

This is the newly revised IRB submission form. It is structured in the following way:

- Section A and B: all review categories (exempt 1,2,3, and 4; expedited; full)
- Sections C, D, E, and F (exempt 2 and 3; expedited; full)
- Section G (expedited and full)

**Reed College  
Institutional Review Board (IRB)**

**NOTE: *This document is a protected fillable form. Please use Microsoft Word to complete this form.*** Microsoft 365 is available to Reed students, faculty, and staff at no additional cost. Visit <https://www.reed.edu/cis/help/office.html> for more information. If you have trouble editing this form, please contact Kayla Johnston at [johnstonk@reed.edu](mailto:johnstonk@reed.edu).

**COVER PAGE**

Project Title: Saving Seed: Socio-Ecological Dimensions of Corn Farming in Chiapas, Mexico

Submission Date: 11/8/2022

Name of Primary Investigator (student or faculty): [REDACTED]

Primary Investigator Email Address: [REDACTED]

Department: Anthropology

Faculty Advisor (if student is primary): Anand Vaidya

Faculty Email Address (if student is primary): [avaidya@reed.edu](mailto:avaidya@reed.edu)

Please indicate your agreement to the following by signing below:

*I will promptly report changes in the proposed study and any unanticipated problems involving risks to participants, including adverse reactions, to the Institutional Review Board.*

Electronic Signature of Primary Investigator [REDACTED]

\*\*\*\*\*

**Please submit this application and additional materials through the IRB Portal (see <http://www.reed.edu/irb/> for instruction).**

**\*If you are a student, please note that your faculty advisor is expected to review a full draft of your proposal in advance of submission, and incorporate feedback. Once submitted, the proposal will be forwarded to your faculty advisor for an electronic signature of approval, and then it will be sent to the committee for review.**

If your submission is **similar to** a submission that has been approved previously (within the past two academic years), please identify that proposal by Project Name and Primary Investigator.

Project Name:

Primary Investigator:

Approximate Date of Approval:

### **A. SUMMARY** (required for all review categories)

Provide a brief summary (one paragraph) of the research project. The summary should describe exactly what the purpose of your engagement with human subjects is, how you expect to conduct that engagement, with whom, and what outcomes of those interactions you expect.

My project investigates the relationship Mexican corn farmers in the southern state of Chiapas have with their land and the crops they grow. I am particularly interested in the Zapatista communities of central/eastern Chiapas and their ongoing resistance against the contamination of their native corn crops by genetically modified varieties grown throughout the state. My historical research tracks the emergence of a complex socio-ecological landscape in which industrial agriculture, science-based sustainable farming methods, and traditional (indigenous/non-indigenous) methods of cultivation often overlap and conflict with each other. The purpose of my ethnographic research is to find out, most simply, why certain farming communities choose to farm the way they do. Is it purely an economic choice, or do they feel that aspects of their identity are at stake in the decision? I additionally seek to understand what "sustainability" means to each community, especially if there is significant variation between indigenous and mestizo communities. I will conduct this research through semi-structured interviews with farmers at six different sites (though I may add more depending on timing and in-country conditions). The interviews will consist of a series of 10-15 questions intended to lead to more open conversation. I will record, transcribe, and translate them afterward. All farmers interviewed will be compensated fairly for their time. As I will likely have plenty of time on each farm, I intend to take a participant observation approach as well, which would consist of helping out with farm work, cooking and eating alongside my interlocutors, touring each farm, and taking notes on the techniques being employed, the diversity of crops, and the surrounding ecology. I will be accompanied on these visits by my primary contact, Saúl Acencio (a friend of professor Alejandra Roche-Recinos) who has relationships with members from each community. I expect the interviews to give me a greater sense of each farmers priorities in choosing which foods to grow and how to grow them. Learning how farmers position their own stories within Mexico's intersecting histories of indigenous identity politics, state formation, and agricultural development will allow me to better align my analysis with the lived experience of the people I aim to represent.

### **B. BASIC PROTOCOL INFORMATION** (required for all review categories)

1. The following populations require special consideration. Please review this list and follow the relevant instructions:

- Children (individuals <18 years). If your research exposes children to risky or deceptive interventions, your proposal requires **FULL** review. All research involving children must include **APPENDIX A**.
- Individuals who for one reason or another cannot give informed consent. Your proposal requires **FULL** review.
- Clinical populations. Your proposal requires **FULL** review.
- Incarcerated populations. Your proposal requires **FULL** review.
- Research conducted outside the US. Please **COMPLETE APPENDIX B**.
- Non-English speakers. Please **COMPLETE LANGUAGE SECTION, APPENDIX B**

2. If this study being performed at sites other than the Reed College campus or online, please list the other sites:

1. Finca Vallescondido (hotel I will stay at, also a working ranch)
2. El Limonal (Zapatista town in the Montes Azules Biosphere Reserve, Lacandon Jungle)
3. Nueva Esperanza Progresista (village my main contact lives in, has farms surrounding it)
4. Ejido Busiljá (Ejido run by indigenous farmers south of Nueva Esperanza)
5. Ejido Nuevo Francisco León (local farming community)
6. Ejido Palenque-La Trinitaria (local farming community)

3. Is this study being funded by the federal government or by some other agency that requires certification of review by the Reed College IRB?

YES  NO

**If YES**, list funding information (including agency and protocol number) and append a copy of the funding application.

4. Does the research require approval from one or more non-Reed organization(s) or IRB(s)?

YES  NO

**If YES**, attach application to other organization and, if approval has been granted, documentation of the approval.

5. Does the research include include in-person research activities?

YES  NO

Please note that IRB review does not assess health and safety pertaining to COVID-19. If you have questions about conducting in-person research at this time, please April Sams in Environmental Health and Safety or Kayla Johnston ([johnstonk@reed.edu](mailto:johnstonk@reed.edu)).

6. Does the research include participants residing in the European Union (EU) or European Economic Area (EEA)?

YES  NO

**If No** please make sure that you exclude individuals residing in the EU and EEA from your recruitment mechanisms.

**If YES**, please note that the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) applies to all individuals residing in EU and EEA member states. Please contact IRB Chair Kevin Holmes ([kjholmes@reed.edu](mailto:kjholmes@reed.edu)) and IRB Administrator Kayla Johnston ([johnstonk@reed.edu](mailto:johnstonk@reed.edu)) to discuss this.

7. **CATEGORY OF REVIEW.** Although the IRB ultimately determines which type of review your protocol will receive, please consult the guidelines on the webpage entitled, “Categories of Review” and then check the category of review you believe applies.

- Exempt Category 1: Educational Practices (**you do not need to submit the remaining pages of this form**).
- Exempt Category 2: Educational Tests, Survey Procedures, Interview Procedures, or Observation of Public Behavior (will undergo Limited Review)
- Exempt Category 3: Benign Behavioral Interventions (will undergo Limited Review)
- Exempt Category 4: The use of secondary data for which consent is not required (**you do not need to submit the remaining pages of this form**).
- Expedited

Full

**C. PARTICIPANTS** (required for Exempt Categories 2 and 3, Expedited, and Full review)

1. How many participants do you anticipate?

15

2. Describe the sample population.

The participants will consist of farmers from multiple farming communities in eastern Chiapas. Ideally, they will be from diverse ethnic backgrounds and political alignments. I will visit at least one Zapatista community farm. If farms have an identifiable leader available at the time of my visit, I will interview them, as well as 1-2 other members/employees of the farm.

3. How will they be recruited?

My primary contact, [REDACTED] has personal connections to members of each of the farms and will communicate the details of my visit with them in advance. Specifically, he will ensure they understand the time commitment required (45 minutes), the nature of the questions I will be asking them in my interviews (farming practices/personal/identity/relationship to government), and the incentive they can expect (200 pesos). If I find more farms beyond the scope of his connections while in-country, I will call them to explain the project and visit them if they are interested in participating.

4. What individuals will be included or excluded, and why?

Though my focus is on corn farmers, I also want to get a clearer picture of the farming landscape of Chiapas in general. If it is not possible to interview strictly corn farmers, I may interview other types of growers. Additionally, I am mainly interested in small-scale farming communities, though I would not be opposed to interviewing members of a larger agribusiness firm if the opportunity presents itself. No farmer will be excluded from my project on principle.

**ACTION:** Please attach recruitment materials (examples of recruitment documents can be found on the IRB website under *Participant Recruitment Materials*). Be sure to include the following information on recruitment materials: expected duration of individual participation, study location, and type or amount of compensation to the participants, if any.

**D. CONFIDENTIALITY AND PRIVACY** (required for Exempt Categories 2 and 3, Expedited, and Full review categories)

1. Will you be collecting any direct identifiers (names, social security numbers, detailed physical descriptions, genealogies, addresses, photographs, video or audio recordings, IP addresses, etc.?)

YES  NO

2. Will you be collecting data that, when considered in light of the potential participant pool, could lead to the identification of an individual participant? Examples include autobiographical accounts or identifiable patterns of demographic information given the sample population.

YES  NO

**If YES** to either of these questions, describe confidentiality procedures, what will become of records after use (e.g. shown at scientific meetings, erased), the final disposition of the records (e.g. destruction, archiving), and a reasonable timeline for this disposition.

I will use pseudonyms for the participants unless they prefer to be identified, in which case I will

have them orally consent at the start of the recording. Only I will have access to the recorded interviews, and all written transcriptions will be password protected on my computer in an encrypted document. I will destroy the recordings by May 2023 at the latest.

3. If you are collecting data online, please refer to our website FAQ for issues related to online research, and discuss here how you will address confidentiality issues (for example, collection of IP addresses, use of Mechanical Turk, etc.)

n/a

4. If data are identified by a code, will you retain a master list linking codes and direct identifiers?

YES  NO

**If YES**, explain how and where you will secure the master list, and how long it will be kept.

5. Will information that could identify the participant be shared in any way?

YES  NO

**If YES**, explain.

My thesis will likely contain personal narratives and descriptions of the general region surrounding each farm that could theoretically be used to identify participants, but I will use pseudonyms unless otherwise directed and specifically ask community leaders how confidential they want their farm's location to be kept. These details will only be shared with the Reed Anthropology Department when my thesis is evaluated.

**E. INFORMED CONSENT** (required for Exempt Categories 2 and 3, Expedited, and Full review categories)

The consent form should be a plain-language description of key information designed to facilitate comprehension and informed decision making. It should also include specific information about how privacy and confidentiality issues will be addressed. Please read the Participant Consent page on our website thoroughly including the consent form templates provided. Then, indicate what form of consent you will seek from participants, and **ATTACH** the appropriate consent form or script.

NOTES: 1) It is common to include a separate line on a written consent document asking for consent to audio or video record, or add a separate question in an oral consent scenario. 2) It is common to add a separate line asking for consent to archive research for future use, or add a separate question in an oral consent scenario.

1. How will informed consent be sought from participants?

**Written consent**  
 **Oral consent**  
 **Implied consent**

**F. PROCEDURES** (required for Exempt Categories 2 and 3, Expedited, and Full review categories)

**ATTACH** all questionnaires and surveys, and include sample items from computerized tasks. For structured interviews, provide interview protocol. For unstructured interviews, please provide sample questions, and describe the goals of the interview. If Expedited or Full, please provide a more detailed

description of the procedures, including specific information on what each participant will be asked to experience or to do.

Questions (These are starting points, I do not intend to get through all of them with each participant, especially if interviewing multiple members of the same farm):

1. What is your name and where are you from originally?
2. Do you identify as indigenous or mestizo?
  - a. If indigenous, which ethnic group are you from/part of?
3. How long have you worked on this farm?
  - a. When and where did you learn how to farm?
  - b. Why do you do this work?
4. What types of crops do you grow here? Do you rotate crops seasonally?
  - a. Why did you choose to grow these crops?
  - b. Where do you get your seed from?
  - c. Where does the food you grow end up?
  - d. If you sell it, where? To whom?
5. Do you practice a specific system of farming?
  - a. If yes, what is it called, and what are its principles?
  - b. Do you grow any genetically modified crops? Why or why not?
  - c. Do you use pesticides/herbicides? Why or why not?
  - d. Do you use synthetic fertilizers? Why or why not?
6. Are you satisfied with your relationship to the Mexican government?
  - a. Do you feel your needs are represented on a regional/national level?
  - b. Are you policed/patrolled by any government/non-government groups?
7. Is “tradition” or “science” more important to you? Do you view them as opposites?
8. What does a successful, healthy community look like to you?
9. What does the term “sustainability” mean to you?
10. How do you feel about the Zapatista movement?
11. Are there any other communities/farms/people you would recommend I talk to?

Zapatista community specific:

1. How has your community changed since the start of the Zapatista movement?
2. How is your community involved in the larger movement?
3. Does your community produce all of its own food?
4. Are you concerned about your crops being contaminated by transgenic varieties?
  - a. If yes, what are you doing to prevent contamination?

#### **G. RISK/BENEFIT ASSESSMENT** (required for Expedited and Full review categories only)

##### 1. Benefits

Describe the potential direct and indirect benefits, if any, to participants (excluding incentives).

##### 2. Risks

Indicate whether the research involves any of the following by checking in front of applicable items:

- Deception of participants
- Procedures that may result in mental or emotional stress, such as induction of negative mood, damage to self-esteem, manipulation of attitudes, exposure to aversive stimuli
- Procedures that may involve physical harm to participants, such as ingestion of any substance, physical exercise, invasive physiological measurements
- Presentation of materials and/or behaviors commonly regarded as socially unacceptable within the setting of the research
- Observations or questions that might be regarded as invading privacy, especially if these might lead to disclosure of information that could be harmful to participant (e.g., criminal behavior, immigration status, information that might affect academic or employment status, information that could affect the participant's reputation or be considered stigmatizing).

3. For each of the items checked above, describe why each is necessary, and how you seek to minimize each risk posed.