

Feasibility Study: Food Cooperative in Monteverde, Costa Rica

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Outline

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Background

Monteverde, Costa Rica



Objectives

Project Statement

- Monteverde, Costa Rica
- Client: Fabricio Camacho
 - Manager/Associate Director of the UGA Costa Rica Campus
 - Community Leader
- Organic Farmers Cooperative
 - High quality, organic
 - Local



Sectors

- **Main sector: Farmers Market Cooperative**
- **Sectors of economy: Local, fresh, organic food**



Methods

Spatial Analysis

- Geographical information systems (ArcMap 10.7)
- Land was mapped and quantified using the field calculator tool
- Assumptions:
 - All data is accurate and the most up to date
- Constraints:
 - Only government reported and registered land included



SWOT Analysis

Strengths

- Climate/Environment
- Existing Infrastructure

Weaknesses

- Knowledge Gap
 - Farmers, laws
- Funding

Opportunities

- Tourism
 - Farms/Tours, Education, Economy boost
- Singular Coop in area
- Decrease in processed food

Threats

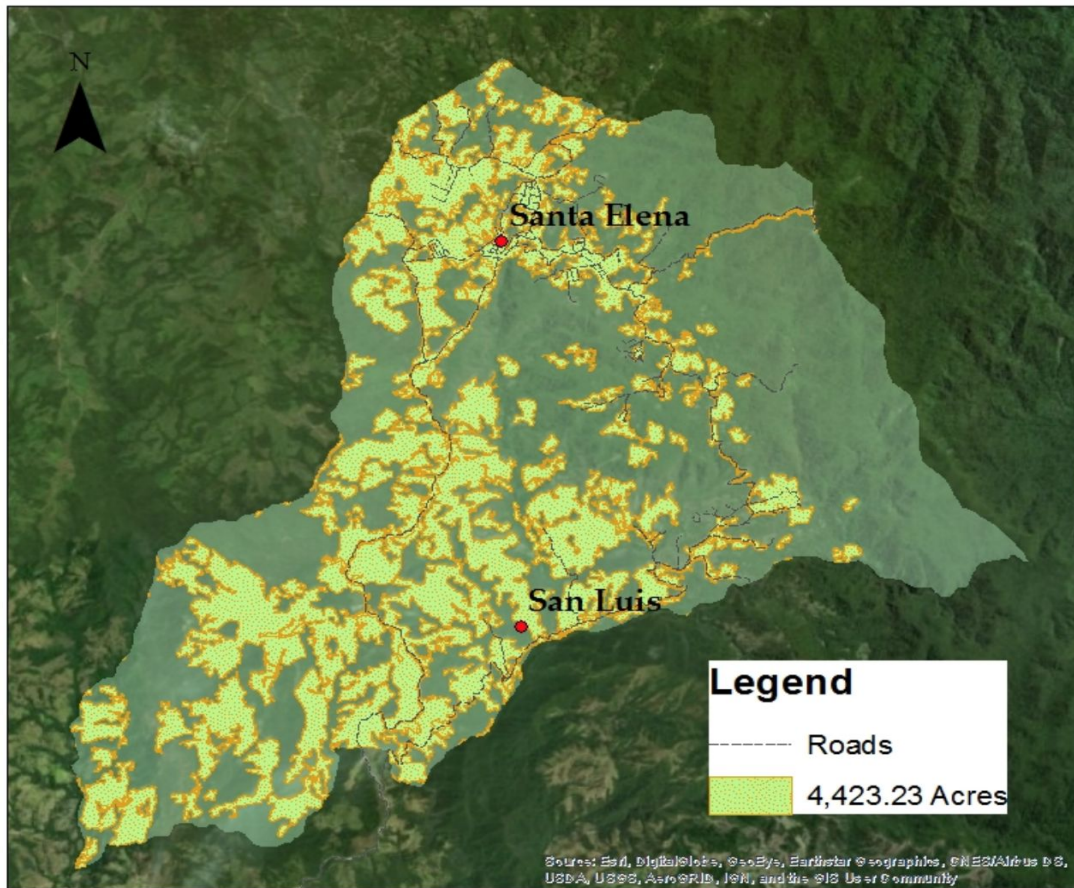
- Government/Contracts
- Degradation of land

Evaluative Matrix

Objective Function	Functional Unit	Target Value	Quantitative/Qualitative	Evaluation Method
Land use	Crop acres/year	6,200	Quantitative	Measurement done by adding total area
Food Consumption	Food kg/person/year	906	Quantitative	Sales reports
Population Use	People use/year	20,000	Qualitative	Surveys

Results

Monteverde's Current Farmland



0 0.4750.95 1.9 2.85 3.8
Miles

Current Agriculture

- Coffee and Dairy largest industries
- Small-scale farms
 - Commercial vegetables, fruits, and herbs
 - Poultry and hogs
- 1.24 acres of land to feed one person per year
 - * 5,000 people = 6,200 acres needed
 - 4,243 acres/ 6,200 acres = 70%



Proposed Cooperative Structure

- Farmers Market Cooperative
- Distribution Cooperative



Cooperative Case Studies: Costa Rican Coffee Coop

- Voluntary certification programs
 - Upgrades Produce
- Willingness to Pay



Cooperative Case Studies: North Nicaragua Coop

- Tourist Sales
- Farmers Survey
 - Security
 - Low price vulnerability
- 73 days to full pay
 - Immediate cash options



Proposed Cooperative Structure: Monteverde

Administrative Board



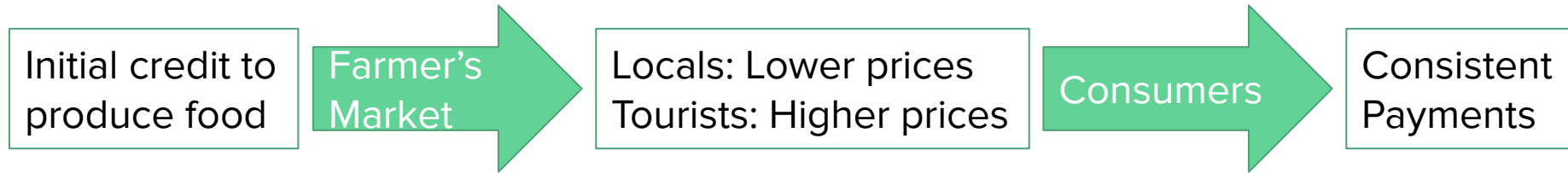
Supervisory Board



Members/Assembly



Proposed Cooperative Structure: Monteverde



Start-Up Economics

- Coops are created, owned and operated by the shareholders, meaning the start up economics are slightly different than typical businesses

Steps:

1. Establish a steering committee and carry out feasibility studies
 - a. Strong leadership = success
 - b. Education
2. Create a business plan and recruit members
 - a. Producer, consumer, multi-stakeholder?
 - b. Members = building blocks of coop



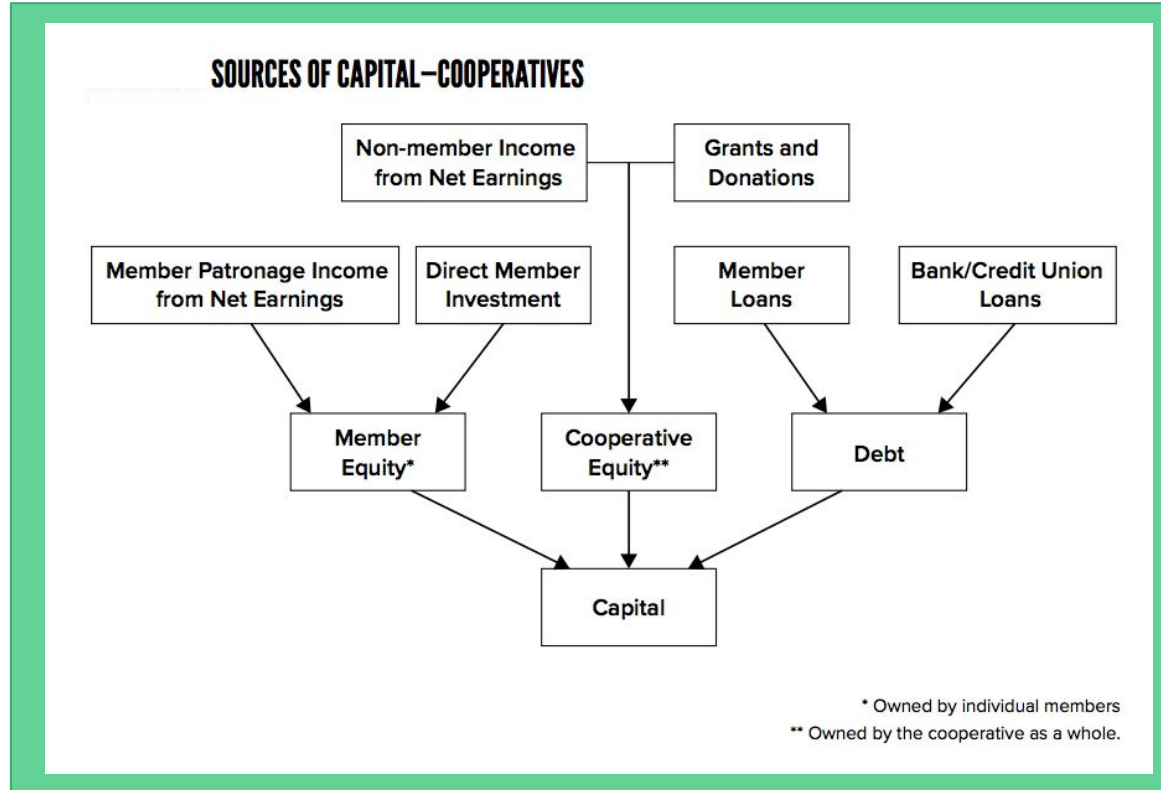
Startup Economics Cont.

Steps Cont.

3. Secure financing

- Capital from member equity
- Donations/Organizations

4. Launch



Social Impacts Case Studies

- **Access to a Diverse Diet**
 - Successful implementation brings access to local foods, public awareness (Bacon, 2005).
- **Community-oriented Mindset**
 - Having a community project will help communication, awareness, positive peer pressure (Abebaw, 2012).
- **Economic Improvement**
 - Optimization models show how selling to tourists and the remaining to locals conclude in harvest sell out (Bacon, 2005).



Social Impacts Continued

- Education
 - Monteverde suffers from overused farmlands (Abebaw, 2015)
- Attracting Tourist with sustainable values
 - Preserving a way of life is feasible marketing the eco-tourism in Monteverde (Valkila, 2009).



Feasible if...

1. Food supplemented by outside resources
2. Members and community support
3. Take the next steps

Next Steps

1. A board and set of community leaders needs to be determined
2. A continuing feasibility study
 - a. logistics of transportation
 - b. community support
 - c. food production on large and small scale farms
 - d. Costs estimates
3. The implementation of a distribution cooperative investigated
4. Further investigation into startup cooperatives is recommended





Questions?

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