

Sheep Not Goats / Sheep Dreamzzz Year-End Update

From: Sheep Not Goats / Sheep Dreamzzz (steve@sheepnotgoats.org)

To: smjacoby@yahoo.com

Date: Saturday, December 14, 2019, 04:21 PM EST

**If you don't see the image above, please enable images in this email message.
There are important photos below and we want you to see them!**



Dear Steve,

We love this time of year! There is excitement in the air, people are more thoughtful and considerate towards one another, and the spirit of giving abounds. It also is a time when we get to share what God has been able to do in 2019 through our non-profit Sheep Not Goats, which includes Sheep Dreamzzz baby blankets.

In a separate email to be sent this evening, we will share specific opportunities to help with the work in 2020. We think we have come up with a list that will really make a difference, with options to fit any budget, and in many cases the giving will be tied to a specific person or family, so we pledge to provide you with updates that include pictures, words, and where applicable feedback from the recipient to you and your family!

Our mission for the last seven years has been to help change people's circumstances through jobs so that by the work of their own hands they can meet the needs of their families and raise their standard of living. Donations have enabled all of the programs and support that Sheep Not Goats has been able to offer to the poor in Nicaragua. We are very grateful to all who have generously donated to help people they will almost certainly never meet. Thank you for your trust in us and for your desire to make a difference in people's lives!

Nicaragua Update – It's important to consider everything in this email within the context of what has been going on in Nicaragua. Beginning in April 2018, Nicaraguans began peacefully demonstrating against government attempts to squeeze them for money as a result of the very bad economy (Nicaragua remains the poorest country in the western hemisphere, after Haiti). The police and masked government supporters working with them killed between 300 and 500 citizens and imprisoned even more. International sanctions are in place from virtually

all human rights organizations and governments, and many people fled the country. The tourism industry collapsed overnight because of the violence, and the economy is crumbling. Jobs became even more scarce than before, and the prices of all basic necessities have risen (one example is a 150% increase in the cost of eggs). Every bit of work, even if it's short-term, can make the difference between extreme need and destitution. So while things are calm compared to 2018, nothing has been resolved and the people are bearing the consequences of a government that is only concerned with remaining in power.

Here are highlights of what we have been able to accomplish in 2019:

- **Operate the Farm in Malpaisillo** – We currently employ 9 people for the farm. They maintain the farm, ensuring that plants don't die in the hot and dry environment, feed and maintain the tilapia in the aquaponics area, and guard the farm during off hours. We replaced most of our plantains with guava, which produces year-round and is more tolerant of dryer conditions and wind. We sell what we can to offset expenses and will double our efforts in that area upon our return to Nicaragua in January.



- **Senior Breakfasts** – For about 2 years so far, we have hosted a nutritious breakfast for local seniors. It has been a huge success; we began with 18 seniors and are now up to twenty-five. We wish you could be on the receiving end of the love the senior citizens give us, their kisses and hugs – they say this is the highlight of their week. The breakfasts happen whether we are in Nicaragua or not. And there are special events such as honoring the women on Mother's Day and hosting an annual Christmas breakfast party. The breakfasts also allow us to spot certain needs like when Ramon arrived with very old tattered shoes. A week later he received a brand new pair of comfortable sneakers.
- **Other Food Support** — Through much of 2019 and until now, we have helped our workers to purchase food for their families. This has been especially important because we have chosen to employ and help more people through part-time work vs. just a few working full-time. We are currently subsidizing food for our workers with families at the level of \$10.50 each week, while those without families to support receive half that amount. We are also helping one of the knitters who comes from

especially difficult circumstances. We will need additional support to continue that in 2020.

- **Medical Support** – Something that typically gets skipped when people struggle to eat is medical care and medicines. They just try to “push through it.” Through our contacts with the workers, the knitters, and the seniors we learn about these needs and are in a position to help. The state-run healthcare is horrendous, but we’ve made connections with a local private clinic and its doctors and have been able to send quite a few people for quality diagnoses and then followup tests and medicines that have often been necessary.
- **Sheep Dreamzzz Baby Blankets** – Sandy has maintained a force of about 20 women who have learned to knit extremely well. They make baby blankets that we sell in the US, online and in-person. Every blanket sale can feed a family for a week. When we are able to bring an additional knitter on board, Sandy trains another from a list of vulnerable women begging to join. This business is sustainable based upon our ability to sell blankets, which is indeed hard work! We are about to try to sell some blankets through retail baby boutiques. If you can help arrange a conversation with a retailer, please help us!



- **Knitter Support** — One of our monthly donors gave extra money at the end of 2018 so that, in January, we were able to give a surprise bonus to all of the knitters.
- **More than Double Our Solar Energy Production** – A single donor funded a major upgrade to our solar plant. In January we hope to completely disconnect from the grid, saving hundreds of dollars each month. Total nominal output is over 7 kilowatts.



- **Sudden Needs** – One of the senior women took a bad fall and was disabled for several months. She needed a real bathroom (vs. the typical hole in the ground). A new donor gave money to build her a real bathroom, and we got it done, with shower, toilet, sink, and tile. This helped her but also 2-3 men who received extra work to build it.

As mentioned earlier, we will be sending a second communication later about specific opportunities to help prepare us to do even more in 2020.

Enjoy the Holidays!

Steve & Sandy Jacoby

Directors, Sheep Not Goats

Saint Augustine, Florida



If you wish to unsubscribe from emails like this, click the the "unsubscribe from this list" link or simply reply to this email with "Unsubscribe" in the subject or body. You can also write to us at 41 Rohde Avenue, Saint Augustine, FL 32084

Is this email not displaying correctly? [View it in your browser](#)

[unsubscribe from this list](#)