



# Annual Community Development Report PRODOSA & FairTSA 2022 -2023

*Small farmers and workers are at the heart of FairTSA Fair Trade certification. Through community development projects and capacity building we are facilitating a direct impact on the agricultural communities that grow and process our food.*

## Finca Prodosa

FINCA PRODOSA is a banana farm located in the community of Hatillo Palma, Province of Monte Cristi, Dominican Republic. Dedicated to the production of organic bananas with 144 employees of which 96 work in the plantation, and the remainder in supervisory or administrative positions. The total farm size is 86 hectares.

The production area is located close to the border with Haiti, less than 100km from the farm and most of the agricultural workforce is of Haitian nationality. While Dominican law protects the right to work regardless of a person's status in the country, Haitian workers have generally a lower social status than their Dominican coworkers. Traditionally, most of the agricultural workforce has been of Haitian descent. After the murder of the Haitian President in 2021 and the ensuing crisis, the migratory flow to the Dominican Republic has increased. The banana production zone close to the border is not only a respite for the workers from the strife in their homeland, but also a source of income to support their families at home.

Since there are many women in this migrant community, FINCA PRODOSA has sought to increase the participation of women. Currently about 25% of the workforce are women who mostly work in fruit packing. Additional support such as food allows the Haitian workers to send resources to their places of origin.

The proximity to the border allows workers around Hatillo Palma to visit their country of origin, with 67% of the workers reporting that they visit their country of origin twice a year (especially during vacations and Christmas). The level of education in the area tends to be very low, so investment in courses and workshops is becoming essential to continue the human development of the community and the workers.

## The Evaluation of Projects Financed by the 2022 Social Premium

Prodosa's FairTSA committee, whose voting members are elected farm workers, makes the FairTSA project decisions. The Farm Management must support the committee and can provide input but must not make the decisions.

### 1. Payment of Social Security Contributions for the Workers

Due to the high inflation in the Dominican Republic the worker pay is essentially less worth by the minute. Therefore, this measure together with increasing the wage, which is under way - will provide workers and their families a decent living and allow them to support their families in their home country, Haiti.



*Open FairTSA Committee Meeting*

### 2. Registration of Undocumented Workers

Many of the workers that crossed the border to the Dominican Republic do not have documents. This project was established so the undocumented workers can acquire proper work permits and passports. At this point, most of the formerly undocumented workers have gotten their documents. In addition to the legal expenses, breakfast, lunch, and transportation were provided to workers to support them with out-of-pocket expenses.

### 3. Improving Food Security

Securing nourishing food is an important issue in our culture that depends ever moron fast food. Realizing the, Finca Prodosa encouraged their workers to cultivate unused parts of the farm to grow their own vegetables. Workshops were held on how to educate the workers and their families, and seeds were provided for planting.

#### 4. Revolving Emergency Fund

A revolving emergency fund was established to support workers and their families that encountered emergency situations. The loans are provided at zero interest but must be paid back over time. This is a substantial support for such families, as current interest rates are between 21 and 25% - if they are able to secure a loan.

### Conclusion 2022

All projects envisioned for 2022 have been accomplished, although some of the projected expenses had to be adjusted due to the rising inflation of 19% and the devaluation of the peso.

### The Proposals for Projects to be Accomplished in 2023

#### 1. Investment in a Kitchen to be Run by Worker Families

In 2022 a program was started to supply workers with breakfast and lunch. This is continued in 2023. However, it was decided that is much cheaper to prepare those meals on the farm, which would also create additional jobs.

#### 2. Zero Interest Loans

The amount available for zero-interest loans will be doubled in 2023.

#### 3. Training for Workers

A program will be established to train workers and increase their job skills. Included in the range of workshops provided are also some with topics that foster the well-being of the farmer families such as "Health and Well-being" and "Allergen Management".

#### 4. Coverage of Workers Social Security Payments

This serves to increase the workers' net pay and will be continued from 2022.

#### 5. Continuing with Legal Registration of Workers

The push to secure ID cards, work permits and passports for still undocumented migrant workers and their families is continuing.



*Banana Washing Station*



*Sample ID for Banana workers*

**6. Additional Incentive Payments**

Partially provided by Finca Prodosá, such incentive payments are meant to enable the workers to have paid leave to attend to their families and be able to have at least a modest vacation time.

**7. Transportation Costs for Workers**

This project is also continuing from 2022.

**8. Increasing the Number of Restroom on the Hacienda**

Per workers' request, additional restrooms are being constructed beyond the legal minimum to shorten the distance to and from restrooms to the fields.

**9. Food Security**

This project will continue from 2022.