

Tree Currency Program

July 2023



A Smallholders Farmers Alliance Tree Currency tree nursery in Haiti.

Why a Tree Currency Program?

The Tree Currency Program empowers farmers to reverse environmental degradation while improving their livelihoods, and because the farmers themselves assist in managing the program, the long-term impact will be a self-sufficient and thriving community. While planting and caring for trees, the participants earn credits that can be redeemed for crop seeds, tools, and training, enabling them to significantly increase crop yields and incomes.

Nearly five million Haitians, almost half of the population, struggle to eat each day. The tree currency program can help communities become more food secure.

Who does the work on the ground?

The Tree Currency Program is administered by a Haitian NGO, called the Smallholder Farmers Alliance. The Raising Haiti Foundation, an American non-profit associated with Our Lady Queen of Peace Catholic Church, located in Arlington, VA, provides oversight. Agents from the Smallholder Farmers Alliance and local farmers (male and female) do the actual labor, and our twin parish of Chauffard, Haiti will reap the rewards in the form of improved crop yields, greater food security and, eventually, shade and food from fruit trees.



When would it begin?

The program would begin in Chauffard in January 2024. We would owe half the funds for the first year in November (\$12,500) and the remaining half (\$12,500) in May, 2024.

How much does this cost?

This is a five-year program.

Raising Haiti (RH) will pay almost half of the needed funds.

Year 1: \$25,000 from us + \$20,000 from RH = \$45,000 total.

Year 2: \$20,000 from us + \$15,000 from RH = \$35,000 total.

Year 3: \$15,000 from us + \$15,000 from RH = \$30,000 total.

Year 4: \$12,000 from us + \$12,000 from RH = \$24,000 total.

Year 5: \$12,000 from us + \$12,000 from RH = \$24,000 total.



What is included? How does it work?



1. Community nursery:

20 kg of tree seeds will be purchased and planted in order to **transplant 15,000 tree seedlings** in the first year of the program. The program will recruit 400 active members in the community to fully engage in the nursery (they are the direct beneficiaries of the program). These participants will construct one tree nursery and stock it twice in a 6-month period. Five forest gardens will be established of 0.2 - 3 hectares.

2. Training: An agronomist will be stationed in the village.

Number of training workshops: 12

Number of on-site trainings: 24

Number of participants in each workshop: 50

At least 2 sessions /subject

Subjects include: nursery management, agroforestry technologies, soil erosion control, building of biomechanical structures on degraded hills; best cultivation practices for beans, vegetables, corn, yams, and sorghum production; how to make natural pesticides; importance of structuring local farmers associations; and the role of a cooperative in local development.

3. Outplanting teams:

Number of teams: 6/semester; 12 teams in a 6-month period

Number of participants in each: 50 at least

Average number of trees transplanted: 15,000/year

Types of trees: **Mangoes, coconut, lemon, Spanish cedar, mahogany, and breadfruit.**

Where: household plots, degraded mountainsides, farmer's farms, family compounds

4. Agricultural service: A total of 660 pounds of crop seeds will be shared with 400 farmers: 450 lbs of black beans and 210 lbs of pigeon peas. After harvest, farmers will return the same number of pounds of seeds to the program that they were lent, with an additional 10%, **to create a seed bank.**

5. Tool distribution: A total of 590 **agricultural tools will be distributed** over the year. 400 tools will be handed to the 400 project beneficiaries, and 190 will be handed to farmers who are indirect beneficiaries (they are neighbor-farmers that are in line for help).

6. Animal husbandry: The community will receive a dozen goats, as well as training in how to care for the animals.



Women participating in the Tree Currency Program in Haiti. Photos provided by Raising Haiti Foundation.