



Alimentos Campestres

Business:	Solar Dried Produce
E+Co Investment:	\$125,000
First Investment:	2007
Country:	Guatemala
Entrepreneur:	Carlos Raul Montes Segura

Overview:

Alimentos Campestres is a Guatemalan company that sells dried native fruits, vegetables and nuts to super markets and export companies in Central America. In operation since 1991, the company recently determined that it would be economically and environmentally beneficial to dry its fruits using solar power instead of fossil fuels. The company provides direct employment to approximately 50 people and indirect employment to more than 120 farmers. The use of solar energy for dehydration is expected to displace 10,000 gallons of propane gas annually.

The Need:

To meet the increasing demand for dried produce, Alimentos has had to substantially increase its production. Due to rising propane costs, however, the company found it more cost effective to import prepared dehydrated fruit than to produce it themselves. Driven by a desire to reduce its production costs and its dependence on outsourced dehydrated fruit, Alimentos decided to explore alternative dehydrating technologies, ultimately selecting a solar thermal dehydration facility as the optimal choice.

E+Co Value Added:

A well-established business, Alimentos did not require a significant degree of business support services. After conducting due diligence on the company, E+Co recommended certain business improvements and invested US\$125,000 for the purchase of the solar dehydration system.