

GROWERTALKS

GT in Brief

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Van Wingerden's Double Harvest Saving Lives in Haiti

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Operation Double Harvest, founded in 1981 by the late Aart Van Wingerden, has been extremely busy helping the relief effort after the severe earthquake of January 12 destroyed parts of Haiti. Double Harvest is a 200-acre mission project that includes a 500-student school, a medical/surgical clinic, church, tilapia farm and greenhouse. It's just nine miles from Port au Prince.

As soon as news of the earthquake hit, six Van Wingerdens—John (Green Circle Growers), Arie (Cherry Creek Systems), Nick (Mid-American Growers), Joe (Prins USA), Bob (Catocin Mountain Growers) and Joe's son Joey—flew to the Dominican Republic, then drove across the border into Haiti to Double Harvest. They found that the facility survived the earthquake because they built it well above Haitian standards. And thanks to a solid infrastructure, it has one of the few running water supplies in the country.

In the aftermath of the earthquake, Double Harvest has been able to provide medical care and food for thousands of victims both at the mission and in surrounding villages, thanks to teams of medical personnel and even the U.S. military, which has helped with fuel, physicians and a second generator. As of press time, a new rotation of 28 doctors had just arrived from Miami, and school is back in session. Volunteers are cooking more than 6,000 plates of food per week.

John Van Wingerden, owner of Green Circle Growers, was part of the first group into Haiti just days after the quake, and he gives a first-hand account of the current conditions in a radio broadcast. You can listen at <http://weol.northcoastnow.com/audio/weol/012710JohnVanWinderGarden.mp3>.

Supporters have generously contributed \$1.2 million to Double Harvest. But the need is still great. To make a donation, visit www.doubleharvest.org, where 100% of your contribution will go to assist the victims of the quake.

In other Haiti relief news, Esbenshade's Greenhouses Inc, of Lititz, Pennsylvania, has designed a 14 ft. x 16 ft. temporary housing structure that resembles a greenhouse and is donating 200 of them to Haiti's earthquake victims. Vendors provided material at cost and shipped them from Florida when an all-volunteer construction team will start setting them up. Cost for one home is just \$300 and 100 structures can fit on one acre.

Esbenshade's hopes to be able to provide more of them.

For more information and to make a donation, visit www.esbenshades.com/Haiti. You can also donate at the Youth With a Mission International website at www.ymam.org. **GT**