

# GENETIC ALTERNATIVES



YOUR NEWSLETTER ABOUT THE LATEST ON SEED RESEARCH

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## Women in Agriculture

by *Dianne Ortiz*

For years women have been considered the ones who are solely responsible for the work within the home. However, this has changed as the years have passed and women have begun to take on a more important role in the labor force and specifically in agriculture. According to census bureau 14% of the farms in the United States are owned and operated by women. This is an increase from 9% in 1980. At 3MG in the last years our female labor force has grown from 18% to 34%.

When I think about the work we do in agriculture, the many photos of women workers that hang on our walls come to mind. Each one of these women has an important and special role. Let me tell you, we have our untiring women field workers who day after day arrive early to face the hot sun. They are capable of doing many tasks without missing the details. They complete plantings, pollination, and harvest among other tasks. Many of the women are faster than the men and they like to compete to see who is the quickest. Each day I see their passion, their desire to grow and to do good work.

We also have those professionals and workers who have prepared themselves and are not afraid to learn and face an industry that is male-dominated. We have accountants, agronomists, microbiologists, assistants etc. and some of us have taken on roles and tasks that were for years considered "men's work." For example, where else have you seen a woman running an irrigation and pest control department, driving tractors, nitro sprayers, forklifts, moving heavy boxes or sacks of fertilizer? If you visit 3MG you will see all of those things. I have seen it.

Don't get me wrong, I do not want to undermine what the men have done to help us in these areas. They are very helpful, and we appreciate all that they do. However, we women appreciate that 3MG has opened these doors to us and permitted us to do this work without ever saying, "That is a man's job." Of course they tell us to be careful. But yes, this is who we are, we are not afraid of anything, and we are breaking down barriers. Each and every one of these women has a distinct role in the business, and it is them who give that special touch every day, week and month of the year.

## Women in Agriculture (from page 1)

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The sacrifices that are required to work in this industry are immense. We know that the work requires long hours especially during planting time. How we do it, I do not know. We divide our time between our work and our responsibilities as mothers, wives etc. After a long day of work (which requires physical strength), imagine how we feel when we leave work! Then upon arriving to our homes we must feed our families, make time to enjoy them, keep a home and rest to start again in the morning. Some of these women care for their aging parents, some are community and church leaders, and they are always doing something outside of work. Others are single mothers who have made even greater sacrifices for the future of their families. I have tried to find a word that could sum up these women and all I can think of is: BRAVE. I am impressed by their courage to leave their children at home for extended periods of time to put food on the table. Others are not mothers, but they are equally brave as they have left their families far away to develop careers as leaders in this industry.



## Women in Agriculture (from page 2)

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We love agriculture. We women are necessary in the home, but we also offer the same special care we show in our homes to the industry in which we serve. We are capable of doing more than one thing at a time; we organize, we wash, we launder, we cook and we attend our children and at the same time we harvest, we plan our next planting and instruct our employees and serve our clients. We are women in agriculture.

## From the President's Desk

by: Ed Baumgartner

Greetings to all of you! It is difficult to realize how fast the time flies by when you are having fun. It seems like yesterday we were gearing up for the 2014-15 winter season starting with our employee boot camp last August, and now the last of the seed from that campaign is on its way back to the project owner. Of course things never stop here in Puerto Rico as we are now in the summer work or 2015 contra season for the southern hemisphere. I will admit it is not as busy for us but maybe a little time to reflect on the 2014-15 season is in order while we prepare for the 2015-16 season.

First off, Erin will be contacting all of our customers from last season to obtain their feedback on how we did last season. If you can't wait to hear from her, please call her at your convenience. We have our notes as to how we think we did, but having your comments is much better. That puts the reality into what we did and what needs to be better for next season.

I was very happy with the way our employees responded to the boot camp we put them through to understand everyone else's job. It is very easy to be only concerned with what we do individually and not worry about how that affects your fellow employees. Let me provide a little scenario of what can happen in a single day, not that this actually happens but it can. I am working in irrigation and see a drip line disconnected and water shooting out after I turned on the valve at the main hose to irrigate that section. I have 3 other valves to turn on within five minutes or it interferes with my watering schedule. I decide to turn on the other valves and then get back to the disconnected drip tape. During these 5 minutes, many gallons of water have pooled and started to run down the row, but I got it connected and move on. Job done. The sprayer needs to come through the field later in the day and drives through the wet spot created by an employee, me, "doing his job" and creates a deep track or worse yet runs down some crop. The deep track can create a work hazard for other employees that collect data or pollinate. The missing crop creates a problem for you the customer and us because we cannot deliver what was expected. What we tried to do last summer is develop an understanding about how even though I made the right decision for my job, I did not think about how it affects the next person's job. We will continue to work on these types of scenarios this summer to keep improving how we work together to deliver a better level of service to you.

During the past few months I have also been thinking about the larger picture of our business. We will be celebrating our 10-year anniversary of being open for business on July 7, 2015. Again, time flies when you are having fun! The realization of a decade of work at 3rd Millennium Genetics hit me hard these past few months. Have we met our responsibilities as a business and employer? We all know a business must make a profit or it ceases to exist. But what about the other things like: creating a sense of community within our business, a respect for all persons, respect for law, encouraging participation in the political processes that govern our communities, social action to better our society, open communication to customers and employees, and operating a morally sound business? We have been very focused on trying to build a good business this past decade. Now it is time to add to that by being a good community member. It is my hope that we get it all together to be the best we can be.

## EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT



Anacia Mangual



Anacia is a native of the Jauca neighborhood in Santa Isabel. She is a multi-talented woman who is knowledgeable in various aspects of agricultural processes. She sets an example with both her work ethic and her positive attitude. She is meticulous and dedicated in her labors without sacrificing her good humor. She has a wonderful ability to motivate those who work with her, and she defines the word teamwork. We continue to learn from her and we appreciate her contributions to this company.

### Q. How long have you worked for 3MG?

A. I have worked for the company as long as it has existed - 10 years. I was the first employee hired by the company.

### Q. What are your responsibilities?

A. I do whatever is necessary: pollinating, shoot bagging, shelling - everything.

### Q. What do you find most challenging about working here?

A. I don't find anything challenging. I not only enjoy my work, I love it!

### Q. What advice would you give a prospective employee?

A. I would tell them to learn to do their work well, to be disciplined in their labors, and to work well with your co-workers. Unity is important.

### Q. What changes have you seen in the time you have worked here?

A. A lot! The company has grown considerably in the last 10 years. There is also a greater variety of crops that we now grow.

### Q. What would people be surprised to know about you?

A. That I sing (but quietly). When I was younger I won some contests, but I did not have the support of my family and I left it behind.

### Q. Do you have a family of your own?

A. Yes, I have 4 children 3 sons and a daughter. My daughter has two children, my eldest son has a daughter, my middle son has 2 children, and my youngest son has two daughters. I have 7 grandchildren. Also, I have my husband of 20 years. (He is a new one.)

### Q. What is the weirdest thing you have ever eaten?

A. Calamari. YUCK! Too weird, I did not like it.



## EMPLOYEE SPOTLIGHT



**Petra Rivera**



Petra is our irrigation and pest control manager. She holds a BS in Agricultural Sciences from the University of Puerto Rico, Mayaguez with a focus on Soil Sciences. She is a native of Santa Isabel, and she is a force to be reckoned with. She is a strong woman in every sense of the word. A single mother of two children, she works as hard as and is as knowledgeable as her male counterparts. She has an impressive background and work ethic. We are fortunate to work with her, and to benefit from her knowledge.

**Q. How long have you worked for 3MG?**

A. I have worked here for two years.

**Q. What are your responsibilities?**

A. I am responsible for managing all areas of irrigation and pest control.

**Q. What do you find most challenging about working here?**

A. I don't think the challenge is specific to 3MG, but it is a challenge to work with large groups of people and maintain a harmonious atmosphere. The concepts of cooperation and loyalty are important to me. I try to facilitate leadership, cooperation and harmony in my group.

**Q. What advice would you give a prospective employee?**

A. Live passionately and work in what you are passionate about.

**Q. What changes have you seen in the time you have worked here?**

A. I have seen the consciousness of my team grow as well as the consciousness within the company and in that respect we have grown as a group.

**Q. What would people be surprised to know about you?**

A. I hold a black belt in karate, and I have been awarded the Woman Agronomist of the Year award for all of Puerto Rico three times.

**Q. Do you have a family of your own?**

A. Yes, I have two sons who are currently completing their University degrees at UPR. One is pursuing a degree in Psychology, and the other one in Agricultural Sciences.

**Q. What would your last meal be?**

A. When I was going through my cancer treatment I would go and find a place by the ocean and eat seafood seasoned with natural spices, like lobster, conch etc. served with Arañitas (shredded and fried green plantains) with a glass of merlot. For me, the setting was just as important as the food.

## Seamless Shipping

*By: Erin Rodríguez*

At the mere suggestion of shipping seed to and from Puerto Rico, some people tremble in fear. Let us assure you that this is a painless process that can be seamless. We successfully receive and ship seed to over 10 different countries on 3 continents, and that number is growing. Have no fear, 3MG is here! There are several misconceptions and myths about shipping to and from Puerto Rico - let us dispel those myths.

**Myth #1 "There are no phytosanitary field inspections in Puerto Rico."**

FALSE. Although it is true that the US Department of Agriculture does not do field inspections on the island, we use Indiana Crop Improvement Association (ICIA) for all of our phytosanitary Field inspections.

**Myth #2 "The certifications rendered by ICIA are not widely accepted."**

FALSE. Our certification by ICIA is globally accepted.

**Myth #3 "Courier services are unreliable in Puerto Rico."**

FALSE. UPS, FedEx, DHL & USPS are all just as efficient in Puerto Rico as on the mainland.

All shipments to Puerto Rico require a phytosanitary certificate from the Department of Agriculture. To ensure that your shipment is not held by the Department of Agriculture upon entry to the island, we recommend that you ship the original documents separately while sending copies of the originals with the seeds. We continue to foster good working relationships with the local governmental authorities, and more often than not we can solve any issues from our end. If we cannot resolve it on our own, we will work with our clients to make the process as painless as possible. We will do all we can to avoid the materials being returned to the sender.

When shipping regulated materials, it is imperative that the triple containment rule be observed. These seeds must be double boxed and either be contained by envelopes, bags or mesh to ensure that there is no accidental spillage. Furthermore, be sure to label all regulated shipments with contact information of the person who is responsible in the case of accidental spillage. Also, please include any associated permit numbers and label the packages as regulated materials.

As a full service company, 3MG is here to help you at every stage of the process of your agronomic project. Yes, that includes shipping. Hopefully this article will give you some helpful guidelines to make the process easier. If you still have questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact us, and we will do all that we can to be of service.



## Worker's Choice Award

To be acknowledged by your co-workers is an honor unlike any other. Your co-workers know who brings a positive attitude to the day's work. They know who it is that gives a little extra in everything they do. They know who they can count on to pull together when team work is vital. It is because of this that we are pleased to announce the winner of the Worker's Choice Award. From its inception to its execution this award was a worker for worker initiative. Over 50 people were asked not only to nominate workers, but also to donate money and their talents to the event. The troops pulled together in fine form. The winner of the Worker's Choice Award is Cesar Hernandez, and he won by what might be considered a land slide.

Cesar has worked as a field hand for three seasons with our company. He has a sweet and humble spirit that permeates everything he does. He is soft-spoken, patient, and willing to help anyone who asks. But don't let the peaceful façade fool you: Cesar works very hard every day. Cesar is the father of a 22-year-old son who lives in San Juan and works as mortician. He lives with and cares for his 83 year old mother. His hobbies include restoration of his house and cock-fighting. He has a life philosophy that is beautiful in its simplicity. He says "I believe in love and friends who enjoy each other's company. Loyalty is important to me." Needless to say this approach to life does not surprise anyone who knows him.

When I asked him how it felt to be chosen by his co-workers for the honor of the Workers Choice Award, he told me, "I am very happy to be here. I am both surprised and pleased that my co-workers think of me this way. I am also very happy to work at 3MG. I looked for work in many places, and this was the only place that offered me a job. I am grateful for that. By working here, I can stay in my home, and I appreciate the trust the company has in me."

On Behalf of 3MG we would like to congratulate Cesar Hernandez on his recognition. We would also like to thank him for all that he does here and for the example he sets in his work ethic and attitude. Thank you Cesar!



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Established in 2005, 3rd Millennium Genetics is a multi-faceted company that is dedicated to providing our customers with improved genetic alternatives through diverse products and excellent service programs. We now have two locations that enable us to take advantage of distinct climates and environmental factors to offer a wide range of services that produce better products and more in-depth research results. We take pride in offering our customers the highest quality products and superior service required to make your projects successful, sustainable and productive.

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