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Class
IX

Reflect



Director's Dialogue *Dr. Hannah Carter*

"Broad, wholesome, charitable views of men and things cannot be acquired by vegetating in one little corner of the earth all of one's lifetime." -Mark Twain

As I think about Class IX's international trip, I do not know where to focus my thoughts—the differences in the countries we visited, the experience of being with a group of people on the road for 17 days, or my programmatic thoughts of "what could I have done better in regards to this trip?" I think I'll focus on the experience.

This was my sixth international trip. I had the great fortune to travel with Dr. Trotter and Dr. Long with Class IV and Class V and then as the one in charge for Class VI, Class VII and Class VIII. I actually broke my own rule for this trip and did not get my passport renewed, even though it expires within six months of the return date, because this passport encompasses all the international trips I've taken as the director of this program. With each class and each trip, I've learned a great deal about myself, about our world and the importance of going away to see new places with stellar groups of individuals.

It was during this trip that I learned the importance of statistics...during my five previous international trips, I've never had a medical emergency, I've never had to deal with a passport being stolen, I've never considered having to repay damages caused by five individuals trying to force their way out of a stuck elevator. I guess I was due and this trip became the trip of "firsts"—first medical emergency (not one even, but two!), first purse stolen, first elevator fiasco—it became a bit of a joke when a Class IX member asked me "so is this a first too?" The class was amazing through it all though—they rallied behind their classmates who had these unfortunate incidents—and really had an "all for one and one for all" attitude. They remained positive, upbeat and with each unforeseen incident, they remained supportive of each other and of the trip itself. My respect for this class grew exponentially on this trip—I knew that were a great class—I now know that they are an exceptional one.

It is through travel that we realize how fortunate we are to live where we do. While we have issues here in Florida and

in the U.S., we are certainly lucky too. This trip only cemented that fact when we were introduced to the challenges facing the three countries we visited. We did see their opportunities too and I believe that a great many of our group will return these countries in the future—for both business and for pleasure.

A trip of this magnitude cannot happen without many people—I would like to thank Janice Shephard for all the details she took care of prior to the trip, Dr. Joe Joyce and Kevan Lamm, for being on the road to share in the responsibilities of making the trip "happen" and all the family and friends of Class IX who shared in the adventures through social media along the way and most importantly for keeping the home fires burning while we were gone!

It's bittersweet for Class IX to be graduating in several weeks. I look forward to this group being welcomed into the alumni association and to see the impact they will make in the future.

"Investment in travel is an investment in yourself." -Matthew Karsten



Noah Handley



Peru

Being an author of this Newsletter is bitter sweet. Bitter, because I am documenting the end of an amazing journey so many have experienced. Sweet, because I was fortunate enough to be a part of the Class IX adventure.

Spirits were high as we were leaving for our adventure. Relinquishing a passport to a hotel clerk in a foreign Country was the straw the broke the camel's back (for me), having done little international travel it was extremely unnerving to relinquish my only form of ID to a hotel clerk who was keeping it overnight. With reassurance from the group I decided that was not normal but when in Peru act like a Peruvian, or just suck it up buttercup.



After a short night sleep we boarded the bus for our trip to Ica, Peru ~5 hours south of Lima. Yes I knew we were in a desert, but this was my first time I was on a bus for 5 plus hours and did not see anything growing without irrigation. The other starkly obvious thing was the number of unfinished houses. This was a result of a tax policy that enabled owners to avoid property tax payments on a structure until the structure was complete, leaving many houses with a constant growth of just enough bricks to keep the tax collector at bay.

Arrival to Ica was around noon, the trip in and through a few small communities on the road made the prospects for lunch seem bleak. Much to our surprise we dined at an extremely nice resort hotel that was decidedly more upscale than its neighbors.

HM Clause Ica Seed

For our first session of the trip we visited Ica Seed of HM Clause a subsidiary of Limagrain. Ica Seed is one of eight home farms of HM Clause, developed in 2005 approximately 10 years after corporate farming became prevalent in Peru. The location provides many things mainly the ability to help moderate their supply chain to ensure their product, vegetable seed, is available to the world's market on a continuous basis. Per their operations manager, their primary challenge on farm was managing their water supply and the salinity of the soil. Ica, Peru being one of the driest places on the planet requires Ica Seed to maintain a 3 day water & power supply in reserve to account for energy or infrastructure failure not uncommon in developing countries. The local permanent staff of 45 consists of a manager, 7 accountants, a doctor, a social worker, 6 engineers, and 29 farm workers. The doctor & social worker are required by law.



Morning exercise on day 2 produced a WLIANR First, according to Dr. Carter, with a trip the hospital in a foreign country (for a cracked collar bone and BFT (Blunt Force Trauma) to the eye).

Lessons Learned;

- Jogging is dangerous even with a concrete security wall that is lined with gun towers.
- Peruvian Healthcare is inexpensive and good.

HM Clause Overview

After the morning excitement HM Clause South America presented the big picture of their business and worldwide seed production. As a subsidiary of Limagrain the second largest seed company in the world. It has a presence in 30 countries and on every continent except Antarctica. The company is made of farmers, researchers, scientist, project managers and host of professional staff to ensure their success. Breeding 23 global species (tomato, melon, squash, beans, peppers, etc) HM Clause is #1 worldwide in melon, pumpkin, zucchini, and corn salad. Their production facilities worldwide are focused on the best environment to fit the seeds they produce. Ica being a desert with a marine influence has a high sun light hours per day and the groundwater provides sufficient irrigation, and the other factors are manageable with proper attention.

With annual sales of \$40+ Billion US, they have global seed production to mitigate risks associated with supplying a perishable product, controlling cost, production on counter seasons, and improving variety adaptation through traditional plant breeding. With only 217 hectares (~536 acres) of home farms HM Clause employs contract growers to achieve ~4700 Hectares (11,610 acres) of production to maintain their supply. Their business truly helps feed the world.



Condesan

Miguel Saravia from Condesan presented on their efforts in land and water management in the Andean region primarily around Lima. Part of the challenges of water supply "opportunity to succeed" in Lima, it is the second largest metropolitan area in the world with 9 million people (behind Cairo, Egypt). Of the 9 million living in the Lima Metropolitan area 1.5 million do not have a consistent clean supply of potable water. To add to the water supply challenges 80% of Peruvian population lives west of the Andean mountain chain which has only 3% of the countries water. Another objective of Condesan is improving efficiency of the use (currently potable supply is 60% efficient while agriculture supply is 35% efficient). Another part of the water supply challenges in Peru include the Peruvian people view water as more than hydric resource they also view it as:

- A Living Devine Being
- A basis of reciprocity
- A universal civic right

In Lima metropolitan area the primary water supplies is 3 rivers; Lurin, Rimac, and Chillon, which have a total population of approximately 80,000 in their watersheds while Lima has approximately 9 million. In the Chillon watershed, Huamantaga a pre-Inca community built ancient infiltration canals to divert river runoff for the purposes of hydrating springs to provide water to downhill areas. A current project of Condesan is to revitalize these

infiltration canals. The 20 year deficit forecast of 23 cubic meters per second (525 million gallons per day) thus there are many efforts aimed at improving efficiency, conserving water, and conserving the upstream sources to supply the growing deficit.



Brisas Del Titicaca Dance Show & Dinner



The pictures speak for themselves, culture and fun was had by all.

Capping off the Peru leg of the trip the last night included some real excitement. Five guys in a very small elevator were a little more than it could handle, not to mention another WLIANR First I think hey all would have been happy to skip.



Lessons Learned:

- International cell call from elevator in basement of hotel is almost impossible.
- Hotel Staff was very optimistic on recovery time of 20 minutes (actual recovery time 60 minutes),
- Many more lessons that should not be discussed in polite company.



National Agrarian University - La Molina

Visit to the National Agrarian University provided an opportunity to learn about a crop indigenous to Peru but popular among the foodies of the world now, Quinoa. Quinoa production reduced significantly with the arrival of the Spanish however is a highly nutritious grain that is suited to the 3-4000 meters above sea level in the highlands of Peru. Unfortunately Peruvian farmers grow and export the crop without taking advantage of the harvest locally because of the high export market. One of the main areas of research for the university is to improve production and variety selection to increase supply decreasing the price giving the local population the ability to afford the grain. In addition to the quinoa research the university is working on mapping local pepper varieties to identify native species that are the most favorable for commercial production to improve the opportunities for farmers to produce higher value crops.

April Porter



Chile

We arrived in Santiago, Chile on Tuesday after a phenomenal visit to Peru. Immediately, programming kicked off with a dinner and visit from Brie Reiter Smith from Driscolls. She shared her insights on the country and some of the cultural differences between the US and Chile. Laying the scene for our time in the country, Brie lamented that the largest hurdles facing agriculture in Chile are 1) shortage of farm labor 2) rising minimum wage (driven by the current government in Chile) and 3) distance from end markets (US, Europe & Asia). Many of these points were echoed during the next several days as we learned more about the agriculture industry in Chile.



Early to bed and early to rise, our first full day of programming began before daylight on Wednesday morning. Chile's government decided to forgo daylight savings time this year, which meant the sun didn't rise until after 8am! The day

started with a visit to the wholesale market on the outskirts of Santiago. The group enjoyed finding their commodity amongst the hundreds of vendors.



Later that morning, we convened at the U.S. embassy and met with the Foreign Ag Service to learn about the USDA's presence in foreign countries. FAS in Chile is actively expanding the pre-clearance program where sample selections from lots of produce leaving Chile can be inspected prior to export and if no pest issues are found, the entire lot can be pre-cleared and avoid fumigation in Chile and at the US port of entry. About 50% of Chile's export produce is pre-cleared. Our group had quite a few questions on this topic and subsequent conversations ensued amongst the group over whether this is the best policy for US producers since it invariably increases the risk of invasive species and disease.

Chile exports most of their Agriculture production and embraces the open economy and free market of today's world. Salmon, copper and fresh fruit/vegetables are Chile's biggest agriculture and natural resource industries. After learning that Chile is the #1 exporter of blueberries, it was a bit surprising to hear multiple speakers mention that Chileans were very unfamiliar with blueberries and most people did not know how to eat them. The blueberry was brought to Chile to be grown for export and there isn't a large market for them in Chile.

We spent some of our time in Santiago meeting with a handful of industry groups and agencies that further the interests of agriculture in Chile:

- At Fundacion Chile, we heard how this private/public initiative is pioneering new industries in Chile by investing in startups and fostering entrepreneurship while leading seed rounds of capital. Oftentimes this group will take a risk that the strictly private sector is unwilling to with the hopes of proving out the potential for a new industry that could add economic value to the country and government.

- Sociedad Nacional de Agricultura is similar to our Farm Bureau and services hundreds of growers and smaller organizations. There we learned more about exports and imports. In particular, Chile has 4 main advantages that contribute to its success as an exporter: 1) free trade agreements with 87% of the world 2) isolation from other countries via the Andes on the west and desert to the north 3) Mediterranean climate with several different growing regions and 4) Off-season production to the northern hemisphere (not much competition in the southern hemisphere). Chile hopes to grow exports from \$19.5 billion in 2014 to \$28 billion in 2020.

- Rabobank talked to us about Chile's major export business for wine. Nearly 75% of the wine produced in Chile is exported, with the US importing the majority of it. Our speaker discussed how the wine industry in Chile struggles to market the great wine it produces. In the past, Chilean wine has been sold at a lower price point in order to take market share, but that has in turn inaccurately signaled to consumers that the wine was lower quality. Our class can definitely vouch for the quality of Chilean wine and would highly recommend it to everyone. However, we're sure there is significantly less to export after our week in Chile!



During our time in Santiago, we visited a Pre-Columbian Art Museum which was very fascinating. The pottery artifacts were incredible, as were the textiles on display. They both had such beautiful colors and intricate details, phenomenal works of art given the technology and resources available prior to European influence and colonization.

Just as we were wrapping up our visit and lunch at the museum, our 2nd unfortunate incident of the trip occurred. Somebody swiped a purse from our group and with it got credit cards and a passport. After a disappointing no-show by the police, efforts were redirected to get a replacement passport. Kevan inadvertently kept the mood light while corralling Terry and after a successful (second) visit to the embassy, we were all clear to leave Santiago the next morning.

"Terry it's time to go!" -Kevan

Speaking of Terry, our tour guide for Chile, well let's just say that she loves rocking the fanny pack. Terry has quite a lot of knowledge (read: opinions) to impart and wasn't afraid to freestyle and ad lib when interpreting for a Spanish speaker. Our bus rides in Chile were typically filled with the sounds of Terry's passive-aggressive musings of Chile and the background accompaniment of Justin Hood's snoring.



We spent our last evening in Santiago reflecting on the trip to-date. It was a much needed debrief session after a week on the road and turned into a great night bonding together. At this point in the trip, everyone still seemed to be in good spirits, individually and with each other. That's probably partly due to the fabulous cafe and vino available at every meal.

The CopaAmerica tournament kicked off while we were in Santiago. A group of us went to the game and it was such a fun experience! The stadium was surprisingly quiet during play. Despite being very prepared to encounter rowdy crowds, we felt safe the whole time. Chile won the game 2-0 and we all enjoyed cheering with the locals after each goal. After the game our group walked the 5 miles back to our hotel and resisted the urge to tell Hannah we lost somebody. It was also neat to continue following the tournament during our trip through South America and even once we arrived back in the US. Especially since (spoiler alert!) Chile won the whole tournament.



Saturday was a road trip on the bus to Vina del Mar. Cheeks on the seats at 8am was easier for some to accomplish than others.

Our first stop was a meet and greet with the Mayor of Curacavi and a few of his team members. He took office in 2012 after his father served as Mayor for 30 years. This town is about an hour outside of Santiago and struggles to maintain land in agriculture as developers from the

capitol move west. The Mayor also sent us on a food and beverage tour of the city.



We visited Botilleria Duran where they make Chicha. On a very cold morning we were very happy to see three open fireplaces to huddle around. Huge copper kettles were full of new batches of smoldering Chicha which would be poured into clay in-ground urns and capped off until mid August. During a long holiday weekend in late September they will sell 80% of their annual production of Chicha. Chicha is made from red grape juice but does not have as much alcohol content as wine. It tastes like a lightly spiked fruit punch. And as Tavis said, is "wine for kids" (trademark pending).

Our next stop was at the best pastry place south of the equator. In particular the alfahor, a dulce de leche cookie covered in chocolate, was to die for.



As we ventured closer to the coast, we stopped at a vegetable packing shed owned by the Nieto family. There employees were hand cutting squash and wrapping cauliflower in plastic for deliveries right to the groceries. The owner's little boy enjoyed showing off for our group; it was a fun reminder that kids are the same everywhere no matter

the language barrier or culture. The owners lamented that they have serious issues finding enough labor to pick, harvest and pack their vegetables. Not many people are willing to work in agriculture fields in their area.

Next up on the day bus tour was a 250 cow dairy farm. This was my first time at a dairy. I had mixed emotions seeing animals milked and calves raised for future milking. Growing fruit is much easier on the soul. It was interesting to hear that the dairy is expanding and uprooting current avocado orchards that are struggling to produce profitably due to their high requirement for water relative to what is available.



Our day culminated with lunch at the Nieto family's homestead. They prepared a feast for us! The whole family was so gracious and welcoming. The wine was flowing and so were the desserts. It was a good thing this was our last stop before getting to Vina del Mar. We all boarded the bus and the majority enjoyed the customary after-lunch siesta.



We arrived in Vina del Mar on Saturday night with the next day set aside for us to take time off from programming. The view driving in along the coast was breathtaking and we were all ready for a low-key evening and day off to explore the area.



Most of us spent our free day in Valparaiso, the working port just south of Vina del Mar. It was a short train ride away and offered some shopping and sightseeing.



Monday it was back to programming, with visits to the Valparaiso Codesser and INIA (a nonprofit Agriculture Research Institute). These groups provide a conduit for information exchange between local producers and national levels of various agencies. Current issues in focus include BMPs, efficient uses of resources, lack of labor, sustainable farming, integrated pest management, and attracting younger talent to Agriculture. Sounds familiar!

We spent some time learning more about the current drought in Chile, which is causing quite a bit of upheaval because most of the agriculture land relies on irrigation. As we know, when the aquifers and headwaters are not recharged annually, prolonged use of the existing water begins to collapse the ecosystems. It was mentioned several times that agriculture production in the northern regions of Chile has been declining due to drought. One of the speakers at Codesser mentioned that due to the last 7 years providing less than normal rainfall, the holding basins for water are only at 5% capacity. However there is hope that normal rainfall a couple years in a row will restore water levels to reasonable heights.

We finished our time in Chile with a visit to an avocado and citrus nursery, Vivero Huerto California. The property and its citrus trees were an unbelievable sight. It wasn't uncommon for the citrus and avocado trees to be several decades old and still appear healthy. Rows full of legacy rootstocks and old varieties lined the walkway to the greenhouses, showcasing robust and vibrant crops of tangerines, lemons and other citrus varieties. Seeing acres full of healthy and productive citrus trees was like walking

through a time warp back to the way our Florida citrus landscape once was. I was really awestruck that they are operating in a Greening free paradigm. The nursery also grows avocado trees for which the demand is growing much faster than production. Water issues in several major avocado growing regions are causing a shift of production to new regions, and in turn increasing demand for new trees. Needless to say, it seemed like this nursery was thriving.



Our last dinner together in Chile as a class was Monday night; Tuesday morning we departed early for the airport where most of us boarded a plane bound for Buenos Aires, Argentina. Hasta la vista, Chile!

Of the 3 countries we visited in South America, it seemed that Chile was the most developed socially, economically and had the most global approach to governance and fiscal policy. In stark contrast to Argentina, Chile embraces their unique position to supply the world with agriculture products, almost to the extent of depriving its citizens of the country's bounty. I look forward to visiting again and exploring more of what Chile has to offer!

Brian Patterson



Argentina

To me Chile, by far, was the most memorable part of our 17 day journey. While I would have been happy to stay there for our remaining time in South America, we had one more country on our agenda. We arrived in Buenos Aires, Argentina on Tuesday June 16th. We quickly learned that Buenos Aires and the immediate suburban area was home to over 14 million people! Every Day over 1.3 million people commute in to and out of the Argentine capital so needless to say, it was a journey moving around the city and suburban areas.

We traveled from the airport to the Claridge Hotel. Described by their website as:

“Prestige. Elegance. Exclusivity. Style. Distinction. And, above all, culture. These are the identify marks that stand before us. So much is this so that when you cross the threshold of the Claridge and enter the emblematic hotel lobby, you cannot be sure if you are in a Buenos Aires hotel or in a select, English gentlemen's club of long-standing tradition. All through its corridors and lounges, neo-classical and British airs intermingle with the breeze from the River Plate. More than a hotel, you are entering an urban oasis of luxury and tradition, with all the man comforts imaginable.”

Yes my friends, this was going to be our home during our time in Buenos Aires.



A welcome dinner at the Hotel was planned and then everyone called it a night to rest up for our first full day in Buenos Aires.

Everyone woke up on Wednesday and was prepared for the exciting day of programming that lie ahead. We started the day off with a presentation from David Hughes, a farmer and private advisor who was going to give us an overview the Argentine agriculture scene.

Some of the interesting facts that David presented:

- The average age of farmers in Argentina is 46 years old. 12 years younger than the average U.S. farmer.
- Production agriculture grew 84% between 1990 and 2000, 59% between 2000 and 2010 and projected to be 46% between 2010 and 2020
- Soybeans, Corn, and Wheat are the country's largest crops, however they only bring roughly half the price of what the U.S. brings for these crops.

David's presentation touched on many issues but highlighted that the three largest impacts to Argentinian farmers were:

- Rising inflation rate: currently at around 60% and one of the highest inflation rates in the world makes managing a business based in agriculture near impossible.
- Export Tax: Farmers are charged a 35% export tax.
- Government forced quotas: Government has annual quota that must be met on corn, wheat, and soybeans which enables farmers to grow other, more profitable crops.

This was the first of many times that we heard these same issues pop up. All of the complaints we heard were centered on the basis that the Argentinian government was responsible for the current hardships that the farmers were facing.

Everyone in our group agreed that David did a phenomenal job setting the stage for our time in Argentina. Davids famous quote, when discussing labor was “you pay peanuts, you get monkeys”.



Wednesday was a packed day and we had several other presentations associated with agriculture in Argentina:

- Martin Fraguio with Maizar spoke to our group about the challenges of the argentine agribusiness value chains in a highly uncertain environment. Maizar is an organization for the corn industry in Argentina and focuses on bringing the 6 sectors of the supply chain together to maximize the value of the crops. They work daily with clients, researchers, farmers, exporters, industry specialist and suppliers to promote open communication amongst all segments. Their message is that products with more competitive value chains have better market access both in Argentina and throughout all of their export markets.

- Our third presentation of the day was from AACREA. AACREA, which stand for Association Argentina de Consorcios Regionales De Experimentation Agriculture, was established on 1960 and is the mother organization of 223 CREA groups. CREA's are regionalized groups of farmers that meet monthly to exchange information and review new research.

Typically lead by professional agronomist, these meetings are intended to provide each farmer in the CREA group tips and advice that they can take back to their farm. Less than 1% of Argentina's farmers are members of AACREA, however that 1% is responsible for up to 20% of the national production. The average farm size of an AACREA member is between 2000 and 2500 hectares. That's over 6000 acres!



After lunch we visited Bolsa de Cereales de Buenos Aires. Bolsa de Cereales is a grain exchange. It is a non-profit civil association that serves as an intermediate service provider. It is also the oldest commercial institution in Argentina. Our first speaker was from ArgenTrigo.

ArgenTrigo is an organization that focuses on the wheat industry in Argentina. Their mission is the promotion and development of wheat and its derivatives in collaboration with government, private, and mixed entities. They work through research, production, processing, commercialization and marketing of such products to enhance the profitability of the Argentinean wheat value chain. The main objective of ArgenTrigo is to improve the positioning of Argentine wheat in the world.

During our time at Bolsa de Cereales we also heard from the Department of Agriculture Estimates. This department is responsible for providing crop estimates for all of the major agriculture crops in Argentina. In addition, they also provide data analysis, historical trends, and future projections. They get weekly data from the field and through other sources including the internet, online meetings, telephone surveys, and even from the USDA. They hold crop tours on

successful and progressive farms as well as educational field days throughout the different regions in Argentina.

Our last meeting of this educationally packed day was with CEIDA. CEIDA stands for Centro de Estudios & Investigacion para la Dirigencia Agroindustrial. This program was started in 1984 and was originally called the Studies and Research Center for Agribusiness Leadership. This program is very similar to WLIANR in that its primary goal is to provide training for leaders in the linked to the agribusiness chain. The organizations participants includes production farmers, marketers, suppliers, exporters, Journalist, educators, and public officials. The minimum age to participate in CEIDA is 25 years old and they seek active participants, not spectators. There are 40 participants selected per class and they have 14 monthly meetings culminating in a study trip. The teaching methodology includes:

- 1) Lectures and Seminars: given by intellectuals, journalist, and renowned speakers.
- 2) Workshops: give the students the opportunity to put in practice the theory they have learned in class. They also promote the integration of the students through group work.
- 3) Informal Meetings: with politicians and legislators to seek the exchange of ideas with leaders from different political parties.
- 4) Meetings with Social and Business Leaders: give firsthand knowledge of personal experiences.



Wednesday evening proved to be an exciting night as we were treated to a fabulous dinner while enjoying one of Argentina's most well-known cultural traditions, the Tango.

The theaters performers and house band took us through the history of Tango and how it has evolved to the dance it is known as today. Not only were we entertained by the main stage act, we were also witness to quite a sideshow in the French National Rugby team. They too were enjoying the festivities and to some in the group, were equally entertaining. This evening was a great time to sit back and relax after a long day while still learning more about the history of Argentina.



Thursday was our second full day in Argentina. Everyone had a chance to catch up on their sleep, read a book, or get caught on emails as we had a 5 hour bus ride planned to the town of Pergamino to visit a farming and cattle operation. Our first stop in Pergamino was to El Desafío, a 280 hectare mix farm owned by Mr. Alejandro Calderon. He currently grows wheat, barley, green peas, corn and soybeans. He utilizes his own storing and grain processing facilities in an effort to increase his profitability. He also utilizes a farm owned trucking service to provide grain seed to other farmers. We heard again how the government is the biggest challenge that Argentina farmers face.

We then had lunch at the Sociedad Rural de Pergamino. While we were there we heard more about the society and the farmers that are involved. We met 5 members of the young members of the society that are working at being future leaders in the local Ag industry. They were generous enough to join us and tell us more about what they did with the society. They are typically family and

next generation of the older members of the society and use this opportunity to further their training and education. The young members work at trade shows and other events for the Sociedad Rural and work with and have field days with other leadership programs in Argentina.



After lunch we visited Mr. Calderon's cattle operation. He has a registered Aberdeen Angus herd with both red and black angus cattle. While the U.S. has seen record prices for cattle, Argentina is currently seeing historical lows. For this reason, Mr. Calderon's has looked to find other means to increase the profitability of his cattle business. Recently Mr. Calderon expanded his business by raising and selling registered bulls. Visiting Mr. Calderon's farming and cattle operation gave everyone in our class a much better understanding of the difficulties that Argentine farmers are facing. However, it also allowed us a firsthand view of how these same farmers are diversifying and succeeding during these tough times.



Our last day of programming in South America started early on Friday, June 19th. The bus pulled away from the hotel before we realized we left one man behind. For future reference, when the agenda says the bus leaves at 7:30, it means 7:30:01. 7:30:02 and you're taking a cab ☺. The great news is that we all arrived at Liniars Livestock market together for a tour of the most famous cattle market in Argentina.



Liniars Livestock Market, which claims to be the single largest livestock market in the world, was just a very short bus drive from our hotel in downtown Buenos Aires. This market was founded in 1901 and at the time was built in a rural area of town. However, with the rapid growth of Buenos Aires the market was soon surrounded by the hustle and bustle of a big city. Today, roughly 8,000 head of cattle are sold daily at Liniars. Our tour of the facility took us through what seemed like miles of overhead catwalks which were designed to give perspective buyers a similar view that they would see from the back of a horse in the field. Even today, some gauchos (cowboys) still do their purchasing from the back of a horse. In fact, it is not uncommon to see the gauchos using their laptops while horseback. It was very interesting to see this large market in operation surrounded by the big city, schools, and sports fields.



Our next stop on Friday was Los Piletones to visit the Margarita Barrientos Foundation. Margarita Barrientos Foundation is 19 years old and started as just a family feeding a few hungry children in one of the poorest sections of Buenos Aires. It has grown to a non for profit organization that provides over 2100 meals a day to the poor. They also offer school for children, free healthcare, and even apartments for the homeless and poor. Every day they have over 30 volunteer workers and they have access to over 120 specialty service volunteers. We were able to meet the founder of the foundation who still puts in countless hours volunteering. It was an eye opening experience to see what one lady with a dream could accomplish with just a few volunteers and limited funding.



For most of the group, the rest of Friday consisted of lunch on the De la Plata River shore and then the final session of the day which was a presentation about INTA by Enrique Bedascarrasbure, Director of INTA. INTA, standing for Instituto Nacional de Tecnologia Agropecuaria is a national organization of the Ministry of Agriculture. It is

devoted to Ag Research and Extension. Its role is quite similar to the ARS of the USDA.

For ten members of the group, Friday afternoon was the start of another small adventure. After our trip to Los Piletones, ten of us said our temporary goodbyes and were dropped off at the Buenos Aires regional airport. From there we flew to Cordoba, Argentina, a world class wing shooting destination, and spent the next day bird hunting with David Denies Outfitting. It proved to be everything you hear about and more.

On Saturday evening the entire group met back up at the International Airport to prepare for our flight back to Miami. We all sat around and reflected on the last few days and what everyone did on the free day. The mood was bittersweet as everyone was ready to get home but everyone also knew it was the last moments of this memorable trip that we were all going to spend together. We couldn't end the trip without one last curveball. While everyone was ready to get home not everyone was assigned a seat on the "sold out" flight back. After 30 or so stressful minutes the eight remaining members were assigned their seats on the flight. We arrived back in Miami on Sunday morning, 16 days after

we had left. As quickly as it had started, it was over and we were back in the U.S.

This journey was one that I will never forget. Three different counties all in South America, yet each one uniquely different from the other. Our group was able to see and do things that the average "tourist" would never experience in these countries and I for one will definitely be returning.

Reflection on South America and Class IX Dr. Joe Joyce

First of all it was a great privilege on my part to have assisted in some small way with the whole Class IX experience and the international trip to Peru, Chile and Argentina, in particular. Concerning the trip, the countries were each a stark contrast to each other: Peru still seems to function as a third world country; Chile has its act together socially, politically, and economically. Agriculturally, it resembles Florida in so many ways in that it focuses on export of high value commodities and can produce them to meet seasonal niches; and then there is Argentina, a country with tremendous agricultural potential which appears to struggle with the development of

appropriate agricultural and social policies. The commonality of each is a great natural resource base and a warm and welcoming populace.

My biggest a ha moment was provided by Joe Hodges from Class II, who gave each of us in Class IX a copy of "The Alchemy of Air" a book by Thomas Hager. We had no idea of the economic, agricultural, and military significance of Peruvian and Chilean nitrogen deposits to the world from the late 1800s to the 1940s. The book really put the resources of the area in perspective. Thank you Joe Hodges!

In closing, I have always been a fan of the Wedgworth Leadership Institute but now I have the same appreciation and love for it that I have sensed among the alumni. I will always cherish the association. Class IX is a special group (and yes I know every class is the best!) in that the emotional bond amongst the group became so strong. It was a treasure to watch that bond grow and the caring for each other that was solidified on the trip. You could tell they did not want the experience of the Class IX WLI journey to end. Thanks to all for my experience and personal growth from the association.





Wedgworth Leadership Institute
Class IX
Seminar 11 - Orlando

Coordinator's Corner *Kevan Lamm*



Although I have had the opportunity to assemble the preceding nine newsletters I've never had such a strong nostalgic experience as I have with Seminar X! Reading the recaps of the three countries we visited was amazing and the perspectives that others took from those experiences was also very meaningful. Although we shared a common adventure throughout the past 20 months it is clear that each of us has taken something very different from the process.

For me all three countries were a surprise. Given the preparation talks we received in Gainesville during seminar IX the surprise was pleasant when we landed in Peru. Although the term desert does not capture the desolation of the landscape in the absence of water, the resiliency of the Peruvian people was very impressive. Annual rainfall measured in fractions of a centimeter is simply not a reality that I can process; however, we saw numerous examples where innovation, industriousness, and hard work have turned this reality into a livable and productive environment. Flying south to Chile I was again surprised, this time by the diversity of agriculture and forward thinking economic environment. The geographic advantages the country enjoys aside, I was again struck by the Chileans we visited and learned from. The challenges they face sound so similar to those we have here in Florida and in the United States. Ongoing water challenges, the need to educate policy makers and society about agriculture, and a shortage of affordable labor. Our final stop in Argentina was equally eye opening. The stark contrast to Peru's geography and Chile's economic policies was halting. Although the most developed of the three countries, I was again surprised to hear of major challenges Argentinians face as a result of the economic environment. Driving across the Argentine pampas and seeing the endless fields of grass, corn, wheat, and other crops made it hard to believe that even under such idyllic conditions, agriculturalists still had a difficult time finding security and success.

Revelations and country specific insights aside, more than the travel, seeing new places, and hearing from different experts, what I will take away from this seminar, and from the whole WLI experience, will be the bonds I formed with class members and the perspectives and insight that I have benefited from. I would never have been able to appreciate the differences between a dairy operation in Chile from one here in Florida had Ben Butler not been willing to share his reflections. Similarly I would have missed out on the nuances and between Florida citrus and nursery industries as I walked through hundreds and thousands of seedling citrus trees with April Porter and Jennifer Parrish. Learning more about labor through Baxter Troutman's expertise or engineering differences from Noah Handley – all of the richness and utility of the experiences would have been missing. I could go on and on about what I have learned from each and every class member; however, in the interest of space I will simply conclude by saying thank you. It has been an honor to have participated in the Wedgworth Leadership Institute and I'm grateful for all of the opportunities and friendships that this program has afforded me!

