

# Women in Ag Network (WAgN) Honduras

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## WAgN Honduras

WAgN Honduras is a five year project led by Penn State in collaboration with Zamorano University. We seek to understand how the horticultural value chain (HVC) can be a mechanism to support equity and empowerment for women, to improve their household nutrition and provide income-generating opportunities.

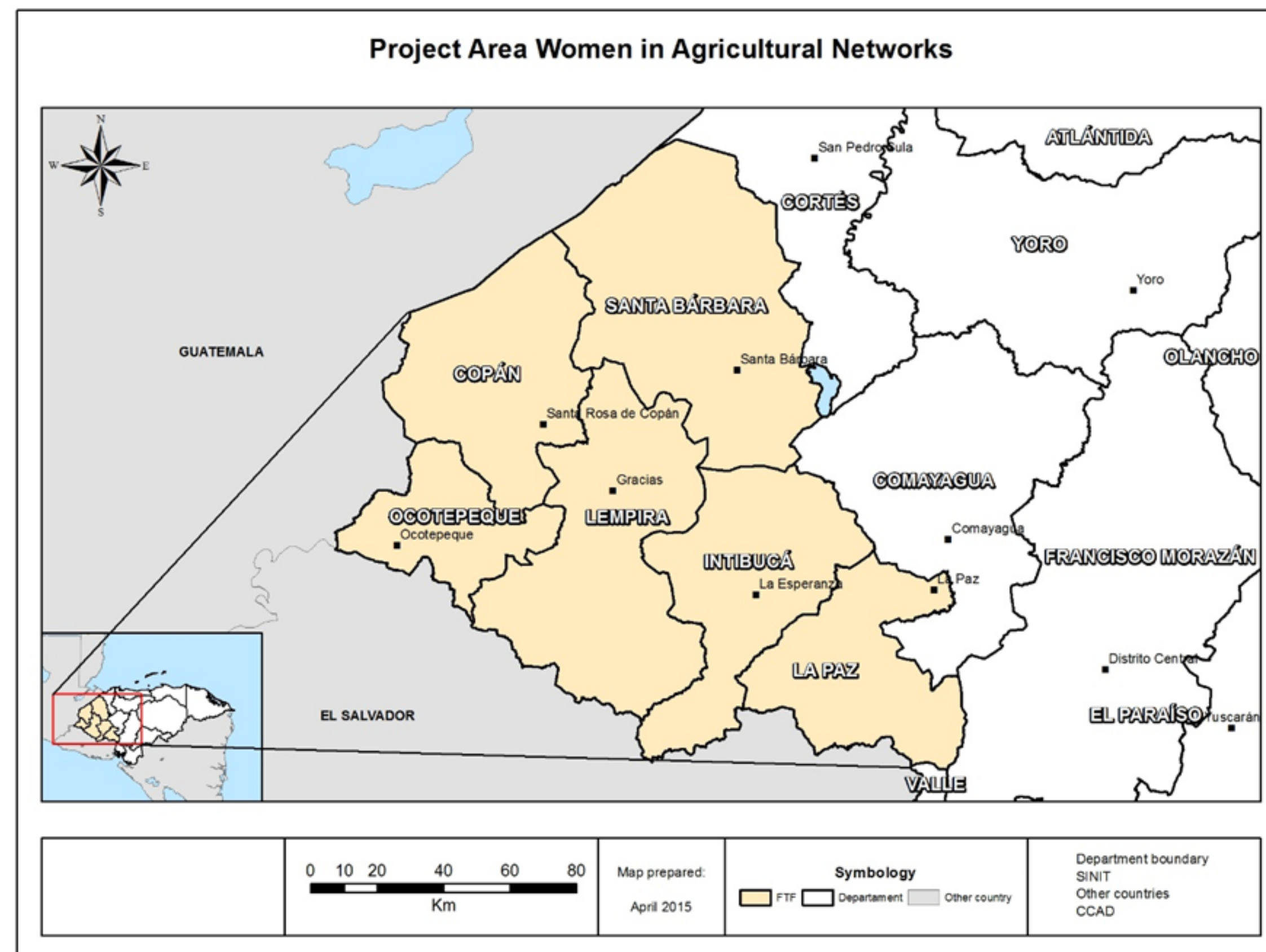


Figure 1. Project Area for WAgN Honduras

## Rationale

The Western highlands of Honduras have long been characterized by subsistence farming, poor diets and poverty. With limited access to inputs, credit, markets and technical assistance, productivity is low. Horticulture has higher value production than basic grains and limited scale economies, and therefore provides an avenue for small farmers to increase income. On a macro-scale, it provides greater demand for labor and opportunities for value-addition, as well as potential improvements in nutrition and dietary diversification.

However, it can be difficult for women and other resource poor farmers to enter the HVC in the target zone. Horticultural production requires investments in technologies such as drip irrigation, solar dryers, on-farm storage and greenhouses, as well as access to credit or other financing options. Producers also need connections to the national/international value chain, technical assistance, business knowledge, and the ability to meet rigorous quality and food safety standards. Large buyers provide the possibility of increased returns, but smallholder farmers are challenged to meet their requirements. Credit and technical assistance are limited for all small farmers in the region, and women face additional barriers to both. While women bear the bulk of household and reproductive responsibilities, they also contribute to agricultural production. Gender roles in this region proscribe activities and limit women's decision-making roles.

## Goals

Our project seeks to understand how the HVC can be a mechanism to support equity and empowerment for women and other marginalized populations. We shall identify technologies, institutions and policies that facilitate small-scale farmers producing horticultural products to improve their household nutrition and enter the local, national and regional markets, as well as other opportunities for entrepreneurs and wage laborers.

To achieve this, we shall **carry out a gendered analysis of the HVC** in Honduras, including access to inputs, production, packaging and processing. We shall also **identify barriers women and others face** in access to credit, technical assistance, use of technologies, and access to markets. The structure of the market will be analyzed to determine how women and other small farmers can best negotiate price and mitigate risk. In addition, we shall identify policies, regulations, and cultural norms that limit the participation of women and other marginalized groups in the HVC. Using these findings, we shall partner with local NGOs, microfinance institutions and women's organizations to **develop and deliver appropriate training, technologies and financial tools** to producers, NGOs, private enterprises, and research institutes.

## Objective 1: Increase the nutritional status and income for poor households in the Feed the Future (FTF) target region by increasing women's participation in the HVC

- Determine barriers to women's participation in the HVC through a household survey, focus groups and key informant interviews.
- Identify opportunities for sustainable intensification to most effectively use limited resources.
- Create opportunities to participate in the HVC as entrepreneurs or laborers to increase household income and nutrition.
- Provide training in sustainable intensification and nutrition through Farmer Field Schools (FFS) and ensure that the intensification is gender sensitive.

## Objective 2: Identify and disseminate appropriate technologies for women's greater participation in the HVC

- Identify barriers to women's adoption of technologies focused on access to appropriate training and technologies.
- Introduce technologies through gender sensitive training.



Potato processing plant in Honduras.

Marketplace in Honduras.

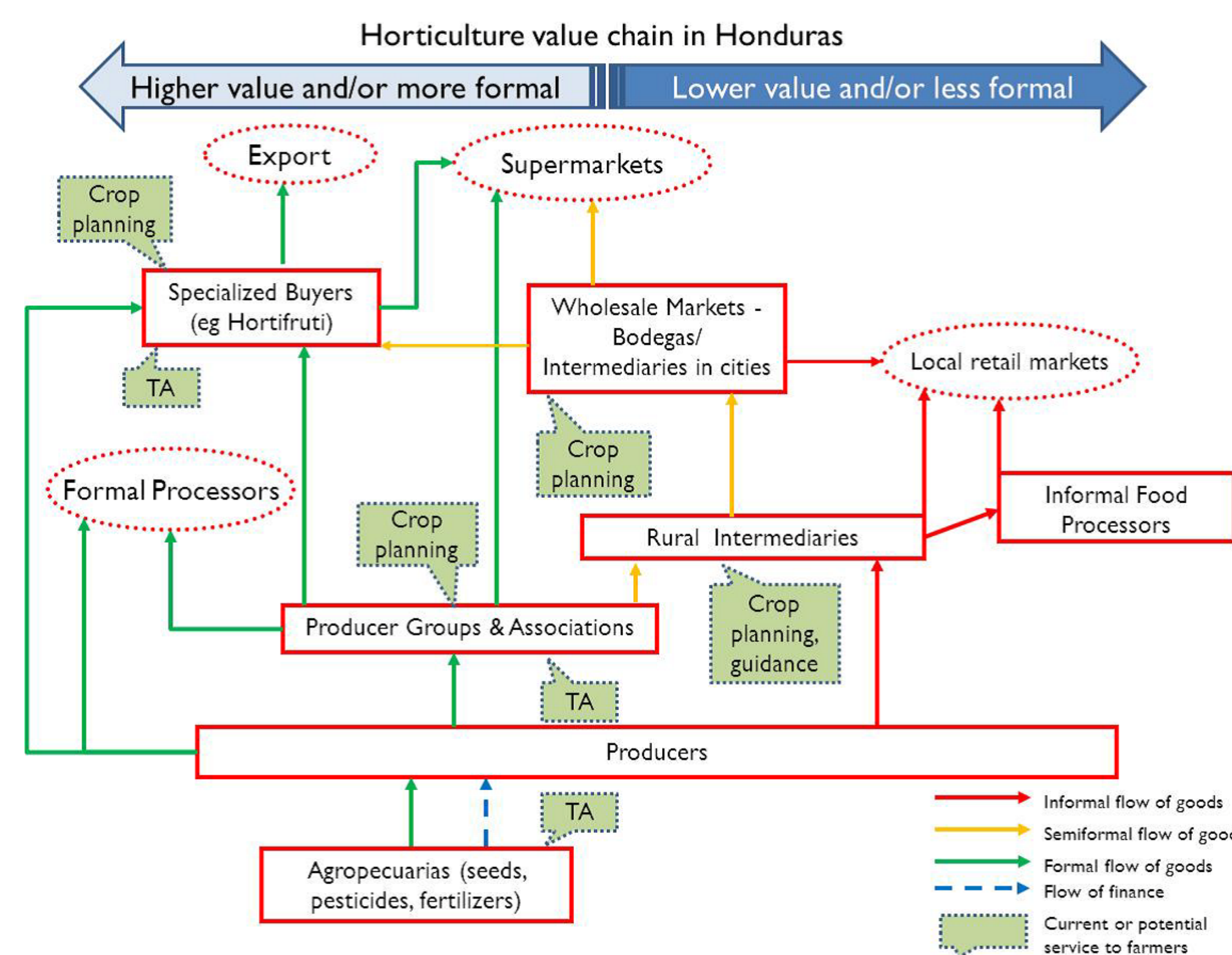


Figure 2. Horticulture Value Chain in Honduras  
Chalmers et al., 2012. *Sustainability in the Honduran Informal Market System*

## Objective 3: Develop capacity to participate in the local, regional and international horticultural market so that female producers are able to negotiate effectively for fair prices and shared risk

- Identify policies and cultural norms that limit the participation of women and other marginalized populations in the HVC.
- Provide training in negotiation, finance and marketing to build capacity.
- Develop financing tools with private sector and informal financial entities.
- Strengthen women's cooperatives ability to negotiate with market actors.
- Identify and strengthen marketing options for producers at various levels of expertise and quality control (local, domestic, regional and international).

## Objective 4: Build capacity in local agricultural institutions and NGOs as well as international universities and research institutes in gender sensitive value chain analysis and sustainable intensification

- Create certificate programs in gender sensitive agricultural development (or sustainable intensification) at Penn State and Zamorano.
- Design curricula and provide training for Central American NGOs working in agriculture and community development.
- Develop a scalable model and tools for gender sensitive research and project implementation.

