



**Belize Sustainable Agriculture Ltd. donates Food Relief  
400+ Households affected by COVID-19 in neighboring villages benefit**

**P R E S S   R E L E A S E**

*Belmopan, Cayo District, Belize*

*May 7th, 2020*

Belize Sustainable Agriculture Ltd is a sustainable farming operation encompassing some 5,000 acres of farmland located along Mile 41 on the George Price Highway in Belize's Cayo District. BSA is in the process of converting its entire farm to sugarcane production, with some 1,000 acres planted in 2019 currently being harvested. BSA expects to have all 5,000 acres planted in sugarcane within the next 24 months. 100% of BSA's sugarcane production is sold under a long term supply contract to Santander Sugar, Cayo District's largest private employer, and one of Belize's most important industrial activities.

BSA's management team and staff is almost entirely composed of Belizeans and the company provides direct employment to over 40 people who mostly live in the villages surrounding its farm: Cotton Tree, Harmony Ville, More Tomorrow, and St. Mathew's.

BSA is deeply sensitive to the severe challenges faced by many of its neighbors due to the economic slowdown brought on by the country's response to the COVID-19 global pandemic. First and foremost, BSA has continued to keep all of its staff fully employed throughout the current crisis, allowing them to continue to look after their families.

However, BSA is also aware that many families in neighboring villages have lost their employment through no fault of their own. In order to try and supplement government food assistance programs, BSA recently acquired over 3,000 lbs. of red beans and white rice as food relief for hard hit families living in neighboring villages. The company has organized the distribution of this food working with the various chairpersons of each village, who will then be responsible for identifying and distributing the food to the neediest households and families. This food relief is being offered exclusively to those persons who either recently lost their jobs or did not qualify for the government's assistance program. An estimated 400+ households will receive red beans and white rice to assist them in sustaining their families in Cotton Tree, Harmony Ville, More Tomorrow, and St. Mathew's.

BSA is grateful to both the Indian Creek Development Company and the 5 Star Rice Company, each of which offered substantial discounts for the bulk purchase of red beans and white rice; this allowed BSA's budget to stretch further in helping to provide much needed food relief to its neighbors.

The CoViD-19 pandemic has affected the entire world, causing severe economic and human distress to millions of people everywhere. BSA has not escaped unscathed, as the global price of sugar has fallen more than 30% since the end of February 2020, at a time when the company is in the middle of a major investment program. Nonetheless, BSA joins Belize's population in hoping that the country will soon be able to return to better economic times and the company hopes to continue to grow as a local Cayo District employer with a strong and demonstrated commitment to the welfare of its staff, its neighbors, the local environment, and the country of Belize.

**Food Distribution Meetings – May 7<sup>th</sup>, 2020**

**Hazel Kuylen – BSA Human Resources Manager / Jonathan D'Silva - BSA Government Affairs Manager**



***Cotton Tree and Harmony Ville – Chairman Oscar Otero May 7, 2020 (374 families)***



***More Tomorrow Village – Chairman Michael Myvette May 7, 2020 (32 families)***



***St. Mathew's Village – Chairlady Esperanza Arianza May 7, 2020 (60 families)***