



# **Cabarete Sostenible Annual Report**

**March 2022– March 2023**



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## Message from our Executive director:

Dear Supporters and Friends,

I hope this letter finds you well and filled with the same sense of pride and accomplishment that we're experiencing here at Cabarete Sostenible.

This year has been all about fine-tuning our core programs, and I'm thrilled to share some exciting highlights with you:

1. **Food Aid Initiative:** We've delivered a staggering 1,000 food packages to homes across Cabarete neighborhoods.
2. **Questionnaire Enhancement:** In response to the ever-evolving post-COVID-19 situation, we've revamped our Questionnaire. This vital tool helps us identify vulnerable homes more effectively.
3. **Volunteer Empowerment:** We've recruited and trained our dedicated Questionnaire volunteers, who play a crucial role in our mission and now receive a stipend for each working day.
4. **El Jardín Comunitario:** Our community garden has been a hub of activity, hosting weekly farmers markets and a series of enriching workshops. Topics ranged from Oyster Mushroom Growing to Permaculture practices in daily life.
5. **The Apprenticeship Program:** We've introduced a paid year-long internship aimed at nurturing local talent. This initiative is pivotal to our goal of creating a team of local experts who can build a lasting career with Cabarete Sostenible and the Community Farm.
6. **La Cocina Comunitaria:** This space has become the heart of our volunteer activities, training center, and the epicenter for our monthly Food Aid Program. We've also utilized it for practical, educational, and fundraising events for the entire Cabarete community.

It's crucial to us that you understand the unique role we play as one of the few, if not the only, Dominican-led non-profit organizations in town. We're immensely grateful for your unwavering support and to those who share our belief that true progress must originate from within.

In abundance,

Moraima Capellán Pichardo  
Executive Director, Cabarete Sostenible





## Who we are:

### Mission:

Provide food relief to the neediest families and develop food sovereignty through civic regenerative agro-forestry and the creation of social enterprises.

### Vision:

Eradicate food insecurity and foster a Cabarete where no one goes hungry; where the historically excluded are nourished with a variety of food options that honor their nutritional needs and respect their cultural background.

### Values:

Our philosophy is to both feed a family with fish for a day, and provide them the tools to fish for a lifetime.



### 1. Patience

At Cabarete Sostenible, we are careful about what is labeled or dismissed as “culture” that could actually be conditioned habits meant to sustain systems of inequality. Our communities are hungry for more than what they are taught. We will strive to create an enriching environment for innovation. We will work to dismantle outdated belief systems. We understand that this work takes time, takes empathy, dedication to unlearning and profound care for each member of our community. We will move with patience and understanding.

### 2. Active Engagement

We are not saviors; we are active participants in our progress and collective improvement. Meaningful engagement is achieved with boots on the ground, listening to the needs of the people we are trying to help. We will not impose our desired solutions and we will remain open to the actual needs, wants and wisdom of our community.

### 3. Social Justice

We seek to create long overdue racial and social equity by returning to ancestral practices that were violently interrupted through an extreme capitalist system. Cabarete Sostenible leads with an anti-racist and decolonial perspective.

### We promise to never:

- Engage in poverty porn; we must not forget the dignity of those we are helping by showcasing their poverty or lack of access.
- Make decisions without the input of those directly impacted by or involved.

We may not always get it right, but please hold us accountable.

## Summary of 2022 and Q1 2023 Activities:

### Food Aid Program



Starting in June 2022, Cabarete Sostenible initiated ten food aid distributions and workdays, leading to the distribution of 1,000 food packages across Cabarete neighborhoods. In the months of April and May 2022, we temporarily suspended our distribution activities as we underwent a transition with a new team member taking the helm as the director of the food aid program. During this period, CS also undertook a comprehensive overhaul of the Questionnaire used to identify vulnerable households, updating it to align with the current post-COVID-19 circumstances. Additionally, we successfully recruited and provided training for our current cohort of Questionnaire volunteers.



Here's a breakdown of the recipients of The Monthly Food Aid Program between June 2022 and March 2023:

- **40.5% of the rations were allocated to senior citizens.**
- **25% of the assistance went to unemployed individuals.**
- **13.5% supported disabled individuals.**
- **11.7% was directed to single-parent households.**
- **9.5% served households with numerous children, relative to the number of adults responsible for their care.**

At CS, we have established a volunteer-based system, enabling community members to actively participate in the food aid distribution process. In cases where volunteers themselves face food insecurity, we ensure their access to a food package as a part of their involvement. **Consequently, we've delivered 143 rations to volunteers to date, representing 14.3% of the total number of distributed packages.**

Over the period from June 2022 to March 2023, a total of 209 volunteers have generously contributed their time and efforts to support the Monthly Food Aid Program.

## Questionnaire



In our region and across most of the island, street and home addresses are often outdated and unreliable. Government records lack accuracy and accessibility, posing significant challenges in identifying and assisting vulnerable families. The questionnaire is designed to collect essential demographic data, allowing us to pinpoint vulnerable populations like the elderly, single parents, and individuals with disabilities. While our objective is to reach every home, participation in the questionnaire is entirely voluntary and confidential.

Thanks to the Fondation Philippe Daher Grant, CS has established a stipend program for trained questionnaire volunteers. These volunteers commit to 3-4 shifts of 2 hours each month, enabling us to conduct ongoing work in the Callejon de la Loma and La Cienega neighborhoods. Each survey takes approximately 20 minutes to complete with each family.



**From 2022 to March 2023, CS has surveyed an additional 116 households, yielding the following results:**

- **73 families are in urgent need of aid.**
- **25 families have a relative level of need.**
- **18 families do not currently require assistance.**

Since 2020, CS has surveyed a total of 405 homes throughout Cabarete.

Since the questionnaire's inception in early 2021, CS has made slight adjustments to our processes, allowing us to collect data on specific target groups more effectively. Notably, we've focused on prioritizing food aid delivery to homes with elderly and disabled individuals, recognizing their heightened vulnerability.

Key improvements to the Questionnaire implemented in 2022 include:

- A review and update of questions to align with the post-COVID social landscape.
- Incorporation of Google Plus Codes for more accurate mapping of home locations.
- Development of a training manual for volunteers and team members, adhering to safety guidelines and confidentiality protocols.
- Implementation of a participation agreement and guidelines between volunteers and Cabarete Sostenible.





## Community garden:

In the backyard of the Community Kitchen, sits the Jardín Comunitario. This garden is equipped with a greenhouse and an outdoor planting area adorned with fruit trees. El Jardín serves as our seedling nursery, providing essential plants for both on-site use and the larger Community Farm. Our approach to gardening at this space is firmly rooted in organic farming and permaculture practices. We emphasize the importance of respecting all flora and fauna, and we strictly prohibit the use of artificial products such as pesticides, genetically modified organisms (GMOs), and synthetic fertilizers.

Unlike conventional community garden models that charge fees for garden bed usage, our space operates differently. We facilitate collaborative group work, fostering a learning environment where we all grow together. The shared understanding is that all produce harvested from the garden is either dedicated to the Food Aid Program or used to generate funds for our organization through our farmers market.



Fun fact: We have implemented an on-site composting system for all organic waste generated at the Community Kitchen. This innovative practice transforms food scraps into nutrient-rich compost, which we then use to enrich our garden beds. It not only reduces our environmental footprint but also eliminates the need to purchase commercial fertilizers.

El Jardín Comunitario hosts weekly farmers markets and a diverse series of workshops, including an Oyster Mushroom Growing Workshop, DIY: Ancestral Higuero, and Permaculture principles for everyday life, among others.

This years harvest from El Jardín Comunitario include:

|               |         |              |              |
|---------------|---------|--------------|--------------|
| 13 pounds     | Chard   | 17.37 pounds | Spinach      |
| 19.759 pounds | Arugula | 5.98 pounds  | Guava fresca |
| 4 pounds      | Squash  | 117 units    | Bananas      |



|             |                    |             |               |
|-------------|--------------------|-------------|---------------|
| 2.55 pounds | Eggplant           | 1 pound     | Ginger        |
| 2 pounds    | Chives             | 6.4 pounds  | Lettuce       |
| 6 pounds    | Kale               | 4.2 pounds  | Oregano Poleo |
| 2.8 pounds  | Collard greens     | 4.96 pounds | Radish        |
| 7.38 pounds | Cranberry Hibiscus | 11 pounds   | Tatsoi        |
| 2.6 pounds  | Verdolaga          | 40 pounds   | Tomatoes      |

## La Finca Comunitaria

The establishment of La Finca, our community farm, is a pivotal component of our long-term vision aimed at achieving food sovereignty in Cabarete. The Community Farm, with 29 hectares is a one-of-a-kind initiative in the region, serves as a hands-on, practical, and educational hub. It functions both as a productive farm, and as a regenerative force, revitalizing damaged soil within the protected area nestled inside Monumento Natural Laguna Cabarete y Goleta.

**Syntropic agriculture** : Our approach, Syntropic Agriculture, draws inspiration from the ecosystem of the Rainforest, aiming for regeneration and the preservation of natural resources. The Rainforest ecosystem is characterized by a multitude of diverse plants coexisting symbiotically within a dense space. These plants have varying requirements for sunlight and nutrients, with tall trees providing shade and shelter for smaller plants. Furthermore, these plants bloom at different times, ensuring a continuous production of fruits throughout the year. Cultivating mixed crops not only establishes a foundation for a well-rounded diet but also fosters greater harmony with the environment, safeguarding soil health over the long term.



In May 2022, Cabarete Sostenible collaborated with Mauro Rosito to host our second Syntropic Agriculture workshop at La Finca. This intensive two-day course drew 24 participants from across the island, offering a blend of theoretical and scientific lectures alongside hands-on activities. Participants immediately put these concepts into practice by planting three tree lines that integrated annual and perennial crops, fruit-bearing trees, and native timber trees. We were delighted to extend full scholarships to four students from the Cabarete community, and three students received partial scholarships.



**Apprenticeship Program:**

To further enhance our efforts, CS has introduced the Apprenticeship Program, a paid year-long internship meticulously designed to cultivate local experts who can forge lasting careers with Cabarete Sostenible and the Community Farm.

Following the appointment of a Farm Manager, the CS team conceived the Apprenticeship Program as a unique opportunity for individuals to gain comprehensive experience, acquire education, and develop diverse skills in the realm of sustainable agriculture. Interns work closely with management across all facets of the Farm, including designing and implementing planting models using permaculture and syntropic agriculture techniques, tending to plantings, and actively engaging with the community. In addition to practical training, participants attend a range of classes, workshops, and talks.



The Apprenticeship program commenced in December 2022, and we currently have two part-time interns, both of whom previously volunteered with Cabarete Sostenible.

In October and November 2022, we successfully launched our inaugural School Reforestation Program in collaboration with ISLA Academy, a local international school. Two student groups from ISLA engaged in a six-week program that delved into regenerative agricultural practices and allowed them to establish their own plots for planting and harvesting food. Additionally, we've hosted student groups from InspireDR, a local nonprofit organization focusing on young boys.

**Harvests from La Finca:**

|           |              |             |               |
|-----------|--------------|-------------|---------------|
| 235 units | sour oranges | 15 pounds   | tomatoes      |
| 6 pounds  | black beans  | 200 bundles | oregano poleo |
| 198 units | avocados     | 67 units    | starfruit     |
| 20 pounds | guava        |             |               |

**Challenges:**

In March 2023, we faced a conflict with the local administration responsible for the Natural Monument where our community farm is situated. As a result, we temporarily halted all planting and volunteer activities at the farm. During this period, we redirected the focus of our Apprenticeship Program towards the Jardin Comunitario.



On April 4th, Cabarete Sostenible hosted a community gathering at La Finca, which drew participation from more than 35 adults and 15 children and youth. During this gathering, we convened in a circle to facilitate equitable discussions. We deliberated on the current status of our community farm project, our collective vision, and our aspirations for the community's future. Residents candidly shared their frustrations regarding the local administration and called upon CS to serve as an organized advocate to address their concerns with the Ministry of Environment.

Cabarete Sostenible is committed to continuing these community meetings and leveraging our platform to provide information, resources, and organizational support to residents who place their trust and belief in our work. This challenging moment has unexpectedly forged unity and strengthened bonds with our neighbors.

Despite these challenges as of June 2023, we have nurtured 192 trees in their initial growth phases, along with a diverse collection of 694 plants, including medicinal species, shrubs, and flowers.

Currently, we are carrying out essential maintenance work at the Community Farm while awaiting official permits from the Ministry of Environment offices in Santo Domingo.





## La Cocina Comunitaria

La Cocina Comunitaria is the CS hub for all volunteer activities at both the community garden and farm, as well as a training center and space to carry out the monthly Food Aid Program. CS utilizes the space to host practical, educational and fundraising events for all the community of Cabarete.



Woke Foods operated a Dominican plant-based restaurant at La Cocina from December 2021 to July 2022. During this time, Cabarete Sostenible and Woke Foods shared and collaborated on monthly activities in the space including the weekly farmers market and fundraising dinners. In June 2022, Woke Foods informed Cabarete Sostenible of their desire to close the restaurant and dissolve our partnership. As of August 2022, Cabarete Sostenible is solely responsible for the use and management of the Community Kitchen, an unforeseen challenge as we have had to ramp up our monthly programming and activities to be able to properly utilize the space.

Activities have included, Cosecha y Cocinao' (Harvest and Cookout) where we harvest ingredients from the garden and then proceed to prepare plant-based dishes together, DIY: Ginger beer workshops and nutrition talks. At La Cocina we have conceptualized fundraising evenings of cocktails and small bites using seasonal ingredients harvested from El Jardin, La Finca or through our network of small farmers. The themes of these "Tardes de Margaritas" have included menus incorporating guava, butterfly pea flower, dragonfruit, jackfruit, water apple and cherries among others. Each night a different theme based on the ingredient available at the time. We believe that this is food sovereignty in action.

During the month of March 2023, La Cocina hosted a pop-up restaurant called WOKUP. Serving an asian inspired menu, WOKUP was our second venture into utilizing the space as a social business that brought funds back towards the foundation. La Cocina Comunitaria provides a multi-purpose space to train volunteers, community members, host events and serve as a base camp for the development of the programs of Cabarete Sostenible.





## Las Galeras Mutual Aid

On September 19, Hurricane Fiona caused extensive damage and destruction in the neighborhoods of Las Galeras in Samana. Several local families and organizations reached out to Cabarete Sostenible to support local relief efforts. We are proud to collaborate with the Asociación Galerenses para el Desarrollo Sostenible and the Dominican Hippotherapy Center to coordinate relief efforts. Our friends from Quisqueya Permacultura coordinated the effort to collect information of the families in urgent need, gather supplies, donations and organize the distribution of aid.

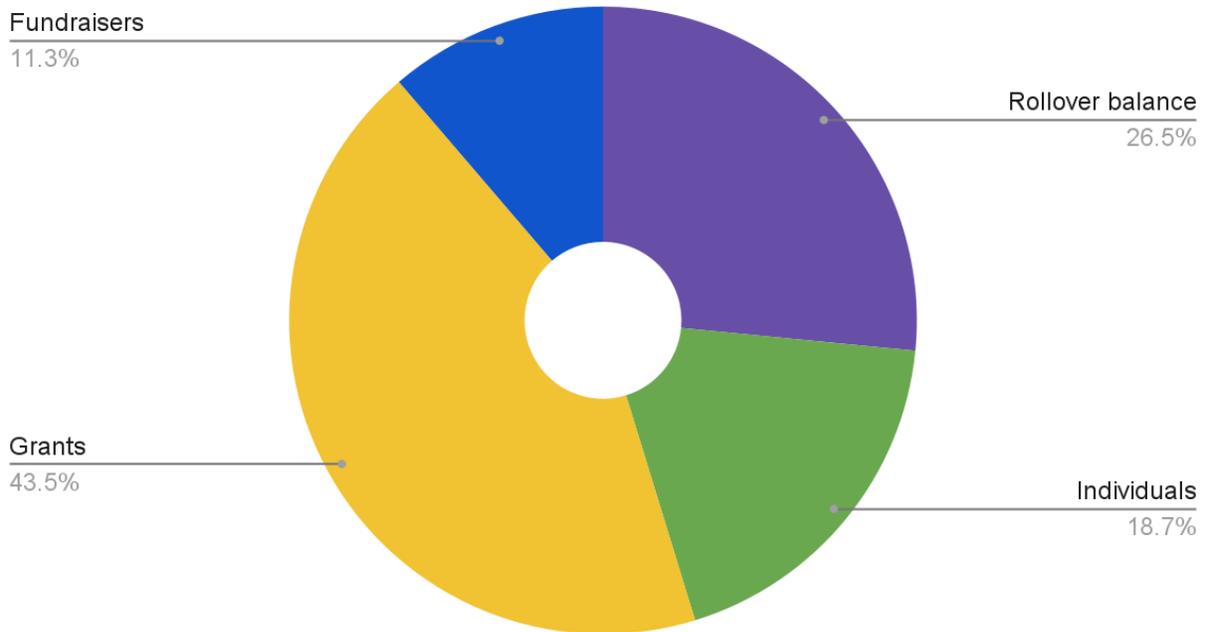
Cabarete Sostenible accepted donations and supplies that were funneled to Quisqueya Permacultura—they identified more than 60 families whose homes were damaged by the storm.





## Financials summary: January 2022 - December 2022

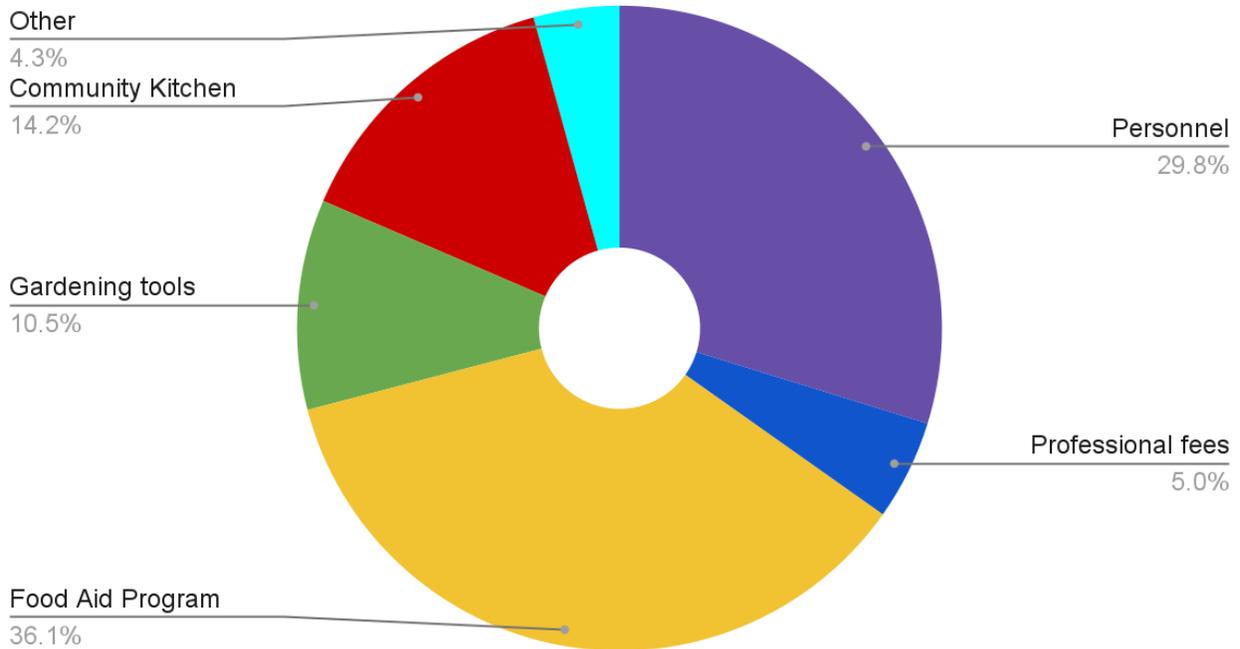
### Income



| <b><u>Income in USD</u></b> |                    |
|-----------------------------|--------------------|
| Rollover balance from 2021: | \$15,293.14        |
| Individuals:                | \$10,778.89        |
| Grants:                     | \$25,039.74        |
| Fundraisers:                | \$6,494.96         |
| <b>Total Income:</b>        | <b>\$57,609.00</b> |

**Financials summary: January 2022 - December 2022**

**Expenses**



| <b><u>Expenses in USD</u></b> |                    |
|-------------------------------|--------------------|
| Personnel                     | \$10,780.00        |
| Professional fees             | \$1,821.32         |
| Food Aid Program              | \$13,082.12        |
| Gardening tools and materials | \$3,817.60         |
| Community kitchen             | \$5,156.10         |
| Other                         | \$1,569.74         |
| <b>Total expenses:</b>        | <b>\$36,227.00</b> |



## Thank you to our donors

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| <b>\$24,000 USD</b> |
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| Fondation Philippe Daher |
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| <b>\$1,000 USD</b> |
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| Realtor DR |
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| Amanda Arias |
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| <b>\$10-\$500 USD</b> |  |  |
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|-----------------|-------------------|-----------------|
| Matthew Lashley | Mery Lois Dorrejo | Dominic Gotanco |
|-----------------|-------------------|-----------------|

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| Jose Candelario Nieves | Evelyn Riboldi | Dianna Bonvino |
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|------------------|-------------|----------------|
| Claudette Chayer | Katie Crane | Rebeka Cabrera |
|------------------|-------------|----------------|

|            |             |              |
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| Mike Davis | Britt Pisto | Eric Swanson |
|------------|-------------|--------------|

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|--------------|---------------|----------------|
| Alex Gillmor | Thierry Daher | Julia Goldberg |
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|               |               |               |
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| Colleen Woods | Doralie Ortiz | Lauren Rossen |
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| Joel Hidalgo | Daniela Perez | Alejandro Forero Lezama |
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|               |             |              |
|---------------|-------------|--------------|
| Klaas Dykmann | Jorge Perez | Marian Grone |
|---------------|-------------|--------------|

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|--------------|------------------|-------------|
| Dharma Shala | Malwina Biczysko | Tess Ortega |
|--------------|------------------|-------------|

|                  |               |               |
|------------------|---------------|---------------|
| Embrace the Blur | Josey Ramirez | Brandy Morris |
|------------------|---------------|---------------|

|                |                |                      |
|----------------|----------------|----------------------|
| Natalia Patino | Alexandra Mane | Julibeth Sáez Negrón |
|----------------|----------------|----------------------|

|                 |                  |             |
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| Myra Jon Aquino | Monica Contreras | Juan Ferrua |
|-----------------|------------------|-------------|



| <b>\$10-\$500 USD</b> |                          |  |
|-----------------------|--------------------------|--|
| Giselle Uwera         | Ashley Fields            | Richard Cantoral   |
| Elizabeth Lincoln     | Michelle Landry          | Gabriella Lundy  |
| Diana Lemos           | Lauren Fiorica           | Zaira Pagan  |
| Evelyn Heffernan      | William Darton           | Hyo Lim Jeong  |
| Trisha Truong         | Huda Bashir              | Melissa Medina   |
| Monica Santillan      | Amy Boglarski            | Catherine Mckinley   |
| Solange Franklin      | PiriTees                 | Sylvia Cohen   |
| Afanwi Aku Acquay     | Yessica Curiel Montoya   | Zoila Alvarez  |
| Angela Margherita     | Mackenzie Kwok           | Sara Nelmes  |
| Orlando Hernandez     | Dylan Kossar             | Amanda Ortiz   |
| Maura Leahy           | Steven Perez             | Cole Quigley   |
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| Mariah Bermeo         | Alan Leal                | Clarissa Lotson  |



## **Our Team**

### **President**

Tomas “Papo” Soñé

### **Executive Board**

Moraima Capellán Pichardo

Iskania Livanessa Perez

Thierry Daher

Marta Cabrera

### **Director of Questionnaire and Food Aid Program**

Jenny Simoes

### **Farm Manager**

Harriet Trower

### **Apprenticeship Program**

Jose Miguel Vargas

Taneisha Cofey

### **Volunteer Coordinator**

Mery Jane Garcia Ynfante