



MCA-Nicaragua's Assistance to Red Bean Producers Results in Better Marketing, More Investment and Higher Incomes

Nicaragua's \$175 million Millennium Challenge Compact targets León and Chinandega, a region located in the northwestern part of the country. The Rural Business Development component of the Compact provides \$33.7 million to help poor farmers transition to higher-profit agriculture. One of the most important crops is red beans, currently a subsistence-farming commodity which supports a majority of the population in the area.

MCA-Nicaragua (a foundation designated by the Government of Nicaragua to implement the program) is helping Edelmiro Espinales, a red bean farmer, sell his beans at a better price this year through improved seeds, irrigation, and drying that will yield higher production levels and uniformity in the red bean.



"With the money I earned exporting beans, I bought food and some clothes for my seven children."

—Edelmiro Espinales

MCA-Nicaragua is providing technical assistance to 600 red bean producers, with the goal of helping them achieve an additional income of \$125 per farmer for this harvest year. Optimistic about the project's future Edelmiro said, "We grow very little but the additional earnings from what was exported was very good because it is money we did

not expect. With the money I earned exporting beans, I bought food and some clothes for my seven children."



Edelmiro Espinales is packaging his beans for export to El Salvador.

MCA-Nicaragua also helped launch two marketing campaigns for the northern Nicaraguan red bean producers to attract potential buyers from El Salvador and Honduras. This effort resulted in the sale of 1.5 million pounds of red beans. Of this total, 800,000 pounds were exported to El Salvador and Honduras, creating an additional profit of \$5 per 100 pounds of red beans. This translates into \$75,000 in additional income for the Nicaraguan producers, including \$110 of additional income for Edelmiro and his family.

MCA-Nicaragua's Financial Specialist, Aldo José Toruño, said, "MCC assistance will help Nicaraguan farmers develop a specialized market to bag, package and bar-code red beans." These types of value-added activities will help transform Nicaragua's rural economy and reduce poverty through sustainable economic growth.