



Belize - A land of Plenty

Volume 1, Issue 6

November & December 2008

Special points of interest:

- Spotlight on Banana and Plantains
- Calendar of upcoming events
- Delicious recipe
- Photo-Page
- Plenty's Award winning parade float

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Enterprise Engine for Toledo update



In September the Santa Teresa Rice Hullers Group, the San Pedro Columbia Coop Pig farmers and the Fajina Maya Crafts & Food Center were approved to acquire business plans from the Enterprise Engine for Toledo.

Mr. Will Jones was hired to train Consortium staff on writing business plans in order to enable the staff members to complete the business plans. The staff who received the training consisted of Ms. Aurelia Cal (Project Coordinator), Roberto Chavarria (SHI Field Officer), and Tasha Petillo (SBRC Manager).

The group worked on the business plans for the Santa Teresa Rice Hullers Group, and the San Pedro Columbia Coop Pig farmers. While the SBRC worked on the Fajina Maya Crafts & Food plan.

Extensive research was done on all the intended businesses in order to write the best possible plans.

The business plan authors made several trips to the villages in order to meet with the groups and discuss their businesses. Research trips were made to the Mill in Big Falls and to visit Mr. Petillo (a local farmer) to gather information. For the Fajina business plan, the group members also completed surveys in order to obtain information on their potential market.



The Women of the Santa Teresa Rice Hullers Group

Each of the three groups are very motivated and willing to put in the extra effort to get the work done in order for them to produce good plans for their businesses.

Sign-Up for the Second Annual Home Garden Contest NOW!

Plenty Belize is pleased to announce the 2nd Annual Primary School Student Home Garden Contest.

The contest is open to all primary school students residing in the Toledo District.

The deadline for signing up is **December 15th**. No late entries will be accepted this year.

Last years contest was a huge success with over 100 students participating. We hope to make this years contest even better.

Plenty encourages interested students to sign up with their school for the contest.

This year we will be adding a new component to the judging, a garden logbook. Each partici-

pant should keep a log book to record their efforts, what and how much they plant, when they work and what they do!

Keep an ear out for more information.

Good luck to all the gardeners!



Growing organically is fun and so easy even children can do it!

Organic Farming

In Today's world market, you can make the biggest money from organic production. International markets are now seeking to purchase larger quantities of organic food. This means that it has a greater value and we now have a better chance to get into business.

The reason for this is because of **HEALTH** issues. Most people are now realizing how important it is to eat healthy. Our ancestors had a healthy life. Our generation is now suffering from Diabetes, Heart Disease, Cancer and other related health issues.

Organic farming promotes healthier life and a longer life.

To all farmers:

AGRICULTURE = FOOD = SURVIVAL = POPULATION EXISTENCE

WAY OF LIFE = FARMING = SURVIVAL

Our ancestors did not have a mind set to go to a farmer's depot to purchase **seeds, fertilizers, insecticide or fungicides – they produced everything they needed.** Today our mind set is the opposite. We are just looking for the fast and easy way out, but this is what is causing our health problem and is shortening our lives.

Honor our ancestors! Go Organic!

“Plans were started for this year's annual Toledo Food Fair, slated for 20 March 2009”



Mrs. Loma Rodriguez, the SFP Vice Secretary at the SFP Food Fair

School Feeding Program Update

On 22 October 2008, the first meeting of the Toledo School Feeding Program Committee was held at Claver College Extension.

Toledo District Education Officer Oscar Reyes gave the keynote speech, focusing on many of the important aspects of Garden Based Learning, including: integration with other subjects such as was done in the REAP program in the 70s and 80s; health and nutrition; and food security.

San Antonio and Pueblo Viejo asked to officially join the other 14 schools that voluntarily serve their students meals through a school feeding program.

The 30+ primary schools represented discussed putting together information to allow a grant proposal to be developed by the Rotary

Club of Punta Gorda to seek assistance with outfitting of kitchens with equipment and utensils.

Plans were started for this year's annual Toledo Food Fair, slated for 20 March 2009.

The schools are joining together to purchase rice at a discounted rate.

The schools are receiving low cost supplies directly from Food for the Poor at Price Barracks, as the system of working with QUADS out of Belize City was not efficient or effective for Toledo.

HUNGRY CHILDREN DO
NO LEARN WELL!

An election of officers was held, with the following outcome:

Chair:

Mrs. Joan Palma

Vice Chair:

Ms. Elizabeth Duncan

Secretary:

Ms. Phillippa Williams

Vice Secretary:

Mrs. Loma Rodriguez

Treasurer:

Ms. Cindy Martinez

Vice Treasurer:

Mr. Samuel Chi

Councilor:

Mr. Mariano Canelo

Ex-Officio:

Mrs. Dely Martinez, and Mr. Mark Miller

Plenty backs TCC student for TIDEs Miss Conservation Pageant

Plenty Belize is proud to announce our sponsorship of Genilee Parham as Plenty's representative in the TIDE Miss Conservation Contest. Miss Parham came by the Plenty office and prepared this statement for our newsletter.

"My name is Genilee Parham. I am fifteen years old. I am currently attending Toledo Community College. I'm honored to be from the proud class of 4 Arts. It is

my pleasure to be representing the diligent and benevolent organization of Plenty Belize.

My goal is to attend UB and graduate with my Associates Degree in Primary Education. I'm not a perfect person, but everything is worth a try. Whatever is worth doing at all, is worth doing well."

Good Luck Miss. Parham!



Miss. Genilee Parham, Plenty's entrant into TIDEs Miss Conservation Contest

Plenty Belize would like to inform you that our phone number has recently changed. Our new number is 702-2198

Calendar of Events

November

- Thursday 6th: International Project Management Day
- Saturday 8th: TOLTEX
- Friday 14th: World Diabetes Day
- Sunday 16th: Official Inauguration of Abby's House – new dormitory at Hillside Healthcare Clinic
- Wednesday 19th: Garifuna Settlement Day
- Thursday 20th: International Day for the Rights of the Child – Children's Day
- Friday 21st: Plenty Belize Annual General Meeting
- Saturday 22nd: HIV/AIDS and Domestic Violence workshop at Tumul Kin
- Tuesday 25th: International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women
- Thursday 27th: Panel Discussion on HIV/AIDS and Gender Based Violence at UB
- Saturday 29th: WIN-Belize Annual Torch Run to raise awareness of HIV/AIDS and Gender Based Violence, starts 8:00 am Central Park

December

- Monday 1st: World AIDS Day
- Wednesday 3rd: International Day of Persons with Disabilities
- Wednesday 3rd: Launching of Enterprise Engine for Toledo at Parish Hall
- Friday 5th: International Volunteer Day
- Tuesday 9th: International Anti-Corruption Day
- Wednesday 10th: International Human Rights Day
- Thursday 11th: International Mountain Day
- Friday 12th: School Closes for Christmas Holiday
- Thursday 18th: International Migrants Day
- Thursday 25th: Christmas
- Note: Plenty Belize will close from 20—28 December

January

- Friday 2nd: Plenty Belize's Gardening Skills Development Workshop (Day 1)
- Saturday 3rd: Plenty Belize's Gardening Workshop (Day 2)



Participants in the 2007 Torch Run held in PG Town

“Bananas are good sources of Vitamins A & C and Potassium. Plantains are good sources of Vitamin A and Potassium”



Banana and Plantains grow well here in Belize and are a really healthy snack

2008 Torch Run Update

Plenty Belize, an active member of Women's Issue's Network (WIN Belize), has been partaking in several activities.

One main focus this year is the Annual Torch Run that is done throughout the country and is carried out to achieve a certain goal; our goal this year is to raise awareness on various issues such as Gender Based Violence and HIV Aids and to help people understand the link between these issues.

This year Plenty has been continuously working with several organizations in the Toledo District to plan the local part of the Torch Run.

These organizations include Toledo Maya Women's Council (TMWC), TOLCA, Toledo HIV / Aids Committee, TDC, BFLA, and the University of Belize.

This year's Torch Run will be used as a survey to analyze how many people are actually aware of the aforementioned issues that we face in our every day lives, and to set up some monitoring and evaluation of the effectiveness of the education strategies.

Our target participants for the Torch Run this year will be young people such as students at the secondary and tertiary level, various organizations such as Help Age, BDF, Police Department, youth groups, and the general members of the public.

This year's Torch Run will also be slightly different. Plenty and other organizations have planned to combine with the Toledo HIV and Aids Walk and will carry out both activities on the same day since we want to

achieve the same goals also.

The planned date for the Torch Run in Punta Gorda will be on the 29th of November 2008 and the planned date for the HIV and Aids walk was to be the 1st of December, this was another reason why it was decided to join the two events.

We have decided to work with Institutions and organizations such as the University of Belize to carry out Panel Discussions so as to educate all or most of the participants of the issues such as HIV Aids and Gender Based Violence prior to the Torch Run.

Further more; we hope to achieve the goals that we have set and as mentioned, that is to raise awareness about Gender Based Violence and HIV Aids.

Banana and Plantains—Fun to peel and eat!

Bananas and plantain are adapted to heavy rainfalls, yet grow best in well drained soils.

The plantain is better adapted to periods of dry then the banana. They grow best in heavy clay soils, and worst in sandy soils. Both plants need lots of nitrogen and more than the normal amounts of potassium.

While bananas grow best in full sun, they tolerate shade very well. Bananas are sensitive to length of day, but can produce year round if other factors are suitable.

A major enemy of the banana is wind as they are easily toppled by moderate winds.

Weeds are another major enemy of bananas. Bananas should be cultivated under almost weed free conditions.

Propagation and Culture

Bananas and plantains are cultivated from suckers. For the best growth, choose tall offshoots with thick stems and narrow leaves.

Plant the sucker at the beginning of the rainy season by digging a hole. Manure or compost is added to the hole or mixed with the soil. Spacing is 6 to 10 feet.

Compost should be applied twice yearly. Suckers should be controlled by leaving one

half-size and one new sucker for every fruiting stem. The lifetime of the planting may be 10 years, but eventually re-planting is desirable.

The plants produce in 9-18 months. The stalk may require support so as not to fall early. Bunches are harvested 80 - 90 days after shoot appearance if they are to be shipped or as the uppermost fruit begin to ripen for home or local marketing.

Nutritional Value

Bananas are good sources of Vitamins A & C and Potassium. Plantains are good sources of Vitamin A and Potassium.

Why complete a business plan is important

Business plans are described as a detailed description of a new or existing business, including the company's product or service, marketing plan, financial statements and projections and management principles. It is important for business owners to develop a business plan because it provides them with the direction of the company and helps them to set and meet objectives. A small bit of advice to small businesses in Toledo; if you are putting your life sav-

ings on the line, endangering your family's stability and borrowing other people's money, it is your responsibility as a business owner to take calculated risks not unnecessary risks. The business planning process helps to manage and minimize those risks. It can be a long process to get it done properly, but the end result will be that you can understand your business as we Belizeans say "inside out".



The San Pedro Columbia Pig Farmers Coop, recipients of a new business plan

TOLCA News

Plenty Belize is one of the 14 members of the Program for Toledo Children and Adolescents (TOLCA).

TOLCA is a network of government and non-government organizations that share a common goal of improving the lives of women, children and adolescents in Toledo.

TOLCA has been working in Toledo for three years now, and has done work in 13 vil-

lages. This work has included school gardens, food and nutrition training, water and sanitation projects, improved play grounds, parenting classes, and more! TOLCA is continuing to focus on this work, and has plans to expand throughout the district in the years ahead.

TOLCA is currently partnering up with SPEAR and UNICEF to conduct a survey of all

the villages in Toledo.

This survey will look at the data at the village level – something that the Statistics Institute does not do.

This village level data will help each village take control of projects for their village, and will help guide TOLCA as we move ahead.

"TOLCA is currently partnering up with SPEAR and UNICEF to conduct a survey of all the villages in Toledo"

Bellyful Bundiga

Bundiga is a good source of potassium, amino acids and vitamins.

Ingredients

- 10 green bananas
- 1/2 TBS consome
- 1/4 TSP salt
- 1/2 onion, diced
- 1 plug garlic, minced
- 1 sweet pepper diced
- 1 dry coconut

- 1 lbs fish (clean and sliced)
- 1/2 pint water

Directions

1. Grate banana and place in bowl
2. Add onion, garlic, sweet pepper and mix
3. Add salt and consome, mix well and set aside for later
4. Grind or grate coconut, add water and strain milk inside a

pot

5. Boil milk for 3 minutes
 6. Add grated banana mix 1 spoon at a time and stir, continue until mix is gone
 7. Boil for 5 minutes
 8. Add fish and boil for another 5 minutes
 9. Remove fish
- Serve banana mix with a slice of fish on top. Serves 5.

Bundiga is a traditional Garifuna food ! Make some and enjoy it this 19th holiday



Plenty Belize's award winning float! Let's hope we do just as well in next year's contest!

September Celebrations

September is a very festive month in Belize. Plenty Belize got caught up in the holiday spirit this year too. Plenty staff and volunteers put many long hours into the construction of a parade float for the Independence Day Parade.

Our hard work and dedication paid off. Plenty was awarded second place in the float contest.

Our float was a tribute to

Belize's proud agricultural past, present, and future.

Plenty would like to thank all of those people who donated their time, effort, and supplies to the float.

We would especially like to thank Plenty's GATE Program Manager Abib Palma for his tireless dedication and hard work, without Abib we would not have been able to even enter the contest!



Plenty Belize Executive Director Mark Miller (right) and PG Rotary Club President Rick Mallory (left) with Plenty Belize donation to the flood victims

Plenty donates to flood victims

Weeks of rains caused massive flooding in the west and north of Belize in October 2008. The Rotary Club of Punta Gorda investigated the needs of the flood victims, and the Belize Red Cross asked for help with anti-fungal / anti-itch cream and cloth bandages. Plenty Belize was proud to assist by donating over \$100 of medicine to our fellow Belizeans.



Abby's House, located in Eldridgeville Toledo District, while under construction

PG Rotary Club applies for first Matching Grant!

The Rotary Club of Punta Gorda has joined with the Rotary Club of Columbus, Indiana (USA) to sponsor a project to provide furnishings for the new dormitory. The dormitory, known as Abby's House, was recently completed at Hillside Healthcare Clinic in Eldridgeville, 5 miles out of PG.

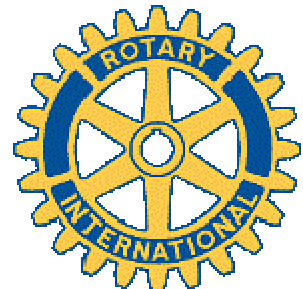
The new dormitory will be able to house 16 medical

volunteers as they provide much needed and appreciated services to we the people of Toledo.

The members of the PG Rotary club are very excited about this project, especially given that the club was just chartered in May!

The project application has been approved at the club and district levels, and is now in process with the Rotary

Foundation. We hope to furnish Abby's House sometime in December.





Participants and Facilitators in the 6th Micro-grant planning workshop



St. Peter Claver RC School Students constructing their garden fence

Join WIN-Belize in...

Torch Run 2008

- Caye Caulker - Nov. 18th**
- Orange Walk - Nov. 20th**
- Punta Gorda - Nov. 29th**
- San Pedro - Nov. 30th**
- Dangriga - Dec. 1st**
- Belmopan - Dec. 3rd**
- Corozal - Dec. 6th**

Run with us as we strengthen awareness about HIV/AIDS and Gender Based Violence



Member of Rio Blanco Mayan Association receiving a new DC refrigerator



Students from Punta Gorda Methodist School working in the school garden

The WIN-Belize Torch Run is November 29th, come out and show your awareness of the issues that affect us all!

PLENTY BELIZE

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Plenty Belize

Mission: Promoting the well-being of the people, the communities, and the environment we share in the Toledo District of Belize

Plenty Belize is a registered Belizean NGO with its office in Punta Gorda Town. Founded in 1997 Plenty Belize has a history of working hand in hand with other local groups to address local needs in a sustainable manner. Plenty Belize has acted both as a service provider within projects spearheaded by other organizations and as a project manager.

Micro-Grant Recipient: a big success!

A year ago Plenty Belize was able to assist a single mother with four children from San Pedro Columbia Village.

This single mother, Miss Ramona Ack, was given assistance through the Belize Rural Development Program to establish a Pig Rearing project at her home. Plenty worked as a service provider for the BRDP Micro-grant program in 2007.

Construction materials for a pig pen and four piglets were given to her. Miss Ack has dedicated a lot of her time into the project and as a result Miss Ack's four pigs have grown to market size. Each pig weighed



from selling the meat was spent on the education of her children. The remainder of the money has been reinvested into her project.

Miss Ack has since purchased 5 piglets to continue and expand her business.

Funding for this project was provided by BRDP and the European Union.

Congratulations Miss Ack!

approximately 350lbs.

Miss Ack slaughtered 3 of the pigs; a portion of the income that she generated

