

# Goat by Goat

How you helped Caterina and Diego flourish in Guatemala

Caterina and Diego Terraza grew up during Guatemala’s armed conflict. Both had to live in hiding to stay safe—violence and poverty defined their childhoods.

As teenagers, Diego and Caterina met, fell in love, and married. Needing work, Diego tried cutting sugar cane as a migrant worker. He said, “It’s veeery difficult. I did it, but I only survived 15 days, and then I left.” Diego knew his family needed a better way to make a living.

Thanks to you, Diego and Caterina came to live in an Agros village. They now have a big, healthy family (all boys!), their own home, and a piece of land.

Caterina is especially grateful that you helped her learn how to raise goats! You gave Caterina her first nanny goat. Today, Caterina has ten goats. She feeds her boys the goat milk, and that helped stabilize their weight gain.

At health checks before having goats, Caterina’s boys would sometimes be underweight. When she added goat milk to their diet, they flourished. The health techs asked, “What are you doing?” She told them, “What I’m doing



is that I have a goat, and I’m giving them goat milk!” Caterina also uses the goat manure as vegetable fertilizer. At first the veggies were just for her family. Now, they are so robust Caterina often sells them, along with her extra goat milk. By selling milk and vegetables Caterina helps her family get ahead!



# Land. Hope. Life.

Spring 2020

## The Right Buyer

Why Starbucks’ C.A.F.E. Practices matter

One of the greatest frustrations small farmers face has nothing to do with dirt, seeds, pests, or weather. Instead, it has to do with the market: small farmers often struggle to find a reliable buyer paying fair prices.

Imagine being a farmer like the ones in these photos. They can do everything right and get lucky with the weather. Their crops can be plentiful and high quality, but if they don’t have the right connections, they might have difficulties selling their coffee. Getting a low price or an unreliable market means another year of struggle and hardship for their families, and it is hard for them to get ahead if they cannot even catch up.

Luckily, donors like you help famers like these get ahead. Just last month, your support helped Agros farmers in La Bendición, Nicaragua, verify 198 acres of coffee plants under Starbucks’ C.A.F.E. Practices.



in four key areas: quality, economic transparency, social responsibility, and environmental leadership. Having coffee that’s verified by C.A.F.E. Practices means Agros farmers are eligible to sell to many more buyers and are much more likely to find a good, reliable buyer.

Agros farmer Erick Chavarria said, “C.A.F.E. Practices helps us define a better price and, in the end, that adds to our income, which helps us make our payments for land, credit, education, health, better diet, and better housing.”

Verification is also high praise. The coffee must meet impressive quality standards and be produced with good environmental practices. For example, farmers must manage waste, protect water quality, conserve energy, preserve biodiversity, and reduce agrochemical use.

Not only have you helped Erick and other Agros farmers grow the best coffee possible in an environmentally friendly way, you’ve also connected them with a better market. Thank you! And who knows, maybe you’ll be sipping the Agros coffee you helped grow the next time you visit Starbucks!



Developed in a collaboration between Starbucks and Conservation International, C.A.F.E. Practices are one of the coffee industry’s first sustainability standards that are verified by third-party experts, and they include guidelines

## ✂️ —————

☐ **YES! I want to give my brothers and sisters in rural Latin America the trainings, goats, snap peas, and more needed to leave poverty permanently behind.**

- Enclosed is my gift of:
- ☐ \$100, which gives a family access to coffee verification trainings
  - ☐ \$200, which gives a family a milk-producing goat
  - ☐ \$400, which helps a family start their first plot of snap peas

**Gifts like these are game-changers, helping families kickstart their lives!**

**\*\*\* Credit gifts are accepted online at [agros.org/donate](https://agros.org/donate) and over the phone at 206.686.3496.**



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# Oh, Snap!

*How snap peas changed the Ixil Triangle*

For a long time, the fertile region in Guatemala known as the Ixil Triangle was, paradoxically, a terrible place to be a small farmer. The local people didn't own the land; they didn't have the seeds or tools to start a farm; and besides the corn on which they subsisted, they didn't know what to grow or to whom to sell it.

To get by, the men migrated to work, harvesting coffee on the coast. The work was dangerous and required fathers and brothers to leave their families for months at a time. Harvesting coffee only paid about thirty quetzals—or four dollars—a day. This was never enough for a family to live on.

The Ixil changed in 2004 with a surprising experiment: Agros supporters like you convinced—and financed—a small group of farmers to grow snap peas. Though locals in the Ixil do not eat snap peas and they had a hard time believing it was possible to sell them, the first harvest bore great fruit.

Leonardo Gómez, an agriculture technician with Agros, said that for the first time ever, local people were able to make a living near their homes and families. “With the start of this project, local people are maintaining production on their own land while being much closer to their families. They can earn an income *here*.”

Your support was three-fold. You gave families the opportunity to buy their own small plot of land. You taught them how to grow snap peas. And, you connected them with a market—their snap peas go to London!

Leonardo said, “So many people have been able to pay off their land with the income they make from snap pea production. And others have improved their quality of life... they have money to educate their kids, improve their homes, and grow their farming capacities.”

Because of your support, families feel financially sound and secure. Plus, the program has grown. The first season fifty farmers grew snap peas. Now there are 275 farmers (and more who want to join!) growing three kinds of peas.

This last year, you helped us with another experiment: a new growing period. Snap peas are usually grown from September to June, leaving farmers with no income in July and August. However, a special demo plot grew snap peas in July and August, and—it worked!



**“THEY [NOW] HAVE MONEY TO EDUCATE THEIR KIDS, IMPROVE THEIR HOMES, AND GROW THEIR FARMING CAPACITIES.” –LEONARDO GÓMEZ**

Now, you're helping to teach farmers to grow snap peas all year round. Leonardo excitedly reported that the market “pays a little more than usual” during the traditionally low period. You changed the Ixil once—now you're doing it again!

## Vision Trips!

*Meet the people you are helping*

Participate in an intensive Vision Trip to see firsthand the extraordinary impact of your generosity in the lives of Latin America's farming families. Trips in 2020 include:

- **Nicaragua:** May 9 - 16
- **Guatemala:** June 20 - 27

For more information or to sign up, contact Guillermo Jiménez at 206.686.3544 or guillermoj@agros.org.



# Getting Climate Smart

*How Agros families thrive on innovative farming strategies*

“We’ve all seen the effects of climate change—extreme winter storms, a growing number of wildfires, longer and harsher hurricane seasons. However, what many of us don’t see is that climate change affects different groups of people differently. It’s typically the world’s most vulnerable populations that bear the brunt of climate change,” said Alberto Solano, President and Executive Director of Agros International, in a recent edition of travel author Rick Steves’ newsletter.

The families Agros serves across Latin America are amongst those “most vulnerable populations.” Instead of simply turning up the air conditioning, these families face challenging farming conditions that make it difficult to subsist.

Alcadio Arauz, one of Agros’ agricultural technicians, explains how climate change affects farmers in Nicaragua: “Diseases like blight and canker have spread. High temperatures and excess precipitation affect production. Farmers must use more fungicide and invest more, so their incomes shrink.”

The families in Agros villages like San José and La Bendición, Nicaragua, are grateful that you and Rick Steves teamed up to tackle this profound challenge.

As part of his inaugural Climate Smart Commitment, announced in late 2019, Rick Steves pledged \$150,000 to help Agros build a climate smart agribusiness center, and around #GivingTuesday, individual donors contributed thousands more to our climate smart agriculture programs.

These programs teach Agros families innovative farming strategies that help them mitigate their contributions to climate change, produce more food, and generate more income.

You are actively helping Agros families thrive—despite the challenges of climate change. Arauz says, “Agros works in the conservation of water and soil. We implement practices to reduce chemical products and increase the use of organic products, and we implement cover crops to avoid soil erosion. Families reduce the

cost of production, which helps them have better incomes and as a result, a better quality of life.” Thank you for building God’s Kingdom right here on earth.



**“FAMILIES REDUCE THE COST OF PRODUCTION, WHICH HELPS THEM HAVE BETTER INCOMES.” –ALCADIO ARAUZ**

## Thank You Community Partners!

*Your support at the 2019 Tierras de Vida gala delivered hope and opportunity to farming families in rural Latin America*

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