

**USDA, Natural Resources Conservation Service
Federal Women's Program
Special Emphasis Program (FWPM-SEP)
Caribbean Area – Quarter #2 - January, 2012**

**“Women in Puerto Rico’s Agriculture Preserving Farm Lands for a
Sustainable Development” - Graduation Day Celebration
December 12, 2011**

A group of twenty five women and one man from the east area of Puerto Rico, celebrated the completion of the second semester course offered by the University of Puerto Rico (RUM) and the Agricultural Extension Service, in cooperation with USDA – Natural Resources Conservation Service.



Representatives of Federal Government Agencies: SSA, USDA-RD, National Agricultural Statistic Service, I.R.S., APHIS-Veterinary Service, APHIS- Plant Protection & Quarantine, and USDA - NRCS



Farm Owners (Hosts) Mr. Jose Aponte and Mrs. Doris Claudio, Milking Enterprise with Agro. Aida Maldonado from Ag. Extension Service.



The group of female farmers who participated in the course from August - December-2011, with Agro. Aida Maldonado – SEA, Dr. Gladys González – CEMA, and Eng. Lydia E. Collazo, FWPM - NRCS.

December 12, 2011 was a very special day for female farmers from Puerto Rico, because a group of approximately twenty five women and one man, from the East Region of the island completed the second semester of a formal course titled: "Initiative for Women in Puerto Rico's Agriculture".

The activity was celebrated at "La Maratón Dairy Farm" that belongs to one of the female farmer – Mrs. Doris Claudio. Participants enjoyed an excellent environment at the top of the San Lorenzo's mountains. They received several presentations from different Federal Government Agencies, who provided orientation relating to farming operations. All participants received a certificate of completion; during the afternoon hours, they participated in a field trip through "La Maratón Dairy Farm" where the owner explained the milking process, and NRCS representative explained conservation practices established.

During the last year, this course was offered by the University of Puerto Rico in different regions of the island in cooperation with NRCS (as Sponsor of CIG Program), in order to increase the knowledge of those females who are working as labors on farms, but want to become the farm operator as well as the owner !! Now, they are prepared to start their own Agro-Enterprise Ladies you are ready: Go-Ahead !!!



Partial view of the group while Agro. Leyinska Wiscovitch - Director's APHIS-PPQ for Puerto Rico, give a presentation regarding the Programs and Services they offer.



Dr. Gladys González, PhD, Director of CEMA ("Centro Empresarial para la Mujer en la Agricultura - CEMA") From University of Puerto Rico (RUM) – Mayaguez, PR



After the graduation ceremony, the group participated in a field trip to "La Maratón Dairy Farm", where a NRCS' Representative talked about conservation practices established.



Eng. Lydia Collazo, FWPM from NRCS with a group of calves in the feeding area.



Mr. José "Cuchito" Aponte, co-owner of "La Maratón Dairy Farm" shows us the milking refrigeration room and explains quality control measures requirements



The Natural Resources Conservation Service provides leadership in a partnership effort to help people conserve, maintain, and improve our natural resources and environment.

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