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Peru

Project title

Conservation and sustainable use of potato germplasm in the rural communities of Andahuaylas

Overall objective: Increase production, productivity and income derived from the use and commercialization of potatoes in Andahuaylas

Crops addressed: Potato (*Solanum*)

Main activities

- Increase availability and access to seeds of native potatoes
- Promote *in situ* conservation and sustainable use of potato germplasm
- Implementation of ecological sound techniques for the conservation of soil and water sources
- Encourage and promote farmers associations and market linkages
- Training of Trainees

Implementing institution

SOLARIS Peru

Related website

www.solaris.org.pe



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(PERUVIAN) ANDEAN FARMERS ARE THE CUSTODIANS of more than 4,000 varieties of native potatoes grown mainly at high altitudes. These farmers have difficulties diversifying their production options, accessing local markets and commercializing their products. The conservation of potato genetic resources and an increase in their market value is, therefore, important to guarantee the livelihoods of the Andean farmers who have relied on this for over 8,000 years. It is woven into their belief system, festivals and customs. The Andahuaylan area targeted by this project already suffers a high incidence of rural poverty, so it is critical to help alleviate this situation.

This project seeks to resolve the problem of low production, productivity and income of native potatoes in the province of Andahuaylas. The project will promote the cultivation of varieties of two strategically divided groups of potato – varieties with immediate commercial potential and varieties to be newly introduced to the market – and also contribute to their on-farm conservation, sustainable management and promotion. Fifteen Producers' Organizations are involved in project activities that have already resulted in the establishment of 15 fields for conservation and evaluation of potato varieties against pests, diseases and adaptive capacity. Over 24 varieties have already been evaluated and more than 400 farmers have directly benefited from training and capacity building in the conservation and management of potato genetic diversity.

Partnerships and collaborations with Producers' Associations, local authorities, the Instituto Nacional de Investigación Agraria (INIA) and relevant development institutions have been developed, and negotiations are underway for the establishment of a Colectivo interinstitucional de Promoción del Cultivo y Conservación del Germoplasma de Papa Nativa.

Agro-ecological techniques, environmentally-friendly inputs and a reduced use of agrochemicals have been used to ensure the long-term sustainability of project results. The project also promotes the training of local technicians (TAPs) who will ensure the continuity of technical assistance over time. The gradual incorporation of new native varieties into seed fields will ensure that farmers have multiple options to deal with new climatic scenarios and new pests, and will grant them considerable potential to adjust to changing consumption and market trends.

By the end of this project, more than 1200 Peruvian farmers will be able to cultivate over 200 new varieties of potatoes for subsistence and commercial purposes.

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