Trip Report: Ecuador
May 19-June 28, 2013

Jeffrey Alwang, George W. Norton, Darrell Bosch, Michael Barrowclough, Francis Dowd, Casey Gresham, Catherine Goggins, Catherine O’Donnell, Stephanie Myrick, and Amy Hubbard
Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University

Purpose:
1. Conduct training and research activities associated with the SANREM Undergraduate Research Internship program.
2. Gather data for choice and risk experiments. These data will be used to assess the value of different CAPS attributes to Ecuadorean farmers and to design an outreach program intended to promote the spread of the CAPS in and outside the study area.
3. Address institutional challenges related to project administration.
4. Review ongoing research activities and plan for the subsequent year.
5. Design publications and assign responsibilities.

Sites Visited: INIAP Santa Catalina research station, INIAP Central Administration in Quito, Tandapi field site for naranjilla research, Illangama and Alumbre river watersheds.

Description of Activities:
1. Student interns visited project partners in Quito, the INIAP Santa Catalina experiment station, the SANREM/IPM naranjilla experiments at Tandapi, Pichincha province, and the USAID and the U.S. Embassy to explain the goals and objectives of the internship. The students also attended Spanish classes.
2. Students prepared for and participated in making presentations to farmers and school children in the upper watershed during a field day organized by INIAP on Conservation Agriculture.
3. Survey instruments were revised following discussions with Ecuador partners, pilot tested, and revised again. Graphics for the survey instruments were also produced and refined.
4. Field work for choice and risk experiments was conducted in Bolivar Province, and 230 successful surveys were completed. Survey information included demographic characteristics of the respondent and respondent’s household, respondent’s attitudes toward accepting
additional economic risk resulting from adoption of new farming practices, and respondents’ preferences for alternative outcomes of farming practices including yields, labor requirements, costs, and soil erosion. Interviewers also answered farmers’ questions regarding the purpose of the survey and other related topics. Surveys typically took 20-40 minutes to complete.

5. Due to the closing of CORPOINIAP at end of August, alternative arrangements had to be made with INIAP for continued funding. There was concern about the continued status of the SANREM vehicles, which were officially the property of CORPOINIAP. A meeting with Dr. Juan Manuel Dominguez, Director General of INIAP, was held to resolve these issues. For the next year of project funding will be passed through ECOCIENCIA, a local NGO that was formerly engaged in the SANREM project. The vehicles in question will continue to be devoted to the project.

6. Alwang met with SANREM field staff to review the field experiment’s cost of production information. Several issues were identified with how costs were being recorded and several discrepancies in the cost of production budgets were addressed.

7. Alwang met with Claire Nicklin, regional coordinator for the McKnight foundation, to discuss the termination of USAID’s involvement in Bolivia and the possibility that McKnight might be able to support the field experiments and laboratory analysis is Bolivia for the next fiscal year. Nicklin expressed interest in some of these activities and was especially interested in supporting additional work examining obstacles to the development of seed markets (quinoa and cover crops) in the study areas. It was agreed that PROINPA would take the lead in presenting to McKnight a proposal for continued work.

8. Alwang met with the INIAP team to address data gaps for a publication being prepared on SANREM/IPM naranjilla work.

9. Met with UNDP/FAO-supported ONU-REDD-Ecuador program. Participants in the meeting included: Alwang, Barrera, Ochoa, Grijalba (all INIAP), and Mr. Ariel Silva, Ms. Belen Cordoba, Ms. Consuelo Espinosa (National Coordinator of the REDD program) on the side of REDD. REDD provided an overview of their activities and Grijalba presented some research being conducted at INIAP that is relevant, including SANREM research on naranjilla. The REDD program is designed to reduce and mitigate deforestation in the Amazon basin and Grijalba highlighted the impact of naranjilla farming on deforestation where technologies to control fusarium are not available. Barrera and Espinosa discussed means to ensure the projects continued to interact.

Suggestions, Recommendations and/or Follow-up Items

1. Barrowclough will utilize the data from the survey to analyze farmer’s views on conservation agriculture and prepare a paper for his dissertation.

2. INIAP team will revise the last-reported cost of production data to ensure their accuracy.

3. Barrera will follow up with ECOCIENCIA to ensure that administrative arrangements for remainder of project are complete.

4. Ochoa, Gallegos, Barrera and Vazquez will address naranjilla data issues.

5. Barrera will follow up with ONU-REDD to see whether project synergies can be exploited.

Appendix 1: Log of Activities
Day 1 (May 21): Visited USAID and the U.S. embassy in Quito. Present were Hugo Ramos (Director, Office of Agriculture), Maria Lorena Correa (Director, Office of Economic Growth), Henry Vega (FAS), and two representatives of USDA Foreign Agricultural Service. Discussions were held about the potential for SANREM/IPM- Innovation Labs participation in several sustainable land use activities USAID will be conducting in Ecuador. Agricultural activities funded by USAID are drawing to a close but Maria and Hugo stated that there was a potential role for SANREM technologies in some of the more fragile areas where agriculture and environmental sustainability might be in conflict. In particular, there was interest shown in potential spread of the *naranjilla* technology in the foothills of the Andes. USAID is likely to release a project proposal in September.

Day 2 (May 22): Visited Santa Catalina experiment station. Met with experiment station director, Mr. Ivan Reinoso, (director of the livestock program), Mr. Luis Rodriguez, Dr. Victor Barrera (IPM CRSP coordinator), and Mr. Luis Escudero (IPM Project leader in Guaranda).

Day 3 (May 23): Met with Claire Nicklin, Andean Representative of the McKnight Foundation. The purpose of this meeting was to discuss the closure of the USAID Office in Bolivia and the future of SANREM in Bolivia.

Day 4-7 (May 24-26): Performed field testing and survey revisions.

Day 8 (May 27): Morning: Traveled from Quito to Santa Catalina Experiment Station to conduct a meeting with Jose Ochoa, Patricio Gallegos, Victor Barrera and Angel Campoverde. Afternoon: Visited with the FAO representative in Ecuador, Mr. Pedro Pablo Pena. Pena discussed the upcoming restructuring of INIAP and its potential impact on ongoing research projects. He noted a close linkage between the work of the SANREM Innovation Lab and the UNDP/FAO-supported REDD+ program in Ecuador and suggested a meeting with that project to solidify linkages. Subsequently, a meeting was held with CORPOINIAP, the funding arm of INIAP, to discuss its closure. Met with Dr. Carlos Nieto and discussed how to ensure that project funding continued to flow through CORPOINIAP until its closure at the end of August 2013. Barrera and Nieto discussed alternatives and it was agreed that contingencies need to be planned since CORPOINIAP could no longer provide cash advances to support project activities.


Day 10 (May 29): Morning: SANREM planning and field testing. Afternoon: Met with the new Director General of INIAP, Dr. Juan Manuel Dominguez. Discussion topics included the future of the SANREM Innovation Lab given planned restructuring of INIAP, and the possibility of creating stronger links between INIAP and U.S. universities. In addition, Dr. Dominguez agreed that funding for the two Innovation Labs would be best channeled through an NGO (ECOCIENCIA) for the final year of the project. This decision essentially removes any uncertainty about the ability to fund the projects during their final year. Dominguez, Barrera and Alwang also discussed planned work on the *naranjilla* publication—all parties are interested in landing the publication in a high-impact journal.

Day 12 (May 31): SANREM activities.

Day 13 (June 1): Traveled to Tandapi to examine progress on *naranjilla* experiments. There is an ongoing debate among INIAP scientists about the appropriate rootstock for the *naranjilla* graft. Scientists at Tumbaco favor the Arborium rootstock because it is native to Ecuador, but Ocho, Gallegos, and others favor the Hirtum variety. Their preference is based on its improved suitability for a wide variety of ecosystems, particularly the low elevations where Arborium is not suitable. Ongoing experiments are comparing the varieties.

Day 14 & 15 (June 2 & 3): Bosch arrived and the group traveled to Guaranda. The group worked with INIAP collaborators to develop a sample list of farmers in Allumbre and Illangama watersheds.

Day 16: Alwang returned to U.S. and field work was finished in Guaranda.

Day 15-19 (June 3-7): Group began interviews in Allumbre and Illangama watersheds. Data from interviews were entered into the computer each day.

Day 20 (June 8): Group traveled to the Chimborazo volcano and climbed the lower slopes.

Day 21 (June 9): Rest day.

Day 22-27 (June 10-14): Group continues interviews in Allumbre and Illangama watersheds and associated data entry.

Day 28-29 (June 15): Rest days. Bosch traveled to Quito (Day 28) and flew to the U.S. (Day 29). Norton arrived in Quito.

Day 30 (June 16): Norton arrived in Guaranda.

Days 31-35 (June 17-21): Group continued interviews in the Allumbre watershed and associated data entry.

Day 36 (June 22): Rest day.

Day 37 (June 23): Group visited Banos.

Day 38 (June 24): Part of group finished the interviews while part of group prepared for the field day.

Day 39 (June 25): Field day in Illangama with about 80 participants. After lunch group returned to Quito.
Days 40-41 (June 26-27): Part of group visited the coast while two students remained in Quito (ill). Norton visited Barrera and the INIAP planning director (Juan Merino) at INIAP headquarters in Quito to discuss research priority setting at INIAP.

Day 42-43 (June 28-29): Group returned to the states.