

WELCOME TO THE SECOND ISSUE OF G.A.I.A NEWS!

Fun facts:

- The term "Biochar" as an agronomic term was only defined within the last decade
- There are a range of methods for producing biochar, from traditional charcoal piles to highly engineered thermochemical conversion facilities
- Biochar was extensively investigated as a soil amendment beginning in the mid-1800's. Scientific interest in biochar waned, however, with the introduction of chemical fertilizers in the mid-1900's.

Notable Happenings at GAIA International

GAIA is now an official Organization Member of the International Biochar Initiative (IBI). Check out our write-up in the May issue of the IBI Newsletter.

Our Board members have been putting in many hours and we want to send a big shout out to each and every one of them:

Dr. Mark Henderson; Stephanie McGrath; Jay Connor; Erin Schmal and Kathleen Stefanik. Thanks everyone!!!!

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G.A.I.A. NEWS

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Quarterly Newsletter: July, 2014

GAIA's June, 2014 Trip to Cuzco, Peru

In June of this year, Dr. Gerry Polesky and team member Tyson Stevenson traveled to Cuzco, Peru to further the initiatives that had been started at the orphanage in previous trips. The main goal of this trip was additional Biochar implementation. To accomplish this, Dr. Polesky's team along with young men from the orphanage cleared a large garden area and then Tyson trained the men from the orphanage in the Biochar process. All of the waste that was cleared from the area will be used to create new Biochar and plant more crops in the future. More than 500 onions were planted and the men were trained to capture the growth results of the Biochar plantings compared with that of other areas of the garden where different types of fertilizers were implemented. The biggest progress was made in teaching the farmers how to measure and compare results in crop



Young men from the orphanage learning to make Biochar

yields., which will allow GAIA to collect new data specific to that geographical region. Thanks to Dr. Polesky, Edwar Escalante (our partner in Peru) and the rest of the team for all of their hard work and dedication!



Welcome Tom Zender to the GAIA Team

GAIA has gained a valuable new member. Tom Zender will be coming on as the Director of Program Development / Strategic Planning as well as an Advisory Board Member. Tom is bringing a broad range of experience to the team. He is a Professional Business Mentor who works with start-ups to multi-million dollar corporations. He has held leadership roles at General Electric, Honeywell and other Fortune 500 companies, has been CEO of a global non-profit organization, is a best-selling business ethics author, is a mentor at Arizona State University's SkySong incubator and a guest columnist for the Phoenix Business Journal—among many other things. Welcome to the GAIA team Tom!



GAIA Founder, Kathleen Stefanik, attends 3-day Biochar workshop

GAIA's founder, Kathleen Stefanik recently traveled to Spain to attend an intense workshop on Biochar. The 3-day conference took place at the Universidad de Santiago de Compostela June 26-28, 2014. It included a high level overview of Biochar production and uses. Some of the topics included Biochar production technologies, processes and parameters, feedstocks, and costs/constraints. Stefan Jirka, from the International Biochar Initiative,

discussed the IBI Biochar Certification Program and Standards in greater detail. There were many lectures addressing the use of Biochar as a soil amendment, including topics such as Biochar's effects on crops, soil nutrients, soil biota, and water availability. Kathleen learned a great deal of technical information that she is now able to share with the rest of the team. She was proud to receive her certificate of completion for this rigorous training.

