



Origin
Diversity
Territories

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Forum Origin, Diversity and Territories
[Workshop n°4], [Session n°3]



Organic agriculture and agroecology as alternatives to the dominant agricultural model in the Argentinean Pampas region. Case study: the Pampa Orgánica group.

PampaOrgánica Norte is a group of small and medium organic producers, grouped in MAPO (Argentine Movement for Organic Production), which today works and produces over 6,000 ha located in the Northern area of the Argentine Pampas Region, formed in 2004 within the "Rural Change" program of INTA (National Institute of Agricultural Technology), in operation and continuously evolving until the present, practicing a type of holistic, open and inclusive development within the framework of extensive organic production.

Towards the end of the 90s, a new model based on transgenic seeds, agrochemicals and direct sowing (GMOs/SD) burst into the Argentine agricultural sector, which is managed as a "technological package", and has the novel property of achieving good production results with only minimal adjustments in very diverse areas and different countries, such as Argentina, Paraguay, Bolivia, Uruguay, the United States and Brazil, among others. It has generated a change in the entire region comparable to that produced by the "green revolution" in Europe with the first arrival of fertilizers, agrochemicals and hybrid seeds in the 1960s. Technically, it is a continuous agricultural system, based exclusively on two crops: GM soya, as the predominant crop, and GM corn, which in a short time was adopted by producers and technicians, becoming today the absolute predominant crop in the Argentine agricultural area, whose advance in the north of the country (NOA and NEA) took place by razing the native forests and in the Pampas region, replacing a wide variety of crops and the traditional pastoral livestock, the latter displaced towards feed-lot type enclosures. The effects of this dominant model on the socio-cultural fabric and the rural territory are evident and alarming. The expulsion of small and medium producers and rural workers towards urban areas is still in force today. On the other hand, the massive use of agrochemicals, indispensable to sustain the GMO/SD model, negatively impacts the environment by contaminating water tables, air and soil, devastating biodiversity and affecting the health of workers and populations.

In this context and against the background of this dominant model, the producers of PampaOrgánica Norte developed an organic production system based on crop rotations (cereals and oilseeds) and cattle farming that can be framed within the principles and strategies of organic development defined by IFOAM and the 10 elements of agroecology of the FAO:

Productive Dimension

- Production without the use of herbicides, pesticides, chemically synthesised fertilisers or transgenic seeds
- Biodiverse production: built on crop-livestock rotations with a great variety of crops (wheat, rye, barley, oats, flax, canaryseed, soya, corn, sorghum, sunflower, sesame, millet and green manure) and cattle breeding and wintering, fed by direct grazing of greenhouses, implanted polyphytic pastures and natural grasses.

Main organizers



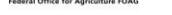
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- Production of local and evolutionary seeds adapted to the conditions of organic and agro-ecological systems with participatory breeding approaches and open patents, as proposed by Bioleft

Associative Dimension

- Producer associations: resolution of common problems and development of technology based on the agro-ecological processes that each establishment is building in accordance with its own characteristics and local agro-climatic conditions.
- Linkage between producers, public institutions, universities and civil organizations in various critical areas in the direction of agricultural sustainability
- Promotion and opening for the participation of new producers interested in starting a conversion period, through informative and training meetings.

Distribution Dimension

- Prospects of local commercialization and short chains, in a scenario where Argentine organic products have their main destination in export.

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