



Newsletter

SUMMER, 2025



Agros

Land . Hope . Life



Featured Story

A message from Rick Steves and Craig Davidson, Agros' long standing supporters and friends

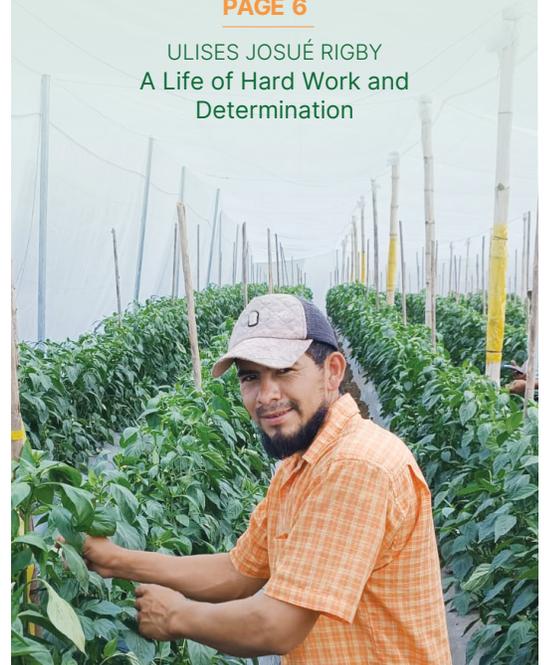
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Dear Agros Friends,

In the face of climate change, Agros is pioneering sustainable agriculture across Central America. Our climate-smart practices—ranging from hydroponic farming to organic composting—are not only enhancing crop yields but also conserving vital natural resources.



For example, our hydroponic modules save 2.5 million liters of water annually compared to traditional methods, while producing 150,000 heads of lettuce in just 1,000 square meters. These innovations reflect our commitment to building resilient communities and protecting the environment.

We are honored to feature an article by Rick Steves, the renowned travel expert and advocate for ethical tourism. Through his **Climate Smart Commitment**, Rick has partnered with Agros to help offset the environmental impact of global travel. His piece offers valuable insight into how responsible travel can be a force for justice—empowering communities, protecting ecosystems, and investing in long-term solutions like Agros' work in rural Central America.

This edition also brings you the inspiring story of an Agros family who has embraced climate-smart, high-yield farming practices. Their journey from subsistence farming to thriving agribusinesses exemplify the transformative power of land ownership, training, and sustainable practices. These narratives highlight the profound impact of our collective efforts in fostering dignity and prosperity among rural families.

We invite you to dive into this special issue and hope the stories, data, and reflections you'll find within offer not only valuable insight, but renewed hope in what's possible—when people are given the opportunity to flourish and they build a planet-friendly prosperity.

"A good person leaves an inheritance for their children's children..."

Proverbs 13:22 (NIV)

Warm regards,

The Agros Team



Craig Davidson and Rick Steves.

A message from Rick Steves and Craig Davidson, AGROS' LONG-STANDING SUPPORTERS AND FRIENDS

Dear friends,

At **Rick Steves' Europe**, we believe international travel is a powerful way to better understand and contribute to the world we live in. But we're also keenly aware that every international flight emits damaging carbon into the atmosphere, contributing heavily to the climate crisis.

This doesn't mean stay home. It means finding ways to be climate smart in our travels — and our business. That's why we launched the **Rick Steves' Europe Climate Smart Commitment**, a self-imposed carbon tax that allows us to pay back the environmental debt created by our travelers. So, every year since 2019, we've donated about **\$1 million a year** to a portfolio of hand-picked organizations that advocate for, or employ, climate-smart agriculture skills and technology where they're needed most.

Agros has been on this list from the beginning. And, based on the results we've seen, we're proud to continually choose to include them year after year. To date, we've invested roughly \$900,000 in Agros — the highest amount among organizations in our portfolio. Our funds have helped create three climate-smart villages in Nicaragua; raised the average daily income for over 500 farming families from \$1.54 to over \$3 (moving from what is considered extreme poverty to what the World Bank denominates as lower middle income); and built prosperous, environmentally conscious communities out of what was essentially nothing.

This work is imperative. In their desperation to grow enough food to survive (let alone sell), poor farmers in poor countries like Nicaragua traditionally adopt farming practices that contribute substantially to climate change.

But with **Agros' climate-smart technology** and training, these hardworking farmers can grow more food while reducing their carbon footprint. Plus, because these programs provide farmers with the tools to be more productive, they help create financially independent small businesses. To us, that's a win-win-win.

And the impact of our investment is only growing. With the next round of Rick Steves' Europe donations, Agros will include the village of El Galope in their development program — in addition to the villages of El Carmen, San Francisco, Luis Hernández — add 120 more farming families, build over two football fields of greenhouses and mesh structures (110,000 square feet), and plant over 250,000 trees (bringing the total to over 500,000).

The philanthropy we do at Rick Steves' Europe is nothing heroic. We simply believe that good business is good business, and we're trying to do our part to make the world a better place. We're proud to offer tour members the peace of mind that this self-imposed carbon tax effectively mitigates the carbon they create when they join us in Europe (see page 8 for more information) — and that our donations on their behalf help organizations like Agros, which is a great example of development work done right.

So keep on travelin' — because you're making a difference.

Rick Steves
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER,
RICK STEVES' EUROPE

Craig Davidson
CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER,
RICK STEVES' EUROPE





How Agros and Rick Steves’ CLIMATE SMART COMMITMENT ARE RESTORING THE EARTH AND SECURING LIVELIHOODS

In 2020, Agros began applying the Climate Smart Commitment as a cross-cutting strategy across its agricultural programs. Our aim: to create sustainable, resilient communities where farming families can thrive—without harming the planet. Our model is built on three pillars:

1)



ADAPTING the Production System

Agros enhances resilience through practices like strategic crop rotation, which breaks pest cycles and fosters healthier ecosystems. With the right knowledge and techniques, farmers adapt more effectively to climate threats—benefiting their families, supply chains, and communities.



2)  **MITIGATING
the Carbon Footprint**

We reduce emissions through reforestation, terracing, and local biofactories that produce eco-friendly biofertilizers and biopesticides—minimizing dependence on fossil-based inputs while restoring soil health and water sources.

3)  **FOCUSING
on Productivity and Well-being**

Every innovation at Agros is grounded in improving the productivity, food security, and well-being of rural families. Our vision is simple: a family’s prosperity doesn’t have to come at the planet’s expense.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS AS OF DECEMBER 2024

■ **Climate-Smart Curricula & Training**

- Development of blended learning modules (e-learning & in-person)
- Over 307 families trained

■ **Climate-Smart Agribusiness Infrastructure**

- Installation of protected agriculture areas
- Creation of nurseries for agroforestry and watershed protection
- Establishment of biofactories for sustainable agro-inputs. Annually our biofactories produces 220 tons of biofertilizers

■ **Building Climate-Smart Villages**

- Efficient stoves reduce firewood use by 50–70% (saving 5–8 trees per family per year)
- Households trained in water conservation and source protection
- Community-wide waste management systems

THESE SUSTAINABLE PRACTICES HAVE LED TO:

Increase in crop yields

32%

Reduction in chemical fertilizer use

50%

Reduction in pesticide application

75%



ULISES JOSUÉ RIGBY

A Life of Hard Work and Determination

At 39, Ulises Josué Rigby reflects on a life built through resilience and the relentless pursuit of a better future for his family. He is a devoted husband to Daysi, 27, and proud father of 8-year-old Deymerin Josué. Life before Agros was filled with challenges and perseverance.



Ulises worked as a day laborer on a coffee farm, earning just \$5.50 per day. For a family of three, that meant each person lived on less than \$1.83 per day—far below the international poverty line. To supplement his income, Ulises planted basic grains on rented land. Through determination and hard work, his efforts enabled the family to purchase land by the roadside, build a home, and start a small neighborhood store in El Carmen 2, Matagalpa.

Despite these gains, life remained precarious. Occasionally, Ulises traveled to Costa Rica for three-month stints, using his farming skills to earn additional income in vegetable production.

■ THE TURNING POINT: FINDING AGROS

Ulises first heard about Agros through his neighbors. Initially skeptical, his curiosity and ambition led him to learn more. What he discovered was a unique opportunity to expand his knowledge, increase his income, and create lasting change for his family.

That hope—and his enduring determination—motivated Ulises to join Agros and fully embrace the opportunity for transformation.

A Life Transformed: The Agros Impact

Since joining Agros, Ulises has achieved remarkable progress, both financially and personally.



HERE ARE HIS 2024 ACHIEVEMENTS

Production Goal
56,000 units

Actual Achievement
218,772 units
more than 3x the goal!

Net Income
\$13,089

Daily income per person
in the household
\$12.83

By adopting 100% of the production practices promoted by Agros, Ulises has sharpened his technical skills, strengthened his family’s economic foundation, and created momentum for future growth.

“I like to encourage others to try because this works—if you follow the instructions learned in the sessions,” he says. “I dedicate myself to my crops and stay disciplined because I want to see results.”

Ulises also balances his work with responsibilities at home and in his evangelical church, where he helps oversee construction projects. For him, faith and effort go hand in hand.



■ DREAMS FOR THE FUTURE

The Rigby family looks to the future with hope. Ulises dreams of owning his farmland, expanding his crops, improving and enlarging their home, and growing their neighborhood store.

These dreams are rooted in faith and the family’s journey—especially the miraculous healing of their daughter, Deymerin, who recovered from bone cancer at the age of two.



“God has blessed us greatly,” Ulises shares. “With faith, hard work, and the support of Agros, we’re building a future full of possibilities.”

For Ulises, Agros is not just a project—it is a catalyst for transformation, a source of hope, and a testament to the power of resilience.





Reducing Our Carbon Footprint

Through the use of the Cool Farm Tool (CFT)—the gold standard in measuring agricultural carbon emissions—Agros regularly evaluates the environmental performance of its programs.

PRELIMINARY FINDINGS SHOW

208.87 tons of CO₂

captured across reforested areas and protected farmland

Equivalent to offsetting

59.38 round-trip flights

from Seattle to Rome

These results affirm that climate-smart farming benefits everyone—local families, the global climate, and future generations.



Agros

Land . Hope . Life

We Are Part of the Solution. Will You Join Us?

Agros is ready to scale its impact—reaching more regions, integrating more families into high-value markets, and expanding sustainable farming across Central America.

Together, we can grow prosperity—join our efforts for sustainable good by equipping more families in Central America to own farmland, run thriving businesses, and restore the earth in this part of the world.

“So the next generation would know them, even the children yet to be born, and they in turn would tell their children.”

Psalm 78:6 (NIV)



Scan the QR code or visit our website to explore more results, and resources on our climate-smart journey.