Orozco picks Jubilee Fuji's in the 2000 Jubilee block..

2011 Harvest

Harvest began with the help of about 1,500 employees. Many of these people are year-round employees, while others come from other cities and even other states such as California, Arizona, Oregon and even as far as New Jersey.

There are many types of apples being picked. One of the first apples harvested is Gingergold followed by the Gala, Honeycrisp, Red and Golden Delicious, and Jubilee Fuji.

Although harvest was about two weeks behind schedule, the apples have been ripening at a fast pace. This requires the orchard personnel to work longer hours to get

the fruit off the trees as soon as possible to prevent over ripe fruit. Joe Shelton, Orchard Manager, comments, "I would like to thank everyone for getting the galas picked in time. There were many late days worked and we even worked on some Sunday's to stay up with Gala maturity. Everyone did it! I very much appreciate the smiles and waves I received from everyone; it helps me make it through the long harvest." During harvest, kind gestures and positive reinforcements help to make everyone's work more pleasurable.

Thank you all for your hard work and dedication this harvest season. You make everything possible.

"There were many late days and we even worked on some Sunday's to stay up with Gala maturity"

Budding Developments

Connecting Broetje Employees and Partners to the Fruits of their Labor...One Fruit at a Time.

By Suzanne Broetje, Vista Hermosa Foundation Director

We recently visited Care of Creation in Kenya where we learned about "Farming God's Way." In the midst of horrible drought and famine, farmers who are using this simple approach are growing healthy crops and finding themselves able to feed their families without dependence on foreign aid.

Care of Creation Kenya

Operating since 2003, Care of Creation Kenya (CCK) has worked to address environmental degradation, and the hunger and poverty it causes, by discipling and mobilizing the Church to glorify God in caring for creation.



Their work focuses on three central actions: developing a tree-planting culture in Kenya; harvesting rainwater; and equipping farmers to protect and improve the productivity of their lands through a biblically-based approach to conservation agriculture. Based on the central premise that God is the First Farmer, CCK seeks to build agricultural systems modeled after the beauty and diversity that we see in the Garden of Eden.

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Care of Creation Kenya Continued.....



Craig Sorley director of CCK

Craig Sorley, founding director of CCK, grew up in East Africa and witnessed first-hand the destruction of forests along the Rift Valley. He operates a training facility and demonstration farm here to teach "Farming God's Way" - a methodology now used and taught in developing countries around the world, including South Africa, Zimbabwe and Brazil.

Farming God's Way promotes low-tillage agriculture combined with heavy mulching to nurture the soil and preserve moisture. Plows, fertilizers and pesticides are replaced with piles of mulched corn stalks, weeds, and other materials to create a heavy blanket around the plants.

We visited a farmer to see the impact of such teachings. Simon lives in one of the IDP camps near Kijabe. After the post-election violence forced him and his family to flee their home in 2008, Simon settled in this camp and was given a small plot of land to farm. He recently harvested maize, using Farming God's Way methodology. Comparing his 290 maize plants to his neighbors 290 maize plants, Simon produced a yield that was

5.9 times higher. Truly micraculous! He is now growing beans the same way, using the left over corn stalks as mulch. Although the methods are simple, most farmers use conventional techniques of heavy plowing and pesticides to clear the land because that is what they know. As forests are further depleted, families are forced to burn corn stalks and cow dung for cooking fuel, further depriving the soil of nutrients. The resulting loss of moisture and soil depletion decimates productivity. In times of drought, like Kenya has experienced for the last three

years, families go hungry and become dependent on food relief.

To instill a new way of thinking into the minds of Kenyans, Craig has learned to start early. In addition to training farmers, he is working with 6 of the 13 primary schools in the district, distributing tree seedlings and preaching the importance of caring for God's creation in all its diversity.

We delivered a new batch of seedlings to Old Kijabe Primary School. Each day these students hand water the baby trees next to their school. By so doing, a new seed is planted in the hearts and minds of these children. As they care for the trees, they learn to value creation in all its diversity.

While we mourn the loss of Wangari Maathai in Kenya, we are hopeful that her legacy will live on in these children.



Plot of onions farmed "God's Way." On the right is the conventional approach. In a country struggling for adequate food and water supplies, the way seems clear.



Get To Know Your Co-Worker

Eva Madrigal

I was born in Jicalan, Michoacan Mexico. In 1958, at the age of 2 years, my parents brought me to the United States. I come from a big family I have 5 brothers and 3 sisters and my mom and dad. Four of us were born in Mexico and five in the United States. Arriving from Mexico, the first place we lived was in Chula Vista, California and that is where our lives began as immigrants. We traveled through the states of California, Arizona, Utah, Oregon and Washington following the fieldwork. In 1970 my parents settled in a small village by the name of Outlook, near Sunnyside, Washington, but we continued working in the fields.

I have worked from the age of 7 years old - working in the field until I got married in 1979. My husband and I have 3 biological children and raising



Snake River Housing Director

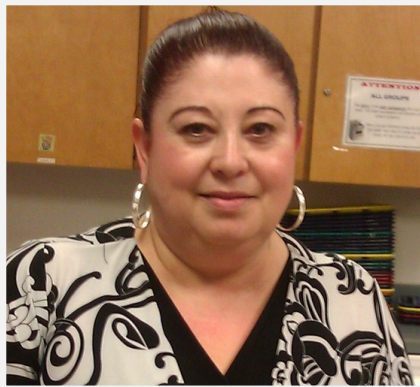
two other children. We are very proud of all our children: Thomas, Patricia, Eva and Alejandro are grown and have graduated from University, and Nathaniel is 3 years old. Even when I was married, I was working at different ranches even here at Broetje Orchards, picking cherries and apples. In 1987 I started working in the warehouse where I worked for 3 years. To help my parents I did not finish school. At the age of 12, I had to leave school to work alongside my dad in the fields. In 1990 I went to study for a year at WSU in Pullman to get my GED. Then I studied business at a school in Tri-Cities. When I graduated, I began to work in different areas of this company, until I began overseeing housing, services and other community programs offered through Snake River Housing. **Story by Eva Madrigal**

Maria De Jesus Espinoza

I am originally from Tamazula, Jalisco Mexico. I come from a family of seven; three brothers, one sister and my parents. I come from a very poor family. When I was sixteen years of age, I had to take care of the family because my mother was ill. I had to take her places and be the mother of my siblings. I had to do all of the house chores and work alongside my father. When I was eighteen years of age I met the man that is now my husband. We married when I was twenty years of age. Because we were very poor we made the hard decision to leave our families behind and start our journey to the U.S.A..

We both left Tamazula, Jalisco towards the border town of Tijuana, Mexico. We didn't pass through the desert as many other immigrants do. We tried to pass through the beaches of Tijuana through a very thin tunnel. We were in the tunnel half full of water for an hour until we were caught by immigration and sent back to Tijuana. We didn't lose hope and we tried to cross the border again the next day. This time we

jumped the fence and ran towards a nearby restaurant. Thanks to God we were blessed and succeeded in our attempt.



Vista Hermosa Elementary Lead Cook

From Tijuana, we came to the state of Washington arriving in this wonderful town of Vista Hermosa about thirty-five years ago. My husband found work immediately but I didn't. The orchard was just beginning to be planted and there was not much work for me until about two years later; when I began to work in the tree nursery, apple thinning and picking. In 1986 my husband and I became legal, thanks to President Regan. In 1987 I began to work in the warehouse. I have worked in the warehouse for seven years, at New Horizon Preschool for five years, and in 2000 I became the Vista Elementary School cook, where I am currently working.

I was blessed to have four children (one who passed away when he was three days old). We lived in the Vista Hermosa community for twenty four years and then were blessed by God again to own a home. Now I happily live with my family and my two new grandbabies. God has really blessed me. **Story By: Maria De Jesus**

“We Are Grateful For All Of Your Prayers and Support”



Jesus, Corina and their two children

Jesus and Corina Gonzalez moved to Vista Hermosa in March of 2000, newly married. They had twins, Maria and Jose in February of 2003. Every time we see Jesus, he makes the following greeting, “Ya llego el papa happy” (The happy father has arrived). He is such a proud father. The family moved to Burbank when they bought their first home in August of 2008.

This year their son Jose was diagnosed with cancer and the family had to go to Seattle for Jose’s treatments. They were gone for several months taking care of their son and his health. After Jose’s successful surgery and radiation they were sent home on September 24th. Jose needs to go to Seattle once a month for follow-ups. Jesus and Corina are back to work, and during a visit with them on Monday, they expressed their gratitude for all the prayers and donations they received while they went through this difficult time in their lives. “I would like this opportunity to thank everyone for their support. May God bless and give everyone more”, expressed Jesus Gonzalez.

Story by: Eva Madrigal



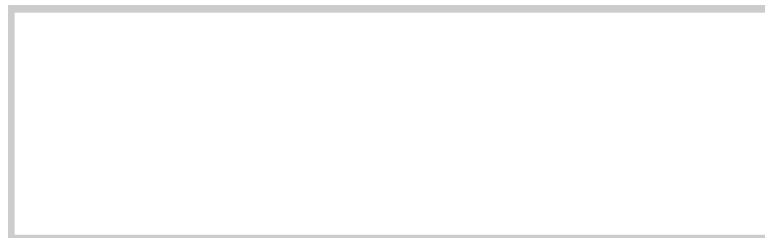
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