

**BAPTIST PRESS**

News Service of the Southern Baptist Convention

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86-79

Dengue, Yellow Fever
Showing Up In Brazil

By Mike Chute

RIO DE JANEIRO, Brazil (BP)--Concern exists throughout much of Brazil following an outbreak of dengue fever and signs of yellow fever in the state of Rio de Janeiro, Southern Baptist missionaries in Rio De Janeiro report.

The "Aedes aegypti" mosquito, which transmits the diseases, has been found in 14 of Brazil's 25 states. Missionaries also report fear of an outbreak of yellow fever.

The hardest hit area is Nova Iguacu, also the area where Brazilian Baptists have their strongest work. Missionaries report many local Baptists are ill with dengue fever. Dengue was first detected in January in Nova Iguacu, only 20 miles from downtown Rio de Janeiro.

Brazilians are apprehensive because there is no specific treatment for either disease and there is no vaccine for dengue fever. However, a healthy person can recover from yellow fever, and some people get a mild form without knowing it, said William Gaventa, director of the medical services department of the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board.

Only 10 to 20 percent of yellow fever cases actually get the classic symptoms, Gaventa said. Not all yellow-fever mosquitoes carry the virus. For a mosquito to pick up the virus, it must first bite a monkey or human whose blood contains the virus.

Because symptoms are similar for both diseases, victims may not know whether they have dengue or yellow fever. Dengue fever is seldom fatal. But up to 40 to 50 percent of people who contract severe forms of yellow fever may die from the disease. Death is much lower among the total number of cases.

The yellow fever vaccine is difficult to find in Brazil, and it is being administered through health departments only to people traveling to Rio de Janeiro or into Brazil's Amazon region.

The vaccination is good for 10 years, but some missionaries in Brazil are past the immunization period.

"I would recommend anyone traveling to Brazil obtain a yellow fever shot," said Bill Damon, Foreign Mission Board associate director for the eastern region of South America.

In Rio and its suburbs, missionaries said, officials have reported 35,000 cases of dengue fever. Two cases of yellow fever have been documented. Government health officials have said the dengue epidemic could affect 1 million people in the next few weeks. Within two months, they added, the epidemic could reach 5 million people, or 70 percent of Rio's population.

The problem is not just limited to the southern part of the country. In the northern capital city of Fortaleza, officials said they expect 2,000 cases of dengue fever in the next few weeks.

Only three states in Brazil completely are free of the diseases and disease-bearing mosquitoes. Parts of all other states are infested with the mosquitoes or have had reported cases of the disease.

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To eradicate the immediate danger in Rio, officials have deployed 10,000 workers with 100 insecticide-spraying machines at a cost of \$25 million. They said it will take about three months to bring the epidemic under control.

A Rio health official predicted it will take five years to eradicate the mosquito that transmits dengue and yellow fever. The yellow-fever mosquito returned to Rio in 1976 after a 31-year absence. Brazilians eradicated yellow fever after an outbreak wiped out part of the country's population in the early 1900s.

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Seminarian Not Deaf
To Call Of Spirit

By Craig Bird

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5/23/86

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP)—Although Yvette Aarons was born deaf, she has no trouble hearing the call of the Holy Spirit.

"The Lord has called me to foreign missions," Aarons says. The Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary student is undaunted by the barriers between her and her goal.

"My deafness has nothing to do with my understanding of God. I really believe God will send me overseas. But until then my job is to get experience and wait. And wait."

As a high school student in Kingston, Jamaica, Aarons began attending a deaf mission operated by Pentecostal missionaries. Not long after her salvation experience she became interested in foreign missions.

"I was impressed that people would leave their homes to help people in another country," Aarons says. "I knew I would like to do that."

In 1975, just months after becoming a Christian, Aarons and her mother moved to the United States for better educational opportunities. She was bewildered by the profusion of denominations. "I thought all Christians were one church," she recalls.

So she was receptive when a man on the street handed her a tract. "The picture on the front was of Jesus holding a lamb—it looked very comforting," she says. Two weeks later she left home to join The Church of Bible Understanding. But her mother tracked her down and persuaded her to leave the cult.

Aarons kept searching for a "church where they really taught the Bible" and eventually found the Long Island (N.Y.) Church of the Deaf, a Southern Baptist congregation.

After obtaining a bachelor's degree in English and visual arts and a master's degree in deaf education, Aarons felt the need for additional religious education. She compared course offerings from various Southern Baptist seminaries and chose Southwestern because the missions emphasis "was the best I could find."

At seminary she chooses her own interpreters for classes. She supplies carbon paper for someone in each class to copy notes, which she recopies while studying. She does not use tutors.

"I have to rely on my own mind," she says. "I like to do it on my own." In class, she reminds her professors to speak to her and not to the interpreter. She asks the interpreter to "use the professor's exact words so when I see it on a test I'll know what it is." She works with hearing children in a YMCA after-school program and performed in Southwestern's production of "Joseph and His Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat" in April.

But still the call to foreign missions is a constant.

"The deaf are just as much a language group as any spoken language in Africa," she says. Aarons hopes to teach deaf children in a mission school and give other children the type of opportunities she has had. Deaf children in many foreign countries do not have the advantages found in the United States, she explains.

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"Many times a deaf child is locked away in a closet and called dumb. I'd like to tell them they aren't dumb and to teach their parents they don't have to feel guilty if their child is deaf, that it's OK to have a deaf child," she says

Aarons sometimes wonders if she may be "the only deaf person in the world who is considering foreign missions," but she won't abandon the call.

"I feel I have so much inside of me that God wants to let out," she says. "I haven't done much yet, there are talents God can use I haven't turned over to him. That is my struggle--to be more and more what he wants me to be."

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(BP) photos mailed by request by Southern Seminary

Smith To Lead
OBU's Alumni

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5/23/86

SHAWNEE, Okla. (BP)—C. Mark Smith, director of publications and information at Golden Gate Baptist Theological Seminary in Mill Valley, Calif., has been named director of alumni and annual giving at Oklahoma Baptist University in Shawnee, announced John W. Parrish, vice president for institutional advancement.

Parrish also announced Cindy Post, assistant alumni director for special programs, has been promoted to associate alumni director.

Smith, a 1975 OBU graduate, will be responsible for conducting the annual giving program, coordinating publication of The OBU Anvil, the university's alumni magazine, and supervising alumni programs when he begins his new position July 21. He will be executive director of the OBU Alumni Association and will coordinate work of the Alumni Association board of directors and regional representatives.

Smith has worked at The Shawnee News-Star and was director of public information at Louisiana College, a four-year Baptist college in Pineville, La. He joined Golden Gate Seminary in August 1977.

Post, a 1981 OBU graduate, has been on the alumni staff five years. Her responsibilities include coordination of special alumni programs.

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'86 National Missions
Speak Out Winner Named

Baptist Press
5/23/86

MEMPHIS, Tenn. (BP)—David Gainey, son of Mr. and Mrs. Wayne Gainey of Troy, Ala., has been selected as the winner of the 1986 Royal Ambassador Missions Speak Out National Jerry Clower Award. The annual speak out competition is sponsored by the Southern Baptist Brotherhood Commission.

Gainey, who will be a senior at Henderson High School in Troy, won the award in competition with finalists who represented nine SBC state conventions.

He previously placed first in Alabama's missions speak out competition. Gainey's five-minute original speech titled "A Well-Informed Responsible Follower of Christ," was videotaped and sent to Memphis, Tenn., for judging at the Brotherhood Commission.

As national speak out winner, Gainey will receive an expense-paid trip to the Southern Baptist Convention in Atlanta, where he will deliver his speech during the annual Brotherhood breakfast on June 11. He also will receive a \$500 scholarship from Brotherhood Commission trustees and a Royal Ambassador blazer and plaque.

Gainey is a member of First Baptist Church of Troy, where he has been active in Royal Ambassadors for five years. After high school graduation, he plans to attend college in Alabama.

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Surgeon Mends Bodies,
Strengthens Families

By Terri Lackey

HOUSTON (BP)—Mending broken bodies is Bill Cole's profession. Strengthening the family spirit is his dedication.

An orthopedic surgeon for nearly 15 years, the Houston doctor has spent the main portion of his adult life revitalizing the sick.

And when innovative, new medical procedures come his way, Cole adapts them into his practice, much like he incorporates creative ideas into his church's family ministry program.

Chairman of the River Oaks Baptist Church family ministry task force, Cole is devoted to making the members of River Oaks feel like a family. He insists on doing it with flair.

"There are no pre-set ideas to ministering to the family," Cole says. "We develop ideas out of our own hearts and not out of textbooks."

The family ministry program of River Oaks church is being highlighted during Christian Home Emphasis, a six-week program conducted between Mother's Day and Father's Day in June, focusing on the family and developed by the Southern Baptist Sunday School Board's family ministry department.

About three years ago, River Oaks pastor Doug Tipps asked Cole to consider becoming a deacon.

"Well, I didn't know what a deacon really did, so I went down to the nearest Christian book store and bought about eight books on the subject," Cole recalls.

"One book, I remember very clearly, had a small section on the deacon's family ministry program, and it seemed like the words just jumped right out of the page like a great, big neon sign.

"It was then I knew our church needed a family ministry program," he says.

Cole adds he knew "at that moment" God was calling him to lead River Oaks' family ministry program, and after a couple of months' hesitation "and reading several more books," he finally decided to plunge in.

Cole established an eight-member family ministry task force, and the first resolution was to lead the members of the church or "the church family" to understand "that they must live their Christian lives at home."

"We wanted to teach Christianity, not necessarily through sermons, but by example," Cole says. "We also wanted to emphasize the church family in our programs, and not the nuclear family."

He says the task force is "very committed" to including children, seniors and singles, as well as the traditional family in the family ministry program.

One of the main features of the River Oaks program is it uses its members to lead seminars and programs.

"We had already reached a decision that we wanted to have lay people of our church involved in our family ministry program," Cole explains. "The thing that makes a program work is lay involvement.

"It is very important that we cultivate talent within our church, use our own people. Every church has talent."

For example, Cole says a member stockbroker led a creative financing seminar, a former restaurateur led a creative cooking seminar and Tipps led a creative living seminar.

Cole claims his wife, Mayron, was the brainchild behind a successful play, "Cleaning Out the Closet in Spring," performed by children of the church.

Although an outside playwright was hired actually to write the play, the task force used Mayron Cole's idea of ridding oneself of fears by "cleaning out the closet."

"Education is an important part of a family ministry program," he stresses. "We need to teach people before the crises happen."

Cole says adapting programs for particular areas is important.

Many of the people of Houston are experiencing financial crises because of the oil crunch, he notes, so planning seminars to deal with that is an effective ministry in River Oaks.

Outreach and counseling also are important factors in a successful family ministry program, he adds.

Cole emphasizes a church cannot be afraid to fail when presenting innovative family ministry programs.

"A church can't be discouraged if a marriage enrichment retreat or a seminar doesn't go over well," he says. "If a program fails, it's probably because the particular needs of the church aren't being met."

"You can't always take a pre-packaged deal and shove it down the throat of a church," Cole adds. "You might have to do some modifying and changing to get it to fit your church's needs."

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(BP) photo mailed to state Baptist newspapers by BSSB bureau of Baptist Press

Baptists In Missouri Show
Concern For Twister Victims

By Trennis Henderson

Baptist Press
5/23/86

SIKESTON, Mo. (BP)—Fellowship Baptist Church's gymnasium was destroyed, leaving only a pile of twisted metal and splintered wood after tornadoes blasted Sikeston, Mo., May 15.

The educational building, which suffered heavy damage from flying trees, may have to be bulldozed down. The sanctuary, minus its steeple, managed to escape serious damage although at least one wall will need repair.

Standing on the front lawn of Fellowship church's once well-kept property, Pastor Don Embry noted, "The spiritual body is a lot more important than the physical buildings. We can meet in a storefront if we have a sweet spirit and can win people to Christ."

Despite the material losses, Embry and his congregation fared much better than many victims of tornadoes which swept through the Southeast Missouri towns of Sikeston and Vanduser. According to George Reeves, Red Cross disaster chairman for Cape Girardeau County, the tornadoes, along with flooding from heavy rain the previous day, caused five deaths in the area. The storms also destroyed or damaged hundreds of houses and other buildings.

In response to the tragedy, the Red Cross requested the Missouri Baptist Convention disaster relief team to provide communication links and food services to victims, public service personnel and clean-up crews.

Missouri Baptist Disaster Relief Director Paul Harvey and Coordinator Jerry Kersey responded with a team of 15 volunteers from throughout the state who prepared and delivered food to tornado victims in Sikeston and Vanduser and to flood victims in Cape Girardeau.

Kersey noted the Baptist volunteers prepared about 1,200 meals per day over the weekend. "This fills an initial need for the victims and workers," he explained. "It also does a lot for the witness of local Baptist churches."

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Along with the convention's disaster relief team, other Missouri Baptists were involved in ministry to victims and clean-up crews. Several members of First Baptist Church in Sikeston—where the relief trailer was set up—helped with food preparation in the church's kitchen.

Members of Vanduser Baptist Church opened their doors the night of the tornadoes to provide their homeless neighbors with a place of shelter. The following few days church facilities were used as an area Red Cross feeding station.

Church members there also collected canned goods and clothing until the sanctuary was completely filled with the donations and they had to start turning down additional gifts. "By and large, the community has taken the loss very well and has really been heartened by the help," said Ted Armes, deacon chairman. "Our ministry now is helping these people."

Included in that help was a busload of staff members and their spouses from the Southern Baptist Brotherhood Commission in Memphis, Tenn., who cancelled a weekend staff retreat to travel to Vanduser and help with clean-up. Describing that group's participation as a "highlight," Kersey added others, such as Off-Site Coordinator Judy Brown, played vital roles in the disaster relief response.

Reeves described Missouri Baptists' disaster relief team as "a real put-together organization" that provided "a great deal of help to the Red Cross."

Tornado victim Mary Scott of Sikeston was quick to agree as she received a hot meal from volunteers manning the disaster relief van. "Everyone has just been wonderful, so understanding and helpful," she said. "It's unbelievable there was such a quick response.... It makes things more bearable."

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Detroit Lions Receiver
Works At Foreign Board

By Erich Bridges

Baptist Press
5/23/86

RICHMOND, Va. (BP)—Detroit Lions wide receiver Carl Bland admits he's not the fastest sprinter in the National Football League. But for a guy who didn't even play as a starter in high school until his senior year, catching 12 passes against the Chicago Bears and the Green Bay Packers is mighty sweet success.

Bland aims to begin his third year in pro football with the Lions this fall. To whom—does the 24-year-old athlete attribute his remarkable climb to the professional ranks? To God, his mother, good hands and Dan Whorton of the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board staff.

"A lot of times I talk to guys in Detroit about which way I could have gone if I hadn't met Dan," explains Bland, who also has worked part time at the board in Richmond, Va., during the last two off-seasons. "Just maybe I'd be in the same place, thinking I did it on my own, I did it all. But Dan showed me God's love. I want to show that to somebody else."

Bland is one of many young black athletes from the Richmond area who look up to Whorton. Actually, most of them look down to him. Whorton's not a husky former ball player; he's a small, bespectacled auditor in the board's finance department. But in his spare time he usually can be found surrounded by a forest of hulking football and basketball players.

Whorton may not look like a sportsman, but Richmond-area coaches and sports reporters know who he is. He's become a favorite of young blacks in urban Richmond through his long association with Royal Ambassadors (RAs), the Southern Baptist program for boys and young men. He started out working with high-school athletes but has kept in touch with many, like Bland, who go on to college sports. Now his college-age regulars bring their teammates to meet him.

Whorton's Royal Ambassador "graduates" include several other professional players, such as basketball star Paul Pressey of the Milwaukee Bucks, who played RA youth basketball in Richmond. But Whorton says Carl Bland is responsible for his own increasing success.

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"He has a real strong, quiet strength and leadership ability, and he has spiritual values," Whorton says of the young football player. "I've seen a lot of guys with even more athletic ability not make it in pro ball. I think it goes back to his dedication to stick to it and stay right with the Lord."

Bland's off-season activities illustrate his priorities: He's almost finished work toward a degree in business administration from Virginia Union University in Richmond, where he played college football. And he works part time at the Foreign Mission Board during tax season processing missionary tax returns.

Bland has faced some obstacles. He grew up in a housing project in northern Richmond where poverty and violence were the norms. "We had a lot of street fights where I lived. There was a time you could find one every day," he remembers. "Drugs were heavy around there, too. But my mother kept me off the streets, and I didn't have time to get into all that because I wanted to play sports." His mother also made sure the young boy went to church on Sunday.

He didn't get much playing time on his high school football team until his senior year. But he dreamed about playing in the pros and managed to draw the attention of a coach at nearby Virginia Union, where he went on to play four years. He also drew the attention of Dan Whorton.

"A few of the players I played with knew Dan, and they would go to his house after a game film session to eat," Bland says. "And that's how I really got to know him because Dan can cook! That got me coming back because I enjoy eating."

Bland got involved in the Royal Ambassador group's activities and Bible study, then began attending Whorton's church, Shalom Baptist Fellowship in Richmond. But he maintains the biggest single reason for his personal commitment to Jesus Christ is Whorton himself.

"It was the love he showed me, just like I was his son," Bland says. "It was sincere. That got me right there."

Virginia Union is not a national football power. But a few pro scouts came to watch the seniors play during Bland's final year. No pro team drafted him, but both the Detroit Lions and the Pittsburgh Steelers invited him to attend their training camp and try out as a free agent. He chose Detroit.

More obstacles came. Three weeks into camp he pulled a hamstring. He missed 13 games of his rookie season and played in only three. The team trainer reassured him, saying the injury might be a "blessing in disguise." But Bland worried.

"If you were a free agent and you got hurt, you were gone. You didn't have a chance," Bland explains. "It got to the point where I just said, 'Lord, if this is it I know you'll be with me. If not, there must be something else.'"

He recovered from the injury, though, and did well in the Lions training camp before the 1985-86 season. Then, with little warning, he was put on waivers—football parlance for being released. Detroit had a 45-man roster limit and needed new players at other positions. Bland went home to Richmond discouraged. He considered playing in Canada and later tried out for the Washington Redskins. Neither option worked out.

"All this time the Lord was watching," Bland believes. "I knew he was watching over me, and I knew I could play and the potential that was in me. I knew that if there was a place for me, I would be there."

Detroit called back. They needed a backup receiver to relieve the starters and a "special teams" player for kicking downs. Bland played in 10 games. Near the end of the season another receiver was injured and he finally got a chance to start—against the Green Bay Packers and the soon-to-be NFL champion Chicago Bears. The result: 12 pass receptions in two games.

Despite his surprising late-season performance, Bland knows he has no guarantee of making the team this year. But he likes his chances. Football isn't his first or only concern, however. Finishing his education is one main goal. Giving back some of what he's received is another.

Whorton reveals that when Bland signed his first pro contract, he received a bonus. Before buying a car (he'd never owned one) or anything else, the young man gave 10 percent of the bonus money to his church.

He also wants to guide young men, like the Royal Ambassadors he now helps Whorton lead. "Young guys today need somebody to keep them out of trouble," Bland says. "It's a small line between doing good and bad. It just takes one point in your life when somebody's going to grab hold of your life and tell you which way to go."

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(BP) photos mailed to state Baptist newspapers by Richmond bureau of Baptist Press.

Student Not Bugged
By Flea Market Church

By Craig Bird

Baptist Press
5/23/86

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP)--In most places, it would be a pastor's nightmare.

All the church members work on Sunday, there is no budget or baptistry and there never will be a building fund.

But Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary students Alan and Raetta Daws have committed to shepherd such a flock at Trader's Village, a 140-acre flea market in Grand Prairie, Texas. They minister to traders, visitors and the folks who stay at the adjacent campground.

Daws, a master of divinity student, has been chaplain at Trader's Village since August 1985. Almost every Saturday he and his wife wander up and down the shopping lanes, visiting with the 30-40 "regulars" and meeting others. Any free time is spent knocking on doors in the recreational vehicle park.

On Sundays they lead early-morning worship services in a building provided by the flea market.

"Most of the 1,600 dealers live in the Dallas-Fort Worth area, but they work on Sunday and are just as hindered from going to church as the dealers who come from 200 miles away," Daws says. "Those who are Christians want--and need--the growth opportunities and fellowship a church can provide."

"And those who aren't Christians certainly need a witness. They have the same problems and battles as everyone else," he adds.

Last summer, after accepting the invitation from the six-person group to become chaplain, Daws began praying to have 15 regular attenders within a year. By April, attendance averaged 50. And on Easter more than 80 people crowded the meeting room.

Monthly Saturday night fellowships attract even larger crowds. In between services and fellowships, Daws counsels traders on everything from cancer to marital conflicts.

And Daws is committed to continue his ministry as long as he is in seminary, which could be another three years. "I decided if the Lord wanted me here he wanted me for more than a few months," Daws relates.

Daws was told up front his salary would be whatever came in the offering plate. Instead of pocketing the whole amount, however, Daws enlisted fellow students, Joe and Katie Young, to lead music. He also bought a portable sound system and coffee pot for the congregation. Each Sunday he provides doughnuts and coffee.

Despite the diversity of the congregation, no one has complained about Daws' admitted Southern Baptist perspective. "In fact, two of our regulars are Catholic ladies," Daws notes. "Last week they told Raetta they had enjoyed the Father's sermon."

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Daws feels he is growing as a pastor and Christian in his chaplain's role. "There is a place of ministry here, and God is blessing us," he explained. What pastor could ask for more than that?"

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(BP) photo mailed to state Baptist newspapers by Southwestern Seminary.)

Missionary Sows Gospel
While Improving Crops

By Craig Bird

Baptist Press
5/23/86

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP)—Barring some natural or political disaster, Fred and Sammielee Sorrells aren't likely to show up on the 6 o'clock news.

Agricultural missionaries don't often address evangelism conferences, and Burundi is not among the better-known countries of the world.

But Fred Sorrells is becoming well known in one corner of Burundi. In the land-locked, mountainous country of East Africa, he addresses a basic human need—hunger, both physical and spiritual.

Working with Burundi farmers on potato and corn crops has helped "Southern Baptists earn the right to be heard when they witness," he explains. That right became even more valuable recently when the government revoked visas of two evangelist/church planter missionaries.

The Sorrellses return to Burundi in July after he completes his master of arts in religious education degree at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth, Texas. They will be the only Southern Baptist missionaries in the country of 4.7 million people.

Several other couples with medical or agricultural credentials hope to secure visas within the coming year.

The loss of co-workers is just an added reason for their eagerness to resume work in the Kirundo area. "We feel like we laid the foundation during our first term there (1980-84), learning the language and meeting people," Sorrells says.

That eagerness thrives despite some rough times the first several years. They learned both French and Kirundi and encountered severe medical problems.

But they love the Burundi people.

Sorrells, who holds a master's degree in agriculture, doesn't see himself as an educated American pouring out knowledge to grateful tribesmen. "These people are scientists in their own right—there are many things I can learn from them," he says.

"They may not be able to read or write, but their research is judged by life or death," Sorrells says. "If they are successful in their farming methods, they eat. If they are wrong, they can starve."

Burundi farmers value consistency of yield more than volume, Sorrells says. "They are looking for security—not 'how much' but something for sure."

So he works to match appropriate technology with the country's needs. "We can't jump from the hoe to the motorized tractor," he explains. "But maybe we can move from the hoe to animal-powered tractors."

Contacts with farmers and other developmental workers leads naturally into opportunities for the Texas couple to share Christ. "In Burundi, talk of farming is talk of life and death, and it is easy to move into considerations of spiritual life and death," Sorrells says.

But Sorrells refuses to manipulate people. His agricultural help is offered with no strings attached.

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That witness has helped win 500 new Christians in the past two years. Sorrells preaches some for the area's three churches, but nationals carry much of the load.

As the Burundi people desire consistent crops, the Sorrellses hope for a consistent ministry in Burundi. They remain confident the God who called them also will sustain them.

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(BP) photo mailed to state Baptist papers by Southwestern Seminary.)

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