

COOMAP NEWS

In your opinion, how important is it to speak English? Well, you might say that it is a key that opens a door to the whole world, after all it is the language of international business and trade. Well, with this in mind COOMAP decided to give its next generation of members a great opportunity through...

ENGLISH CLASSES FOR MEMBER'S CHILDREN AND GRANDCHILDREN



As a co-op, COOMAP is always encouraging its members to start family succession process, for which we even have a course dedicated to, as described on our 5th edition. So that it is successful, it's important that younger generations feel they aren't missing opportunities by staying at the family's farm.

One way of doing it is by allowing them to have access to education. According to this, in 2016 COOMAP started its first English Class. There were 17 students from 14 to 17 years old. COOMAP prepared its training room to offer the best learning environment for these youngsters by installing a projector, digital blackboard and sound system.

But there was something missing: what about books and methodology?

COOMAP wrote a letter to Cambridge University Press and requested its support. After writing a project proposal, that was sent to the company's headquarters, and exchanging some e-mails, they decided to support this initiative by providing all of the books for the students! Something that made everyone at the co-op bubble with excitement! Right after that, the program was announced to all of the members. Some days later the first class was already taking place... there were HOW ARE YOU, MY LAST NAME IS... and I AM, YOU ARE, HE IS,... being heard all over the co-op! Yeah, students were excited for having such a great opportunity, after all paying for English classes in Brazil is expensive, something that many of our growers can't afford with.

After the 3-year-long course the first group reached the end of the second book. At this level, students were ready to conduct medium complexity conversations and face pre-university tests confidently. That is nice, isn't it? It is really a great and rewarding project, because several students did really well at it, like a girl who became reference at school during English classes, or even a guy who did really well at a test for studying at a federal university, and even students who got confident for flirting with foreigners over the internet... lol... These teens are the same everywhere, aren't they? However, COOMAP did have challenges at it. One of them is the fact that many teens had to quit classes in order to go to college,

which was something really celebration deserving, but we also had students who left the course in order to work, because they were already 18 years old. And this is something that made us wonder about the importance of starting a next group with younger students so that they have plenty of time to do it completely.

In early last February classes for the second group started. There were about 25 students, but this time the group was a mix of members' children and grandchildren with COOMAP staff, after all, unfortunately, we didn't have teens enough for a class just for them. And as you might know, we haven't been able to have classes since COVID-19 came up.

This project has taught the co-op that the path for improving our member's awareness toward the importance of education isn't straight and short. But instead of losing heart, realizing it reinforces the importance of a co-op to the community around it. Thus COOMAP has been improving its projects dedicated to the next generations, after all education is one of the main blocks for building fair life conditions and sustainable work, which are part of its mission as co-op. Well, since all of you who read our newsletter speak English fluently, whenever you have the chance to visit us, chances are big that we will have a class going on. Thus you are warmly invited to get in the class and have a chat with them... very slowly and with your mouth wide open please!





It's been said that we should be like ants and not like grasshoppers. If this is still true in our times or not, it's a discussion for some other time, but today we'd like to introduce you a couple that we could name Mr. and Mrs. Ant, they are Irene and Joseph (people around here call him Big Joseph), our

GROWER OF THE MONTH

Terezinha Irene Xavier Mendes, is a very quiet, calm, easy smiling 53-year-old woman who is a real tractor when it comes to working! We mean it because along with her husband she does everything is their 6.5-hectare farm, named Santa Terezinha Farm.

She had a very humble beginning at her father's farm, who used to plant garlic for a living. Something interesting that she told us was that her father didn't appreciate the idea of planting coffee because what he really liked was dealing with ox charts... you read it well, but after her mother insisted so much on it, he decided to plant some trees and for his own surprise he liked it. Because of that, a few years later he had left garlic crops behind, and the ox chart became just a hobby. Irene says that she remembers spending time with her family while they were dealing with coffee crops.

Some years later, she got interested in one of her neighbors, who turned out to become her husband. It was a very humble beginning, after all they had to live at a small farm that used to belong to Joseph's father. There was no electricity and they needed to borrow money in order to harvest coffee and pay the bills. After Irene's mother passed away she inherited a small piece of land, which they sold and

bought part of the farm they have right now. This didn't mean the end of their hard word. Since it was all pasture, they had to plant all of the 14 thousand coffee trees they have now. In order to make money to pay for the costs of a new crop, they kept working as coffee harvesters for several years while they still had to do everything at their farm.

Looking back on all of their work results, they say that they managed to buy two houses in the city, all of it with coffee revenue. Two years ago Irene decided to convert a part of her farm to organic, and once again her husband and her **w h o** are the ones **t a k e** care of

everything. And when we say it, don't think we are talking about a disorganized farm, it is just the opposite. Whenever you stop by, their house, patio and machines are always clean and well maintained. In fact, we have the sensation that their coffee trees are like her children, which her husband and her couldn't have. "Coffee is something very good, but you've got to treat it well and take good care of it. At the farm we work a lot, but I'm much more free than a person who works at a company and has rigid working hours. This way it is great!", she says with a wide smile on her face. But being honest to you, we are quite sure that Irene, our little ant, works longer hours than most of ordinary company workers... however she likes it so much that she might not realize the clock ticking away.

Isn't it great learning about someone who really loves coffee and appreciates everything it has allowed her to have? Ah, something else Irene is also good at is making cookies and pudding, we really learned it ourselves... lol ! Want check it for yourself? Then you are invited to come over and pay them a visit. We are sure you'll love them... that is, her, her husband and the deserts.



See you next month!