



If you have ever stopped by a fruit stand to purchase special, homemade dehydrated fruits or fresh marmalades and wondered just where do these specialties come from, you don't need to wonder any longer. It all started in early 2008 as a project of the Spanish NGO Manos Unidas together with the local support and advice of Carmelite Father Alfonso Alaiogoikoa Asuage. (The Spanish NGO Manos Unidas is a Spanish organization which fights poverty, hunger, lack of education and underdevelopment by financing projects in Third World countries; and Carmelite Father Alfonso Alaiogoikoa Asuage is the local advisor for OSCARTE, a non-governmental organization founded by the Carmelite missionaries who work for the promotion and development of areas with high levels of poverty.) Father Alfonso Alaiogoikoa Asuage actively worked to implement a project in the local area which focused on empowering poor women by teaching them to use seasonal local fruits in a productive way and to receive some income from their work. The project benefits from the support of the MIDA (Ministry of Agriculture Development) and Taiwan Technical Mission.

In early 2008 the project began at Berta Elidad Fernandez Elementary School in Bejuco, Chame, with an agricultural business, food craft and marketing training workshop. And out of this workshop came the idea to create an association of women who could put into practice what they had learned. Thus began ADEMUS (United Women Association) on April 22, 2008.

Its 14 current members have been trained in the processing of seasonal fruits, roots, and tubers; and they have decided to continue spreading what they have learned through workshops to women in different areas of the Chame District. In these workshops the women learn how to select the better fruits and how to process them using the traditional methods.

The ADEMUS office is located in la Paz de Chame. Their members receive the support and advice of OSCARTE, and they have a small plant in the community of Mangote, Bejuco. Here they have the equipment to prepare some of the products they offer such as the marmalades and fried snacks. The dehydrated fruits are processed in La Montuna Plant in Divisa, Herrera District.

ADEMUS products are 100% natural. The women obtain the fruits from their own gardens, or they buy them and then select the right ones to be processed. Mrs. Cecilia Martínez, ADEMUS President, and Mrs. Alina Aguliar say that their products have gained the acceptance of the consumers in the different markets and places they have put stalls for selling. Among the

products that ADEMUS offers are:

Dehydrated Fruits:

These are processed in La Montuna Plant in Divisa using the technique of "hot air dried" which helps to maintain the fruit's nutrients. They have the following dehydrated fruits: crystallized pineapple, mango, papaya, guava, cashew, cashew with honey.

Marmalades:

All of the marmalades are handcrafted by the women of ADEMUS. They make marmalades with the following fruits: pineapple, pineapple-nance, orange, cashew, papaya-pineapple, orange-pineapple.

Sponge Cakes:

The sponge cakes are produced with the flour which the women make with roots and tubers such as yam, cassava, otoi and sweet potato. □ They also use this flour to make pies that mix with nuts, oats, pieces of dehydrated fruits, honey and much more.

Salty Fried Snacks:

These snacks are made with cassava, yam, bananas, sweet potato and otoi. They are fried to get crispy, and then they are slightly salted.

Among ADEMUS future goals is the construction of their own industrial plant in Chame. This plant will continue to empower the local female population and enable them to register their products so they can sell them in supermarkets. They also have the vision of being able to

export their products in the future.

Locally, ADEMUS products can be bought in MIDA office in Capira and at ADEMUS office in La Paz de Chame, or you can call to 240-6368 in order to get more information.

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