

**Lucimar Santiago De Abreu; Gustavo Ferreira Almeida: Policies For A Greener Agriculture: The Agro-Ecological Approach Of Current Programs In Brazil**

The formulation of governmental programs relied on agro ecological concepts in Brazil is a recent approach to stimulate the transition to an ecological based agriculture for family farmers. The most important aspect of this new political set-up is to re-organize the governmental support to small scale farmers who were mainly dependent on the dominant police model for conventionalized/monoculture production systems. The stimulus for landscape diversification through the application of a set of rules, principles and practices is expected to rebuild agro-biodiversity and value cultural heritage of families that nowadays are responsible for more than 60% of internal food supply as well as labor generation in the Brazilian rural sector.

Since 2003 the new political approach has been adopted as a referential model for governmental programs in a range of areas like research, extension services, marketing, subsidized loans and education. More than half of farmers interviewed stated that they are still receiving no government support from public spheres. In addition, lack of a genuine policy to stimulate production indicates that the main focus of public support for family farmers has been under social groups engaged in agro-ecological networks in association with social movements of consumers where it is also possible to identify prioritized investments in training and subsidized loans. This finding suggests that we are facing a new process of social differentiation and marginalization within the family agriculture, since designed programs are not achieving the expected universe of family farmers but achieving only certain groups that are more organized and with higher educational and cultural capital.

On this background, based a multiple-cases-study approach, our main objective is to discuss to what extent this new political approach has been able so far to obtain and increase concrete progress in rural areas in

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Brazil. For the discussion that we intend to report, we aim to describe our findings in relation to a set of emerging trends and issues highlighting in the current news: the weak points of the production in ecologically based agriculture as low yields; the demands from family farmers in terms of developmental support from public spheres as support needed for conversion period. In conclusion, we intend to present our perspectives regarding the role of public sector in the provision of conditions for a practical application of agro-ecological principles with the aim of improving the development of family agriculture in Brazil.

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