

*From the Nicaragua Network:*

## GIVE GIFTS THAT KEEP GIVING.

Fight climate change! Help Nicaragua recover from floods!

Share the joy this holiday season with the gift of a tree, a wood-saving stove, or a cistern for rainwater in Nicaragua's rural north.

Nicaragua has been devastated by the winds and water of Hurricane Felix and the floods caused by two tropical depressions this season. The damage was aggravated by existing environmental damage to forests and watersheds. Attempting to redress this damage and prevent future disasters, the Federation for the Integral Development of Peasant Farmers (FEDICAMP) continues its "Let the Rivers Run" Campaign, a comprehensive plan for the intelligent management of water and the re-greening of Nicaragua's watersheds.

*You can help Nicaragua recover from the recent floods through your holiday giving!*

*Over one million trees planted!*

In 2002-2004, FEDICAMP planted 1.2 million trees in three departments (Nueva Segovia, Madriz, and Esteli) and they are in the process of planting 250,000 more. They have also enabled the natural regeneration of forests on more than 1,500 acres of land.



*Volunteers from a Nicanet reforestation brigade join community members in planting trees. Photo: Laura Jensen*

## Two thousand families using wood saving stoves!

Since 2002, they have instructed over 2,000 families in building improved cook stoves, which reduce by 60% the amount of firewood used by traditional stoves meaning instead of using 20 sticks of wood in a day, a housewife only uses three to five. The stoves are based on the *fogón* seen in all traditional dwellings but are much more efficient. FEDICAMP also provides training in gardening, community empowerment, and environmental awareness.

## Cisterns capture scarce rain water!

FEDICAMP is building cistern systems which allow families to have potable water during four or five months of the six-month dry season. These cisterns are crucial for future community survival, as more and more large land owners deny families permission to obtain water from their land.

Here's how the cistern system works: Rainwater runs down the family's sloping roof into gutters at the roof edges. From there it is piped down through a large cement-enclosed filter containing sand, gravel, chlorine, and charcoal. The purified water is then piped to a large underground self-contained cistern. The family uses a simple pump, made from PVC pipes and a ball bearing, to bring up pure water for their use. The water may also be pumped to an elevated container, for later gravity feed as needed.



*A Nicanet reforestation brigade participant demonstrates how a water cistern works. Photo: Laura Jensen.*

## Local materials and trees!

Whenever possible, FEDICAMP uses locally available materials as well as the volunteer labor of its project beneficiaries. They plant only trees which are native to the community. Thus, the costs of the programs are kept low, covering only technical assistance and other skilled labor, as well as transport of the few materials brought into the community. It costs FEDICAMP a little over \$30 to plant 20 trees and \$36 for an improved stove that uses only a fraction of the usual amount of firewood. The entire cistern system costs between \$200 and \$350, depending on the community. Beyond the plans and training, the local community does the physical work.

All of these efforts require environmental education and training which FEDICAMP promotes in the region. FEDICAMP is also working to address the large policy issues which threaten the environment through advocacy efforts at the government level and education and training of the local population.

## The holidays are just around the corner!

Give trees in Nicaragua as gifts to your relatives and friends who "have everything!" "Let the Rivers Run" will plant mangoes, avocados, oranges and other productive trees on the banks of streams to protect the flow of water and provide food for the people in the villages in the area. Or give a fuel-saving stove or a water catching cistern to that aunt and uncle who are so difficult to buy for!

## **FEDICAMP History**

The Federation for the Integral Development of Peasant Farmers (FEDICAMP) was founded in February of 2002, emerging out of a long history of peasant organizing in Nicaragua in coordination with the John XXIII Institute for Social Action of the Central American University (UCA). Elvin Castellon, FEDICAMP Director, comes from a family of small farmers in the Department of Somoto in northern Nicaragua. He served in the Nicaraguan Army and worked with the Union of Farmers and Ranchers (UNAG) in the promotion of sustainable agriculture. He has worked with FEDICAMP since its formation in 2002. His speaking tour to the U.S. in April-May 2006 visited seven states across the country.

The positive results of FEDICAMP's work are already notable, and they can be huge if FEDICAMP garners more support from friends in the U.S. They are not only working to heal their environment; they are creating the possibility that Nicaraguans can become self-sufficient on their own land and in their own homes. Participants are much less tied to corporate globalization; for example, they are less dependent on fertilizer and on external food and water sources. Through self-sufficiency, they also have less necessity to emigrate. Women are freed from hours of daily gathering of wood and water; consequently, many of them are now spending time planting vegetable gardens and enjoying their families.

**Fill out this coupon and mail it by postal service with your check made out to *Nicaragua Network/AGJ* to:**

*Nicaragua Network*  
*1247 "E" Street SE*  
*Washington, DC 20003*  
*Attn: Kathy Hoyt*

**Yes. I/we want to make the rivers run.**

- Plant  trees in the name of my/our friend or relative at US\$30 for 20 trees.
- Give  fuel-saving cook stoves for \$36 each.
- Give a cistern in the name of a friend or relative for \$250 each.

Enclosed find US\$ \_\_\_\_\_.

Send me \_\_\_\_\_ Nicaraguan art card(s) (circle: Christmas scene or nature scene) to send to my friends and relatives telling them of my gift in their name.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
City, State, Zip: \_\_\_\_\_  
e-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

For more information about the campaign, write [nicanet@afgi.org](mailto:nicanet@afgi.org) or call (202) 544 9355 or visit [www.nicanet.org](http://www.nicanet.org)