



## PRESS RELEASE

### FIRST WORLD CONFERENCE ON SELF-SUFFICIENT AGRICULTURAL SCHOOLS

*Paraguay, December, 2007*—Making Cents International participated as a sponsor of the First World Conference on Self-Sufficient Agricultural Schools, which was organized by Fundación Paraguaya and its sister organization, TeachAMantoFish. An international body of 140 experts in education, microfinance, and agriculture convened at Fundación Paraguaya’s agricultural high school’s campus in Cerrito, Paraguay December 4-6, 2007.

Fundación Paraguaya is a social enterprise that seeks to develop innovative solutions to poverty and unemployment and proactively disseminate them throughout the world. It manages a microfinance program that supports microentrepreneurs and emerging entrepreneurs, and an economic education program for children and young people based on the Junior Achievement model. Additionally, it started a financially self-sufficient agricultural high school in 2002, which has produced significant results and widespread recognition. This conference emerged from the experience of this school and worldwide interest in it.

The conference’s theme was **"Integrating Entrepreneurship into Agricultural Education."** This theme highlights the importance of agriculture in sustaining rural life in developing countries. It also emphasizes the need to integrate training into sound agricultural practices with the teaching of entrepreneurial skills, if agricultural education is to offer a viable route out of rural poverty. Conference participants also addressed the following topics: 1) Financially Self-Sufficient Schools: Rewarding Examples; 2) Transforming Curricula: Integrating Agricultural and Entrepreneurial Education; and 3) Reaching Out: Meeting Needs and Achieving Impact.

Beyond listening to fascinating presentations, conference participants engaged in cultural events, tours of the school, and networking opportunities. They also interacted with students and teachers of Fundación Paraguaya’s agricultural high school who helped plan and execute this learning event. Other sponsors include the Avina Foundation, Peery Foundation, and Educating Africa.

As a result of the conference, TeachAManToFish was given a mandate to lead a world movement that will promote education for rural entrepreneurship in every country. A Steering Committee, virtual forum, and network of schools interested in replicating the model are under development to help with this mission. Making Cents International strongly supports this endeavor and was pleased to be a part of this historic conference. “This conference demonstrated the need to promote and support financially self-sufficient agricultural schools, which have the capacity to revolutionize education and serve as catalysts for entrepreneurship and rural development,” said Andrew Baird, Making Cents International’s Director of International Programs.

For more information, visit: [www.fundacionparaguaya.org.py](http://www.fundacionparaguaya.org.py) and [www.teachamantofish.org.uk](http://www.teachamantofish.org.uk).