Agrequima Safe Use Initiative in Guatemala

Teaching the proper use and management of pesticides and fertilizers as well as the protection of the environment.

Agrequima is a non-profit apolitical body in Guatemala that aims to improve the Guatemalan agriculture industry by increasing production and limiting costs, bringing together agrochemical producers, importers and distributors.

Agrequima also aims to carry out educational programmes that teach the proper use and management of pesticides and fertilizers, as well as the protection of the environment. It was founded in the early 1990s and is a member of CropLife.

Agrequima supports local farming associations in several ways:

- Providing training sessions on responsible use and management of pesticides and the use of biodeps (a biological bed that retains and breaks down surplus pesticide).
- Encouraging the implementation of the Campo Limpio programme, which is responsible for the gathering and recycling of empty agrochemical containers that are deposited in mini centres.
- Training qualified pesticide applicators.

One such association that has benefited from the support of Agrequima is the K’aqchikel Indigenous Association for Integral Development (Asinkadi). Founded eight years ago in the Sololá region of Guatemala by a group of entrepreneurial indigenous farmers, Asinkadi’s main crop is sugar-snap. The association currently has 45 members, eight of whom are women. They cultivate 52.6 hectares of land and have a bi-annual production of 95,000 pounds of sugar snap. More recently they have begun to cultivate carrots, onions, cauliflower, broccoli, potatoes and flowers.

Due to the support provided by Agrequima and other external bodies, Asinkadi will soon fulfill the normative requirements to receive GLOBALGAP certification for their sugar-snap, thus enabling them to export it.