

Linda Fix
NYS Promotion & Education Committee

Agriculture – The Universal Language

I recently travelled to Portoviejo, Ecuador, which was the epicenter of a major earthquake this year. Riding through the village, it was clear this region was heavily damaged. Speaking to many who went through this ordeal, the one thing I learned was that while they may have lost their homes and businesses, they never went hungry. Although fresh water was scarce at first, there was always plenty of food. I have been here a few times now, but after the devastating earthquake, it's amazing how resilient these people are. While the houses may be on stilts or some are still living in tents offered by the Government, their fields are well manicured and very much flourishing with fruits and veggies.

It's funny how we take things for granted. There, sometimes the internet works, and sometimes it doesn't. But what was interesting was to see all the agriculture available. There was corn growing on hills steeper than I have ever seen before with donkeys at the bottom of the hill eating and waiting for their master to come back to bring them home after a long day.

Along the road you will find people selling watermelon, oranges, bananas and of course plantains as well as other home-made items that are tasty. These small "farm markets" are open every day, as this is how they make their living – selling their crops. The people here go from place to place to pick up their fruit, veggies, dairy, bread, and other groceries instead of a large grocery store. It was very easy to grab some fresh fruit to have fresh-squeezed fruit juice every day. And of course, if you are thirsty, you can grab a coco water – using a straw to drink right out of the coconut.

The hustle and bustle during the day are the farmers harvesting and delivering their crops throughout the region. I found it very different ways of their and veggies were piled into heading somewhere to fascinating to see how the delivery systems work. The fruits cars, trucks and on mules, all feed their people.

We live in a region where And while I always take our farmers have to offer, I so that throughout the harvest. We have dairy farmers' local markets and meats are also available at should take advantage of. the lawn advertising fresh to stop and buy from our commodities are available. Visit your local farm markets and buy fresh. Don't forget about the bees and their honey. Local honey, as we know, is very good for the allergies, especially this time of year.



fruits and veggies are seasonal. advantage of all the freshness have decided to preserve more year, our family can enjoy the products that are available in the sold in our local stores. Fresh local farm markets that we Many farmers will have signs on eggs. We should practice more local farmer while the

One thing is very clear that we all need to EAT. I would like to thank the Farmers all over the world for their hard work and dedication. Farmers count on the weather conditions and always manage to continue their livelihood even after a disaster.