

Israel Ochoa Lopez

La Montana, Guatemala



Israel Ochoa Lopez is no stranger to the difficulties facing small farmers in Guatemala. In fact, he is just now returning to his home after spending 5 years in the states trying to save money for his family. He explains that in Guatemala, farmers face the difficulty that land is very expensive and often times crops barely pay for themselves.

Israel is 55 years old and is married to another participant in Semilla Nueva's programs, Maria Thelma. They farm on his wife's 5 acres of land. This year is the first

year he has returned to farming after being in the states. He and his wife are now experimenting with conservation tilling and planting pigeonpea and Quality Protein Maize (QPM). Pigeonpea provides families with an extra source of income, an additional food source, and has a deep root system that breaks up hard pans in the soil. QPM is a hybrid corn variety bred specifically to be a complete protein. Simply switching from a normal corn variety to this variety can help families get all the nutrients they need and combat malnourishment in their communities.

Israel was never able to go to school but he hopes that his children and grandchildren will have a better future. He hopes that they will do well enough for themselves that they will be able to help him and his wife in their old age. He hopes that the land he and his wife plant on never stops giving. By investing in his land now, Israel is taking the steps to realize that goal.

Thank you for helping family farmers grow a better tomorrow.

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