

Evaluating results of tobacco leaf diversification program in Brazil

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BACKGROUND

The FCTC took special care to the most fragile link of tobacco production chain: the tobacco leaf producer. FCTC Articles 17 and 18 require countries to adopt specific policies to identify more profitable and healthy product diversification mechanisms.

Brazil is the third largest producer in the world and the largest exporter of tobacco leaf, with 153,000 producer families distributed in 152 municipalities of the country south region. Eighty five percent (85%) of 630,000 tons of tobacco produced in 2015 were exported, especially for Europe and China, which means that the continuity of this activity depends on the world's demand, impacted by the accelerated FCTC implementation.

The program for tobacco leaf diversification was created in 2005 and its objective is to articulate a set of public policies and programs (credit, guaranteed purchase, distribution, etc.) to reduce farmers' dependence on tobacco leaf production. The program is operationalized through public grants offered by Ministry of Agrarian Development, and local organizations and cooperatives submit projects to provide technical assistance to tobacco farmers. By 2017, 11,000 families were covered by this program.

METHODS

Interviews were conducted by Ministry of Agrarian Development and the NGO Department of Rural Socioeconomic Studies (DESER) in 2011 and 2013 with 254 families assisted by the program, with questions on family and production profiles, health issues, productivity, income, etc. The research evaluated the impacts of the work developed by the organizations benefited by the public grants.

RESULTS

- ❖ Households not producing tobacco anymore (2011-2013): 6,5% to 10,2%
- ❖ Monthly income grows after diversification: USD\$ 545 to USD\$ 697
- ❖ Average annual income:
 - ♦ families without diversification system: USD\$ 7,727
 - ♦ families with a good diversification system: USD\$ 15,606
- ❖ 71% of family farmers wish to leave tobacco growing. Why?
 - ♦ 23.2% due to hard work
 - ♦ 22.7% due to low financial income
 - ♦ 20.8% due to health problems (body aches, intoxication, and depression)
 - ♦ 13.5% due to use and consequences of agrochemicals



CONCLUSIONS

The data shows that the diversification program had a positive impact on the family incomes and many families want to stop producing tobacco, due to different social and economic causes. This data highlights the importance of strengthen and maintain the national program for tobacco leaf diversification, increasing its investments. The modernization of the cultivation process, the raising consumption of electronic cigarettes, and the tendency to reduce domestic and foreign demand for tobacco are a concern for tobacco growers. In addition, there are internal challenges that need to be overcome to ensure the success of this program, for example, the lack of marketing networks and the lack of articulation with public marketing policies, as the purchase of tobacco leaf is guaranteed by the tobacco industry.