

## The *El Oratorio* canteen and agro-ecological production

### Origin

INTA, through its intervention program PROHUERTA, works in the El Oratorio canteen, located in the El Oratorio district of the municipality of San Isidro de Lules, Lules, Tucumán, which depends on the Citric Foundation. The work consisted of: delivery of inputs (seeds and chicks), 600 mts<sup>2</sup> of agro-ecological production, dictation of courses in workshops (orchard, farm, agro-industry, healthy food, etc.), participation in fairs and exhibitions.

### Activities

The strong link between the canteen of the Oratorio, AER-Lules-INTA, and the Citric company, has allowed the efficiency of the technical and economic means and the continuation of the integration on the territory. Initially, course-workshops on agro-ecological production and healthy food were organized for the canteen cooks and the general public, accompanying this process with the practice and construction of an agro-ecological production area.

A second stage consisted of course-workshops on raising chickens at home and the handing over of a staff of 6 women and 4 men from Black INTA to the families of the participants in the canteen.

A third stage worked on added value. Courses and workshops were organized on the preparation of jams, pickles, etc. And at this stage, a chef was added, giving workshops on the preparation of bread, pizza, puddings, Christmas bread, Easter cakes, etc.

### Destination of production

The main destination is self-consumption, i.e. feeding children.

The cooks make milanesas, quipes, cakes, pizzas, soups, etc. and accompany these meals with salads of lettuce, tomato, beans, peas, carrots, etc.

The surplus was distributed to garden participants, with the surplus being sold at a lower price in the region.

As far as agro-industrial products were concerned, they were intended to be sold at the fairs, exhibitions and events in which they participated, and the money obtained from these products was intended to buy canteen supplies.

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**Corona virus**

All these training activities, which have been carried out over the last three years, have enabled participants to organize themselves into groups to continue the vegetable garden in the canteen and also to carry out the vegetable garden at home. They say that this not only allows them to eat healthy food for themselves and their families, but also, fundamentally, to calm the anguish and anxiety they feel in this very difficult time we are going through. On top of that, they have been able to contribute to their homes with vegetables and reduce their daily expenses.

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