

## 19. Internships

**T**he real hands on school of success is to intern with a working farm. Then you can learn first hand from experience. You will appreciate the land, soil and even the process of efficient food production more.

The special relationship we enter into with the land is called Husbandry. You've heard of animal husbandry, but land requires stewardship that is very unique compared to that required by your other possessions. We are married to the land in one sense. We are to take care of it for generations to come. Short-sited profiteering with environmental abuse proves that the owner is a pimp, not a husband.

## A Natural Farming System for Sustainable Agriculture in the Tropics

When the land is treated like a prostitute, it goes through many abusive relationships.



**Community organizing and social work is handled by Aloha House Staff. Annacar is our licensed social worker. She helps organize families for training, counseling and financial assistance.**

We teach the stewardship that each person has during our internship program. They learn more than just technique; they get to see the big picture. We were created by an all-wise and perfect Creator. He gives us opportunity to serve Him. We can learn to till the land and better care for this planet. Our interns can learn value in providing quality food in a sustainable operation.

Why not watch over your land with the intention of permanently preserving it for generations to come, like the way a good husband looks after his wife, loving and caring for her while working together toward common goals. Teamwork makes a marriage successful, and it is the same with land. Mutual benefits develops

between the steward and his land. The relationship creates value over time.

Make your farmland a sanctuary for wildlife, birds and insects by committing to never spraying chemicals. Plant and harvest all you want, but allow the natural balance to develop into a climax vegetative state.



**Farmers and cooks harvest the food we need for the orphanage daily; fresh and pesticide free.**

Live with some of your wet areas. You don't need to drain all the low-lying places. Learn to grow wild rice or other natural food crops. Avoid diverting waterways with cement and steel. Plant the shoreline with SALT hedges and legume trees, serving a dual purpose. They will keep topsoil in place with sturdy root growth and cycle nutrients for other crops. Plant local species that thrive like berries.



**Sugar cane is self-mulching and creates a lot of biomass. This in turn affords earthworms better feed and they can multiply, increasing the fertility of the soil.**

We encourage interns to plant indigenous fruit trees. Even root crops can be found native to most area. Don't clear-cut or slash and burn like the shifting cultivators. Stay on your clearing and maintain soil fertility. Build up, don't tear down. Practice renewable forestry, with selective harvesting and sustainable management that allows time for hardwood species or Raton to be replaced.

Every farmer should consider himself married to the land till death. Then he should get buried there and make one last contribution to its fertility! Now his heirs will be able to follow your pattern for generations to come. Land is the most precious heirloom.





**Interns learn to cope with the forces of nature. When wind damage from a typhoon knocks down a prized corn stand, the plant has to be reinforced with soil mounds.**

Any farmer who wants to develop his techniques should try an internship. It is a time honored tradition in most trades and will be valuable experience. It's training time you will not be able to carve out of your schedule once you have your own project. The methods and practices learned through repetition and day-to-day reality will decrease time wasted on your own farm. Your mistakes will not be as catastrophic in an established farm! When you start without this internship exposure, you will lose a lot of time and money learning the hard way. Why not learn from someone that made the mistakes for you? Learn what they went through and don't repeat their mistakes; make new ones based on insights that will lower your risk. You're sure to fumble in the beginning. We did. However, the lessons learned from previous projects allowed us to progress quickly. We hope our interns will progress quickly too!



**Pastor Joseph “Jojo” Demafelis took this picture of a SALT hedge in the mountains of Palawan. He trained a Batak tribe on how to use Sloping Agricultural Land Technology to save their ancestral lands. The thick double rows of flemingia and rensonii follow the contour and capture run off, creating level areas to plant over the coming years.**