



## Post Fellowship Reporting - Project Summary

**Report Title:** Going Green: Working on a Costa Rican Organic Farm      **Name:** Alicia Arenas

**Other Team Members:**

**Program:** Oakland Program

**Trip Dates:** 11/30/-0001 - 11/30/-0001      **Location Visited:** San Isidro, Costa Rica

**Post Fellowship Reporting Template:** PFR Template 01

**Project Summary:** Living in an urban community, we, as a society, lose touch with essential things like how food grows. I do my best to promote a healthy diet in my class however, I realized that my knowledge on how to grow fruits and vegetables was limited which is why, for my fellowship, I chose to travel to Costa Rica and learn more about the needs of plants.

During the first part of my travels, I worked on an organic farm in San Isidro, Costa Rica. I loved being surrounded by so many fresh fruits and vegetables. On the farm, there were fruit trees everywhere I looked. Maria, the owner of the farm, was very patient with answering my many questions about the needs of different plants and the best time of year to beginning planting certain vegetables and fruits. While on the farm, I was able to learn how to prepare the soil before planting seeds. I worked in a green house planting herbs and vegetables. I also learned how to transplant small trees. Every meal on the farm consisted of fruits and vegetables that were grown on the farm. Everything was cooked with a wood burning stove and clay oven. Also, on the farm, there was a gray water system set up so that we used rain water to wash the dishes and water the plants in the green house.

It was difficult to leave Costa Rica because everyday was a new learning adventure. I came back with a new appreciation for the gifts that our natural environment gives us. I returned ready to teach my students about healthy eating habits and hope to inspire an appreciation for our environment.

**Career Impact:** \*Developed a personal connection to our environment and an appreciation for where our food comes from.

\*Gained necessary hands on experience that I will use to develop a unit on the life cycles of plants and animals.

\*Gained an understanding of the needs of plants to help me start a school garden.

**Classroom/Community Impact:**\*Creation of new unit on animal and plant cycles

\*Develop school garden using what I learned while working on an organic farm

\*Encourage families to provide healthy snacks for their students in monthly newsletter

\*Encourage families and colleagues to help work on organic school garden

**Open Response:** \*sharing unit and books bought in Costa Rica with grade level teachers

\*incorporating parent support with starting and maintaining the school garden

**Quote:** I have a new appreciation for the gifts our natural environment gives us and I am excited to share everything with my students.

Photos:



I learned how to transplant trees.



My tasks on the farm varied each day and included recharging the oven.



Maria la bonita standing next to the welcome sign to her farm.



Silvano had so much patience and taught me how to space the seeds when planting.



The farm had an open kitchen.



So many fresh fruits everywhere you looked!



It only took a couple of days for the lettuce to start growing.



Silvano and Diego got the soil ready in the green house.