

Supply perspectives of family farmers products for food and nutrition security public facilities in the Federal District, Brazil

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Abstract

The increase of the availability of foodstuff, through the consolidation of local production and consumption circuits, strengthens the scenario of a decentralized agri-food system of family origin capable of promote Food and Nutrition Security (SAN). Aiming to verify the tendency of insertion of this model of production in institutional purchases of public equipment of Food and Nutrition Security in the Federal District, Brazil, five social actors have been interviewed: public managers, local family farmers representative, non-governmental organization that receives donation from Food Bank and meal supplier to community restaurants. Results were analyzed based on the discourse of the collective subject (DSC) using the Qualiquantisoft® version 1.3c Build (2) software. Many obstacles to the deployment of family farming in the institutional market of the Federal District were pointed, such as bureaucracy and hegemony of agribusiness. However, alternatives to overcome problems were identified, such as productive structuring and organization of farmers to achieve institutional demands; actions to raise awareness directed to businessmen acting in equipment, along with policy of inclusion of preferential purchase from family farming to community restaurants in bidding documents; altogether with the offer of local infrastructure for more efficient family production flow. Favorable environment has been observed, but it will only be achieved with the involvement of the whole community and support of the Federal District government.

Key words: Food Supply. Sustainable Agriculture. Nutrition Programs and Policies. Food Security. Nutrition, Public Health.

Introduction

A significant amount of individuals in a situation of hunger or poor nutrition is still an existing issue nowadays; a fact that is not consistent with the annually increasing global volume of produced food. Such contradiction can be clarified by the propositions of Josué de Castro, who has stated that: “the phenomenon of hunger is not the result of overpopulation nor of arising climatic or racial issues, but instead, it is a scourge created by humans when making political and economic choices”.¹

This socio-political interpretation of hunger has accelerated and enhanced the creation of Food and Nutrition policies in Brazil,² incorporating the concept of *Food Security*, which had been limited to the biological and hygienic-sanitary characteristics of food up to the mid-90s.

In 1996, countries gathered at the World Food Summit, in Rome, reported the incorporation of the notion of access to safe food, with good nutritional quality, produced in a sustainable, balanced and culturally acceptable manner, giving rise to the concept of food and nutrition security.^{2,3}

The concept that is currently being used in Brazil was established in 2004, at the Second National Conference on Food and Nutrition Security held in Olinda, in the state of Pernambuco, Brazil.³ In 2006, Law No. 11,346, which established the National System of Food and Nutrition Security (SISAN, in the Portuguese acronym), has adopted the same definition, thus, Food and Nutrition Security (FNS) is :

[...] Food and nutrition security is the realization of the right of all to regular and permanent access to quality food in sufficient quantity, without compromising access to other essential needs, based on nutrition practices that promote health, respect cultural diversity and are socially, economically and environmentally sustainable.⁴

SISAN foresees a model of intersectoral public policy that requires, for its implementation and enforcement, the involvement of various governmental and non-governmental sectors. Moreover, in partnership with the National Council for Food and Nutrition Security (CONSEA), the Interministerial Chamber of Food and Nutrition Security (CAISAN) has coordinated and developed the National Plan for Food and Nutrition Security (PLANSAN), which is a planning, management and implementation tool of the National Policy for Food and Nutrition Security (PNSAN).⁵

Following that same process, the Federal District joined SISAN on November 7, 2011, at the Fourth National Conference on Food and Nutrition Security (IV CNSAN), by making the

commitment of developing the First District Plan for Food and Nutrition Security (I PDSAN), which includes in one of its guidelines the support to the promotion of supply and structuring of sustainable and decentralized systems, based in agroecology, production, extraction, processing, distribution and marketing of foods, in addition to fostering family farming production and agribusiness. With these guidelines, the I PDSAN was launched on October 23, 2013,⁶ during the First Food and Nutrition Security Meeting of the Federal District.

Family farming is a production model that promotes the structuring of local circuits of production and consumption, facilitating access to adequate and healthy food, besides being key to provide food supply to large cities.⁷

In Brazil, the agricultural census statistically shows the importance of this type of production in the country. Data show that 76.8% of black beans; 83.8% of black-eyed beans; 86.7% of cassava; 55.0% of coffee; 58.0% of cow milk; 67.0% of goat milk; 50.0% of poultry and 59.0% of pork produced in Brazil come from the family farming.⁸

The Federal District differs from the national scenario. Results show, for those same products, a percentage down to 70 times lower: 1.2% of black beans; 8.1% of black-eyed beans; 43.0% of cassava; 11.0% of coffee; 17.4% of cow milk; 6.1% of goat milk; 5.0% of poultry and 7.6% of pork – indicating a mild participation of family farming in the total production of food in that region.⁸

However, land distribution in the FD resembles the national distribution. At a district level, family farming make up 80% of the total production of agricultural facilities, and it holds only 14% of the total area of crop land. Nationally, the same corresponding values are 78% and 13%, which point to a general inequality of land distribution.⁸

One way to minimize such inequalities and distortions found in the production process is to expand and strengthen policies that encourage family farming and create more marketing opportunities for it. Some national policies and programs have been drawn up for this. The Program to Strengthen Family Farming (PRONAF) was the first of them, created in 1995, and aimed at reducing the shortage of existing credits for small rural farmers in Brazil.⁹

Results are already beginning to show, after years of the program. PRONAF has significantly increased and considerably expanded nationwide, aiding with financial improvements, developing special programs to meet the several categories of farmers, taking over technical assistance and strengthening infrastructure in the surrounding municipalities.⁹

However, despite the remarkable growth of the program, it still has its weaknesses. One of its main weaknesses is the alleged diversion of focus in management, which has directed major

investments to farmers considered to have “safe production”, which are family farmers of soybeans and tobacco, foods that are traditionally found in agribusiness at the expense of those farmers that grow rice and beans, which are foods produced for the domestic market and consumer.⁹

After the creation of PRONAF, the Food Acquisition Program (PAA), created in 2003 by the Federal Government, gained prominence, which intent was to scaffold another structure to fight hunger and poverty. It was created to strengthen Brazilian family farming, by encouraging the governmental acquisition of horticultural products based on family production, so that the products could be also distributed to people with social vulnerability and food and nutrition insecurity.¹⁰

The PAA, therefore, aims to address the main challenge of family farmers: marketing. Thus, the program articulates public policies that regard family farming, besides bringing to the debate the environmental, social, historical, political and economic aspects of this form of production.¹⁰

At the district level, the Federal District Family Farming Product Acquisition Program (PAPA / DF) emerges with the same line of thought of the logic of incentive. PAPA-DF ensures direct acquisition, by bidding exemption, of products produced by rural and urban family farmers, and other beneficiaries and organizations that meet the provisions of Federal Law No. 11.326, of June 24, 2006, as well as native people and communities and agrarian reform beneficiaries”, in order to meet the needs of social-welfare institutions, of programs and public projects on Food and Nutrition Security, and of the governmental market.¹¹

Both PAA and PAPA-DF have incorporated into their implementing methods the idea that creating incentive opportunities to the institutional acquisition of family farming products is the initial action to be taken to leverage the implementation and growth of this form of production in Brazil and in the Federal District, in order to expand its commercial power.

The National Policy on School Meals (PNAE) has followed this path by recommending that at least 30% of federal funds, passed from the educational fund to schools, is used in the acquisition of family farming products.¹²

The benefits of this policy are highlighted in a study by Belik & Chaim,¹³ which indicates that local development is favored with increasing purchase of food from family farming, and it leverages the local economy, since the conformation of an institutional market entails particular organizational requirements so that producers can meet the demands. The authors state that “Within this proposition of including local produce, school meal menus end up encouraging regional eating traditions and nutritional and quality gains”.¹³

Given the initial results identified in PNAE, the potentialities and benefits of expanding the institutional market started to be considered, in a way that the products from family farming could be part of other public programs. To make this feasible in terms of the Federal District, it is essential to have the cooperation of the government to include family farming in various dimensions and policies that go beyond school meals, reaching programs and public agencies that directly provide food and promote FNS in the DF, thus strengthening short supply chains and reassuring truly adequate and healthy eating habits.

This research, therefore, aims to identify the understanding of public officials and social organizations related to public agencies for Food and Nutrition Security of the Federal District, about the potential and challenges of inclusion of family agriculture in community restaurants and food bank locations.

Methodological approach

This is a descriptive research conducted as a case study with a quantitative-qualitative approach,¹⁴ performed in two stages. The first stage consisted of a literature review on the topic, with the aim to investigate the current conception of what are and how short-circuits of production and consumption function, as well as the potential and challenges of inclusion of family farming in public programs and agencies of Food and Nutrition Security.

The second stage, which took place from October 2012 to January 2013, comprised of semi-structured interviews made with five social entities: two managers of public agencies of Food and Nutrition Security from the Federal District - food bank and community restaurants; two entities linked to public agencies (supplier of meals in community restaurants and non-governmental organization favored with donations from the food bank); and one entity associated with the organization of local farmers.

The selection of subjects was made in accordance with the methodology proposed by Minayo,¹⁵ which requires the choice of those who have more significant opinions to the social context, allowing for a more reliable data collection. The selected respondents are placed in the context of promoting food and nutrition security and therefore are a representative group, which allows to analyze the perspectives of these social actors.

The script of the semistructured interview is the ideal tool, because while it facilitates a safe approach, since it is previously prepared, it does not frame responses to specific questions, ie, it allows the respondent to reflect on various aspects brought by the topic ensuring the researcher greater richness and depth of information.¹⁵

The tool used was common to all subjects, allowing standardization of the analysis for all interviews. The questionnaire was divided into three thematic blocks: Block of Food and Nutrition Security, Block of Family Farming and Production Short Circuit and the Block of Institutional Market - Potentials and Challenges. The questionnaire aimed to investigate, from the perspective of managers and related social entities, as well as the sector of family farmers itself, the acceptance, feasibility and obstacles for structuring short circuits of production, linking family farming to the public agencies from the Federal district.

With the intent to reduce errors and biases in the study, a “Protocol for Conducting the Interview” was created. It aimed to predict errors frequently made by researchers when conducting qualitative research interview, pointed out by Rosa & Arnoldi.¹⁶

The field trip was carried out according to the following steps: presentation of the purpose of the study, reading of the Term of Free and Informed Consent Form (ICF), presentation of institutional credential and initial discussion. The interviews were transcribed, with the permission of the interviewees, after signing the consent form, accepted and approved by the Ethics Committee on Human Research from Universidade de Brasília (Decree No. 150/12).

The interviews were transcribed and analyzed, and the relevant opinions were sorted through a process that includes identifying key terms and core ideas. Key term addresses the extract that best represents the content of the speech; and the core ideas, by describing meaning, give rise to discursive categories.¹⁷

Key terms, core ideas and discursive categories were transferred to the 1.3c Build (2) QualiQuantiSoft® software, which allowed for the construction of DSC (discourses of the collective subject). The speeches were constructed by summing key expressions of all responses for each relevant category. Therefore, they allowed an understanding of the perceptions of the group interviewed on the matter, characterized as representing the collective thought.

Results and discussion

The interview consisted of three thematic blocks: (i) Food and Nutrition Security; (ii) Family Farming and Production Short Circuit; and (iii) Institutional Market - Potentials and Challenges. After the transcribing and subsequent analysis of the interviews, the script was reorganized in order to sort the speeches by “topics”: understanding of FNS - production and consumption of food; food system - family production, public purchase and potentialities; challenges; and finally, the proposals for overcoming obstacles.

Understanding of SAN: production and consumption of food

Respondents were asked to reflect on the dimensions addressed in the concept of Food and Nutrition Security, currently adopted in Brazil and measuring such dimensions in the current scenario of production and consumption of food.

The collective discourse allows us to infer that the respondents strongly value a varied diet so it can be classified as “Healthy and Adequate Diet”, referring to the benefits for health. They believe that one way to ensure food and nutrition security is to value dietary habits that include the consumption of fruit and vegetables, bringing to debate current issues such as the indiscriminate use of pesticides on crops.

DSC: [...] *I understand that the concept of Food Security is wide. In the conventional concept Food Safety and Healthy Eating is that with a Food Certification. We always look for... the best quality in the variety of food, access to adequate food, focus on finding healthy food. It is not only about getting something to eat to stop being hungry, it is about knowing what is best for your body, to avoid certain diseases and related diseases that we know can occur. Eating habit changes very focused on increasing consumption of fruits and vegetables. Quality is also an interesting topic because it involves an issue that is quite a matter for debate today: residues of pesticides. [...]*

This thought agrees with the nutritional aspect of the FNS, which provides the choice and consumption of healthy and adequate foods in order to promote health. Adequate food means appropriate for the eating patterns, including free from adverse substances in excess of pre-established by national legislation and international standards. Some examples are toxins, pollutants resulting from agricultural and industrial processes and veterinary drug residues (inductors of growth and hormones).³

The second most mentioned category was “educational processes’ (n = 4), translated as Food and Nutrition Education (FNE). Most respondents believe that to ensure FNS it is necessary to follow guidelines for dietary changes, besides changing from traditional agriculture to sustainable agriculture, to respect the environment and social relationships.

DSC: [...] *In my opinion, health promotion is oriented to issues of nutritional education, changes of habit. The main task is the process of education and training. Food and Nutrition Education and Environmental Education, oriented to the conversion of traditional agriculture in the settlements, in the family farming communities, in a sustainable agriculture with the use of appropriate practices for soil conservation, the preservation of sources, the recovery of degraded areas, the use of native seeds to avoid GM. [...]*

The training, pointed out by respondents as a strategic action, can be framed within the concept of FNE as a type of “active educational resource.” According to the Reference Framework of Food and Nutrition Education for Public Policies, published in 2012:

FNE, in the context of Human Right to Adequate Food and ensuring Food and Nutrition Security, is a field of knowledge and of continuous and permanent practice, that is multidisciplinary, intersectoral and multi-professional, that aims to promote autonomous and voluntary healthy eating habits. The practice of FNE should make use of problem-solving and active educational approaches and resources that favor a dialog with individuals and population groups, considering all life course stages, the steps of the food system, and the interactions and meanings that make up the dietary behavior”.¹⁸

As for the current production system, all of the respondents believe that the dimensions in the concept of Food and Nutrition Security are not being fairly addressed. Thus, to further deepen the speeches, the category “Does not encompass the dimensions of FNS” was divided into subcategories: “No. Due to difficult access” (n=3); “No. Due to current eating habits” (n=3); “No. Due to sustainability issues” (n=3); “No. Due to the use of chemicals” (n=4); and “No. Due to unknown product origin” (n=1). The first four categories were most commonly chosen.

DSC: [...] *We still have many matters that still need to evolve on the issue of food quality, and access itself. From the producer to the supplier there is a very long path, much is lost on the road, this path has great waste of food. We also have many missing food because agribusiness turned them into a commodity or in a production system that took them from here. [...] (emphasis added).*

Respondents identified that difficult access is one of the current constraints of the productive system to contribute in ensuring FNS. The current form of food supply in the cities is made through the transport of food over long paths, which triggers an increase in the price of products, and contribute to increased waste. For Maluf,¹⁹ the support given to regional circuits of production and distribution triggers the creation of job and income opportunities for local farmers, while valuing regional and different foods, with positive impact on costs by making transportation less expensive¹⁹ and also on the consumption of better quality foods.

The current eating habit is also a determining factor pointed to food and nutrition insecurity. The Brazilian consumption today pervades the habit of eating unhealthy and high calorie foods. Data from POF-2008/2009 (Household Budget Survey) show that typical foods of unhealthy diets, high in sugars, fats and sodium, are the fast foods, sweets (sandwich cookies) and sodas, and are associated with the highest values of energy consumption in the population.²⁰

DSC: [...] *The vast majority of the population, instead of eating a salad, they order a burger, instead of eating tapioca, they order pastries. Habits of eating out, consuming too much fast food. We are still very influenced by misleading advertising and excessive commercials on foods with excessive sodium and fat. [...]*

DSC: [...] *The habits of the Brazilian people, which are not any different in the DF, are conventional. The historical habit of deforestation, the historical habit of carelessness with nature, both with sources of water and with the ground, with the flora and fauna. [...]*

DSC: [...] *there are all kinds of chemicals to make the poultry larger and get it on the table as quickly as possible, to ensure economic return. There is a lot, but good quality is not at stake. For us the high grade, the high rate of chemical products compromises product health and compromises the health of those who eat it. [...]*

To emphasize the discourse on the topic “pesticide”, brought by the respondents, it has been categorized separately from the topic “sustainability”. Struggling to fight the use of such poison, Abrasco (the Brazilian Association of Collective Health), has prepared a brochure entitled “A warning about the impacts of pesticides on health”, with the aim of making people aware about what concerns “addressing food and nutrition insecurity, through renewed emphasis on economy, to rethink the expansion of agricultural frontiers for the export of commodities, and questioning the model of conservative agricultural modernization and chemical-dependent monoculture.”²¹

This publishing indicates, by agreeing with the DSC, that:

[...] Export crops, monoculture of soybean, maize, cotton, eucalyptus and sugar cane, have increasingly occupied arable land, in order to feed the cycle of biofuels, cellulose, iron-steel, rather than people, advancing on the cerrado and Amazon biome, hindering family farming life and production.²¹

The text contains information from 2002-2011, which demonstrates that the food consumed daily by Brazilians, such as rice, beans and cassava occupy the same area of production, whereas monocultures of corn, soybeans, cotton and sorghum expanded their production areas and export, simultaneously to an exponential increase in the amount of chemicals used. This situation goes against the regulation of pesticide use and often is supported by scientific research that are induced to renounce the possible nuisances and negative effects to health, environmental and food and nutrition security.²¹

Food system: household production, public purchase and potentialities

In this field of discourse, respondents expressed their ideas about family farming and their contribution to ensuring FNS; their knowledge about federal or district proposals that promote preferential purchasing from family farms; about the importance of a legislation to foster productive manner; and the potentialities to secure an institutionalized market in the Federal District (community restaurants and food bank) for family farming.

Most respondents believe that the reasons why the family farming production interacts with the dimensions encompassed in the concept of FNS are “the great ability to promote the social and economic value of the producer” and “the strong relationship of this production chain with environmental, social, cultural and economic sustainability,” as noted on the following speeches.

DSC: *[...] I believe such action of local short circuit is in full compliance [...] it favors in the sense of building, strengthening this counterculture of the food system. And I think we can only win, if we rescue a system of production and consumption that is more efficient, more logical, with very strong social impacts. [...]*

DSC: *[...] I believe so, if sustainable practices are employed... if you keep the conventional production system, and create the short-circuit production, you just introduced something new. You have introduced a good thing, but the basis is still agribusiness. [...]*

The thought described is consistent with the results of a paper published in *Journal of Rural Studies*, in the UK, which used interviews with individuals from five different locations, two from the rural area and three from the urban. Respondents declared, in order of relevance, the reasons that lead to their choice of foods, namely: first, good quality (taste, fresh food and appearance); second, access to food (cost and convenience or location); and, less significantly, the image (packaging and product branding).²²

In that same study, issues related to health and well-being of animal and environmental issues were considered highly relevant, while the production of organic was considered of low relevance. For respondents from rural areas, the major concern regards knowing the origin of the product and if the food is local.²²

It can be observed that in both the discourses of the aforementioned study, and in the DSC presented, the idea of sustainability exists, which highlights how distant the current production model is from making food production associative to the precepts of FNS. It is known, however, that in order to come closer to the proposed sustainable model, there must be strong encouragement of the Government, which should have a significant role in promoting it, not only by granting resources, but, in fact, by reducing the obstacles and bureaucracies applied.

This need was addressed in the study of Triches & Schneider,²³ according to which, by 2009, the resources used in public purchase should be mandatory by law. This fact was an important obstacle for family farmers to enter into the market of public programs. The Government, with its duty to promote and facilitate access to a production of agrifood chain linked to the promotion of good health and nutritional quality,²³ should therefore play a more effective role in the coordination and preparation of systematic reviews of concerning laws.

In this regard, the respondents, in general, believe that it is necessary to create legislation recommending the purchase of products from family farming to public agencies of FNS in the Federal District, but these laws have to actually be intended to facilitate access and consolidate advance.

DSC: [...] This is critical. I think the law can support [...] it would certainly be an incentive. But society needs to inspect, well monitoring it. They have to create specific laws to strengthen the issue of rights, because otherwise it will be weak. From the perspective of con-so-li-da-tion, to avoid fall backs. In fact, for these legal changes, they become state policies and not only in government policies. [...]

Only one speech showed a contrary opinion: **DSC**: “[...] I don’t think a law (emphasis) would be necessary for that, because maybe the matter of supply and demand could be hindered [...]”

Individuals were asked what they knew about federal or district programs that recommend the purchase of products from family farming. A total of nine responses were obtained, categorized into “PNAE” (n = 4); ‘PAA’ (n = 2); “PAPA / DF” (n = 2); and “Did not know” (n = 1). Eighty percent of respondents reported being aware of PNAE.

DSC: [...] *There is the PNAE - National School Diet Program, with this concept: buy Family Farming with bidding exemption. We realize that the state understood that action should be taken in this area to ensure that: what is produced on family farms and agrarian reform, 30%, 40%, 50%, can reach 100, but it can not be less than 30, to be marketed to meet the public demands and inventory building in the area of food safety. [...] (emphasis added).*

Triches & Schneider²³ state that after the PNAE prospective study, it is possible to evaluate it as: [...] *Great potential for a policy of structural character, since it enables the purchase of food from local producers, generating income and benefiting small farmers. However, with regard to the effectiveness of this local policy, few efforts had been observed before legal requirement.*²³

This supports the hypothesis that the creation of laws would be essential for the insertion of a new culture on the relationship among food production, social, economic and environmental sustainability and food and nutrition security.

From results, it can be inferred that the PNAE was the most referenced program by being the first to perform connection of different sectors of public policy, such as the field of supply of family farming (Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Supply) and school diet (Ministry of Education). It is due to its inter-sectoral features²³ that the program is so popular and notable.

Regarding the potential and benefits of a policy, program or action with such profile, the respondents evaluated, from their own perspectives, the incorporation of family farming in public agencies of FNS in the Federal District, the community restaurants and the food bank.

DSC: [...] *The first benefit of the buyer is knowing that the product is being produced by a family of people who are simple, but have provided that product with dignity. And, companies, [occupying the Community Restaurants] working at a lower cost, can sell for a lower price [the meal] and ends up bringing benefits, in general, to everyone. The advantage of farmers in such programs is the guarantee of income to maintain a good quality of life, avoiding poverty, to protect future generations. [...] (emphasis added).*

As noted, the discourses converge for the “improvement of the socioeconomic conditions of farmers’ (n = 5), which showed a greater number of responses. Other issues were raised, such as “nutritional quality in public agencies” (n = 4), the “ease in ensuring food access” (n = 4) and “greater and safer consumer market (n = 4).

It is common sense that the development and strengthening of local family farming ensure improved quality of life in rural areas and create better social conditions for the producers, who are able to reach back their dignity and citizenship.²³⁻²⁵

In the UK, this perception of local social and economic development is a question of weighting on the acquisition of food. Consumers prefer to purchase foods that are locally produced in a sustainable, economic and environmental positive manner²².

The study by Starr et al.²⁶ reinforces that the insertion of product of local agriculture provides to the public agencies higher quality food, in addition to the advantageous possibility of being associated with educational practices of diet and nutrition, reflecting increased consumer interest in seasonal, fresh and cultural foods.²⁶ Triches & Schneider²³ confirm the same result: after the inclusion of family agriculture in school meals:

[...] There was a higher frequency of receiving fresh produce, with greater variety, quality, and improving the acceptance of meals. Children began to eat foods they did not eat before, due to better presentation of varieties such as maize and tomatoes.²³

The challenges

Due to the discovery of numerous difficulties and challenges pointed out by researchers, and faced by family farmers, unable to compete in the food market and, above all, to be inserted in the institutional markets pointed out by researchers, responded were asked to identify what challenges they would point, according to their knowledge and work routines. The major convergences of responses were for the categories “bureaucracy” (n = 5) and “hegemony of agribusiness” (n = 4).

DSC: *[...] BU-REAU-CRA-CY. It's not that you do not have to take control, but this complicates the Public Decisions ... Not every family farmer has a bureaucratic organization. The entire bureaucracy with which the government works, makes it very difficult when it is all auctioned. [...]*

DSC: *[...] The capitalist system, this conventional system ... it has no interest. Why encourage family farming to guarantee 100% supply of the food supply need, for Food and Nutrition Security? It is like encouraging my opponent in the competition for profit. Small farmers are then harmed. [...]*

The DSCs indicate that the government and its functional structure are the major obstacles to the actual inclusion of family farmers in the institutional market policies and public programs guarantors of Food and Nutrition Security. This result comes as a contradiction, since the government, in view of the recognition of the great importance that the local small and family farms have to improve the social and economic conditions and the quality of life in urban and rural regions, was based on laws in the sense to implement it in the School Diet Program, and seek to decrease the bidding difficulties by allowing direct purchase, as noted in Law No. 4,752, of February 7, 2012, which provides for the PAPA-DF.

The difficulty pointed out in practice may be associated with lack of information on the new laws in force, plus a still incipient awareness in the subject. The professionals of public agencies as well as those associated, show some fear and insecurity when it comes to purchase with bidding exemption.

And yet, often, certain institutions related to equipment, allocated as companies realize the simplistic choice of evaluating the product for the price. In this sense, family farming may actually be at a disadvantage, since the difficulties related to the existing “logistics” of supply (category also highlighted by respondents - n = 2) can lead to a costly production for small farmers, while large agricultural industries, through wholesale market, offer lower quality products for a lower price.²³

Another category that has been pointed out is “difficult access to land and inputs” (n=2).

DSC: [...] *I think these issues of inputs and land. Family farming has less land and less space. Everything less... less incentive, less funding. I think there is a good level of technical service, which are not being accessed well. [...]*

The difficulty of access to land and inputs of production results from pressure exerted by the hegemonic production model, which dominates the percentage of arable land to produce a dull and poorly diversified crops. This difficulty of access to key elements for production is found in family productions all over Latin America, as highlighted by the study of Chiriboga (2002).⁷

The proposals

Given the exposure of challenges, respondents pointed proposals for overcoming obstacles. The most significant categories were “organizing cooperatives / associations” (n = 4) and “financial / tax / technical subsidies” (n = 3). These were also mentioned: “Agrarian reform”, “supply policy based in family farming” and “recognition of the theme.”

DSC: *[...] There must be an organization to help producers with their accomplishments, because a producer alone can not reach the market. Family farmers advance in their economic organization ... cooperatives either advance, expand their membership base, or form core cooperatives, complicating the economic organization or there will be no advance. I think the best way is to create a more organized thing. And prepare the business plan with the community, to know what to plant, where to sell, to whom to sell, how to sell and for how much, considering that the goal is to escape the middleperson, to sustainably produce, sell straight to the consumer, ensure food security and surplus also serve to secure other people that have no productive activity. [...]*

DSC: *[...] I think above all there must be political will ... I think political priority should be resources, funding and people to work for the Policy, the actions and the support of civil society is essential in this regard. Providing support with technical training and with some inputs and some credit ... empowering families, taking into consideration their capacity and production system, the capacity of land production, and what type of culture is more profitable more adapted to that reality. If there are conditions for families to produce, if they get equipment and space, I think they can compete with those coming from other states, they would be able to meet the prices of the current market. [...]*

For Maluf:²⁴

[...] The obstacles and the main demands of supporting farmers to implement ventures in this direction refer to organization, aiming to stimulate small group based associations in production techniques, to improve the processing or transformation of raw material, in the management of projects, in their administrative, accounting, marketing and financial components.

It is necessary to encourage the organization of family farmers into associations or cooperatives, as it is a good way of entering the competitive market. After all, these organizations may be acting to minimize the costs of marketing products, the cost of inputs, credit, technology and information. Apart from this, preserving the autonomy and the management capacity of members is critical to articulation, with both the market in general, and with government policies and incentives, in order to always be performing the readjustment of laws, if appropriate, and allowing adequate social monitoring.⁷

The need of fiscal, financial and technical incentives is pointed by Triches & Schneider²³ as one of the most important aspects. Through the evaluation of various implementing agencies PNAE, it was identified that the successful ones, in terms of the inclusion of family agriculture in school meals, received relevant incentives from representative bodies such as technical assistance and rural unions, that aided and qualified farmers, whereas meeting the needs of public institutions, in order to propose actions that facilitate the access of farmers to markets.

Conclusion

The study has allowed us to identify the close relationship between the concept of Food and Nutrition Security and the majority of individuals interviewed. In general, the view of the respondents on this matter was broad and it fully encompasses the understanding that ranges from the type of production up to the conditions of physical access to food, permeating social, economic, and especially sustainable relations.

The subjects showed positive trends for the promotion of local circuits of production, considering this productive model as a way to ensure FNS, bringing to practice all reputable dimensions. However, this restructuring for a new hegemonic model of production can only be achieved gradually, making it necessary to change the culture of the economic system, first, in addition to community awareness to the issue.

In the Federal District, the inclusion of family farming in the institutional market, of community restaurants and food bank, must go through many obstacles. However, they can overcome such obstacles with the support of local government, by structuring and organizing the productive farmers to meet institutional demands; making entrepreneurs of agencies aware of the cause, along with creating a policy of preferential purchase to family farming with bidding exemption, in legal documents for community restaurants; and provision of local infrastructure for more efficient disposal of household production.

The study also shows the incipient debate on the restructuring of new decentralized production models, mainly in the Midwest region of Brazil. The debate that has started within the academic and scientific community can be a mediator to encourage this matter and call the attention of the community, to interactively discuss proposals to overcome possible obstacles experienced by family farming in the Federal District.

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