



ICSUR – Association for Research and Training of Southeastern Mexico

The Association for Research and Training of South-eastern Mexico (ICSUR) is a non-profit organization based in Chiapas, Mexico. The organization supports social and economic development in coffee-growing communities in the Zoque region of Chiapas. ICSUR's edible mushroom project utilizes organic waste from corn and other agricultural products to grow mushrooms. Their chicken-raising project contributes to food security in coffee-growing communities.

Life in Mexico

Chiapas is one of the poorest states in Mexico. The overwhelming dependence on coffee production and lack of other economic opportunities has led to a huge wave of emigration. As a result many women in rural communities have become heads of households.

This trend has created the need and opportunity for women to learn new skills and actively participate in community decision-making. Men who have not emigrated have the opportunity to learn how they and their families can benefit from the new system of teamwork brought about by the social shift.



Women collect fresh eggs from their coop as part of ICSUR's chicken-raising project. Participants are learning to produce meat and eggs.

Coffee Kids and ICSUR

Since becoming a Coffee Kids partner in 2006, ICSUR has completed an edible mushroom project. This program reached the point of sustainability and is an important source of food and income for the participating families. The project encourages and supports women as they develop business skills and contribute financially to support their families.

Coffee Kids also supports ICSUR's chicken-raising project. Many families are dependent on mass-produced meat and eggs from other communities. Oftentimes these are produced using growth hormones, antibiotics and genetically modified food. This project provides families with the knowledge and equipment to produce meat and eggs locally and organically.

2008 Results

- Forty-one families in three communities received technical training on the chicken-raising project.
- Three demonstration chicken coops with egg incubators were built and one more is under construction.
- Three workshops on eggs and meat production, sanitary handling and genetic selection of new stock were conducted, as well as training on the use, care and calibration of egg incubators.
- Over 750 chickens were hatched from the incubators and incorporated into the egg and/or meat reproductive cycle.
- Renovations were completed on 24 of 41 individual coops, which will be incorporated into the project.
- Ninety hens were selected for breeding stock.