

The Potrerillo Community in 1861 (Generated by AI)

Capitanía Pedánea de Ceja de Pablo (Sagua la Grande)

Based on the March 14–15, 1861 census.

A Rural Community in Transition

In 1861, the **Cuartón de San José del Potrerillo** was a predominantly rural, agricultural community organized around family households and sustained by farming labor. At the same time, it was deeply connected to the plantation economy through at least one large **Ingenio** (sugar estate).

This dual structure—small farming families alongside plantation labor—defined daily life in the region.

Occupations: A Farming Society

The overwhelming majority of adult men are listed as:

- “**Labrador**” (farmer)

Women are almost universally described as:

- “**Quehaceres diarios**” (domestic work)

This reflects a **subsistence and small-scale agricultural economy**, where:

- Men worked the land
- Women maintained the household and contributed to domestic production

A small number of specialized occupations appear, including:

- **Carpintero** (carpenter)
- **Boyero** (ox driver)
- **Mayoral / Mayordomo** (estate overseers)
- **Propietarios** (landowners)

These roles suggest a modest but clear **social hierarchy within the rural economy**.

🏰 Enslaved Individuals and the Plantation Economy

One of the most striking features of the census is the presence of a large, enslaved population associated with the **Ingenio San Dionisio**.

- The Ingenio lists **67 individuals**
- Only one is identified as a **hacendado (owner)**
- The rest are primarily classified under racial categories indicating enslaved status

This reveals that:

- The plantation was a **major economic center**
- Enslaved labor formed a **significant portion of the total population**
- The local economy depended on both:
 - Independent farming households
 - Plantation-based production

🕒 Understanding Potrerillo in 1861

Taken together, the census portrays Potrerillo as: A **rural, kin-based farming community**, deeply interconnected through family ties, and economically linked to a nearby sugar plantation that relied heavily on enslaved labor. It was a place where:

- Families worked the land together
- Social identity was shaped by race, status, and occupation
- The plantation economy and peasant agriculture coexisted side by side

