

Carlos Gonzalez - Graduate 2015

“I’ve always thought about having my own ranch. Now, with Alba, I can.”

Carlos Gonzalez Torres remembers growing up in a poor family whose livelihood came from the beans, corn and squash they were able to grow on their family farm in Hidalgo, Mexico. “We didn’t put anything on them. No fertilizers, no chemicals.” Since then Carlos has always looking for that sense of connection to the earth and nature in his work.



“It was all because my car broke down on the side of the road.” Carlos says and laughs about the situation. A friend of his who is a mechanic came by to help get the car up and running again and they got to talking. Carlos was dissatisfied with his work picking strawberries. He always had ideas about wanting to do things a better way, but he didn’t know how. Expressing his frustrations while fixing the car, led his friend to ask to a simple question, “Why don’t you go to Alba? It’s a school where you can learn to be your own boss.” Without delay, Carlos jumped in his newly fixed car and came to sign up for PEPA Farmer Education classes.

Today, he is working on a small plot of land with kale and other vegetables. “My wife and I still have to work with other companies because our land with Alba is small. But next year, we will have our own space and will be able to provide for our family.” He has big plans for his own ranch. “My children came here when they were on summer break, and they like to help me work. But they also see that I am doing something that I love, and that is what I want them to learn.”

Carlos still remembers with fondness the tranquility of his family farm in Mexico. He is proud that what he is creating now is like that, too. “This organic farming is natural. I love to see how it all works together. When I see the animals and the bees fly down to my plants, I know that things are working well. It is so natural, to see it all together, the flowers growing, the little birds, the bees, the ladybugs. This is how farming should be.”

