

**From:** Melanie Desch  
**Subject:** Field Course: Agroforestry and Community Development in Peruvian Amazon HOJA NUEVA

---

We are currently accepting applications for our SPRING 2017 intern session at Hoja Nueva. Hoja Nueva is a 501c3 registered charity located on the Las Piedras river in the Peruvian Amazon. Formed by two research driven professionals and friends Samantha Zwicker and Melanie Desch, Hoja Nueva was created to tackle the increasing deforestation found in the Las Piedras watershed due to cacao agriculture. We support a three tiered approach: research in sustainable cacao agriculture, communication of successful methods to local communities, and certification of sustainable farms so that agriculturalists receive an economic benefit to preserving their forests. Our current projects include harvesting and cultivating wild cacao species, collecting seeds for our reforestation project, waste management in Lucerna, implementing biopesticides on our 2 hectares of cacao, mapping landowners cleared land, and building greenhouses in community farms. Our mission statement follows:

**Mission Statement:**

The goal of Hoja Nueva is to develop a successful permaculture program within the community of Lucerna, located on the Las Piedras River Basin in the Southern Peruvian Amazon. We are an experimental center that integrates research, conservation, education, and reforestation into our everyday permaculture efforts. We also consult and cooperate with local agricultural associations and other non-profit organizations to ensure reliable food production while maintaining healthy forests. Hoja Nueva will incorporate ecosystem monitoring, long-term soil research, sustainable practices, and extensive community outreach to attain its objectives. We aim to provide a practical framework for permaculture practices in lowland rainforest environments that can be used regionally and globally to safeguard a future where both humans and nature can thrive.

**En Espanol:**

El objetivo de Hoja Nueva es ayudar a implementar programas de permacultura en las comunidades agricolas de la cuenca del río Las Piedras, ubicado entre los distritos de Las Piedras y Tambopata en la provincia de Tambopata en el departamento de Madre de Dios. Somos un centro experimental que integrara investigación, conservación, educación y reforestación en nuestros esfuerzos para brindar una opcion de agricultura mas sustentable y redituable. Pretendemos consultar y cooperar con las asociaciones agrícolas locales y otras organizaciones sin fines de lucro para asegurar una producción de alimentos confiable, manteniendo los bosques sanos. Hoja Nueva incorporará el monitoreo de ecosistemas, la investigación del suelo a largo plazo, las prácticas sostenibles, y un intesivo intercambio de conocimientos con las comunidades para alcanzar sus objetivos. Nuestra meta es proporcionar un marco práctico para las prácticas de permacultura en entornos de bosque tropical de tierras bajas que se puedan utilizar a nivel regional como a nivel mundial para salvaguardar un futuro en el que los seres humanos y la naturaleza puedan prosperar.

**INTERNS:**

All interested in the internship program must complete an application form attached and send it to our email [info@hojanueva.org](mailto:info@hojanueva.org).

They must have a research project in mind that will be completed during the four month long program, and upon completion it will be presented to the community and presented in a formal write-up. There will be guidance by staff members throughout the entire process.

Project Ideas: (not limited to the following)

BioInsecticide research

Cacao plant/insect associations

Reforestation models

Cacao intercropping (rubber trees, brazil nuts trees, Inga edulis)

Brazil Nut germination

Edible fungus Cultivation

Stingless Bee Cultivation  
GIS mapping of association  
Creating longterm soil studies  
etc.

**Program Description:**

Four-month-long internship program in the lower Peruvian Amazon rainforest at Hoja Nueva, an integrative center of research and collaboration in sustainable tropical agriculture and conservation

Our internship program exists to continue research in our innovative cacao agroforestry plots and translate collected data to the local communities in Las Piedras as well as provide relevant information to the greater scientific community. Our interns are generally University Students, newly graduated professionals, and master's students. All interns are individuals who share our mission to raise standards of living in remote communities while maintaining healthy forests and habitat.

While in the field, interns will have 2-4 trained Hoja Nueva coordinators to help with project implementation. They can expect to spend most days on Hoja Nueva land, in the chacras, and in the local communities to carry out their projects. Days begin at 8AM and end at 430PM, with a long break for lunch. There are also scheduled "tourist" days so that our researchers, interns, and volunteers can experience and appreciate the wonders of the jungle and living in the Peruvian Amazon. These activities can include swimming in the waterfalls, pack rafting the river, viewing the forest from lookout points, chocolate and bracelet making in Lucerna, visiting other chacras, and taking guided day and night walks in the forest. Once a week there are scheduled community workdays in which we travel to other chacras to improve the sustainability of their cacao plots. These traditionally Incan "Ainee" days reinforce our relationship with the community and provide interns with real agroforestry practice beyond our own lands.

**Included Services:**

Room in Puerto Maldonado, first day breakfast, lunch, and dinner  
Room and board at our newly constructed Center of Collaboration  
Transportation to and from our center  
Three meals per day plus snacks and fruits  
2-4 full time staff members

**First Aide Kit**

CPS/Wilderness First Aid?First Responder Trained staff  
Emergency Evacuation Procedures and Evac devices  
Venomous snake bite protocols

Services Not Included: (can be requested in advance)

Flights to/from Puerto Maldonado

Private personal guide/field assistant

Food and activities whilst in Puerto Maldonado

Professional Chef Service

(Meals are made by staff and interns in group settings, not always by professional chefs. This creates opportunity to discuss projects, brainstorm ideas with other interns, and immerse in culture through food)

Visits to other tourist lodges/destinations

Pricing: \$5400 for 4 months

**FOR MORE INFORMATION**

Please visit our website, [www.hojanueva.org](http://www.hojanueva.org)

Email staff members at [info@hojanueva.org](mailto:info@hojanueva.org)

Fill out attached application and send to [info@hojanueva.org](mailto:info@hojanueva.org)