

Jardín Etnobotánico

El Colegio de la Frontera Sur (ECOSUR)

Chiapas, Mexico



This sister garden project was the first established and grew out of a long-term collaboration between researchers at El Colegio de la Frontera Sur (ECOSUR) and the University of Georgia. Laid out to follow the contours of ECOSUR's herbarium and library facilities, the medicinal plant garden contains over 100 plants of ethnobotanical significance to the Tzeltal and Tzotzil Maya of Chiapas, Mexico.

The garden is used extensively as an educational resource in the community of San Cristóbal de las Casas, where ECOSUR is located. Regularly, school and community groups visit ECOSUR to tour the garden and learn more about the uses of medicinal plants. The garden has also sparked great interest among outlying communities who have gone on to establish their own gardens, facilitating the exchange and conservation of medicinal plants and knowledge of their uses.

Eight cooperative ethnobotanical community gardens have been established in Highland Chiapas as part of efforts to promote and maintain traditional knowledge of medicinal plants. Species inventories of three of the fully established gardens average 324 species in 103 botanical families. These gardens are of great importance in the promotion and maintenance of Maya traditional knowledge of herbal remedies.

