

**BUILDING ORGANIC STRATEGIES:  
ACTIONS TO PROMOTE ORGANIC AGRICULTURE IN  
SAO PAULO, BRAZIL**

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**SUMMARY**

Authors show recent evolution and future trends in organic food in Sao Paulo, Brazil. Using the netchain approach, a Workshop was carried out in order to update the last ten years of achievements, build bridges among different actors, sectors and strategies, besides defining specific guidelines to NGOs, private and public sectors regarding the development of organic agriculture in the state.

**BACKGROUND**

Our main purpose is to identify actions and guidelines related to the expansion of organic agriculture and organic food consumption in the state of São Paulo. These guidelines were based on the results of the Workshop "*Challenges of Organic Agriculture in Sao Paulo: what limits its growth?*", organized in 2012 by the Agricultural Economics Institute (IEA), within the São Paulo's Agribusiness Technology Agency (APTA) of the state's Secretariat of Agriculture and Supply (SAA-SP), as an initiative of the Organics' Intelligence Center (CI Organicos) of the National Agricultural Society (SNA), with the support of the Brazilian Service of Support for Micro and Small Companies (SEBRAE) and the Foundation for Agribusiness Development Research (FUNDEPAG).

**MAIN RESULTS**

An important goal we had in 2012 was to identify the factors that impaired the development of organic agriculture in the state in the last decade, in order to delineate strategic actions as well as public policies for the organic food sector. The starting point were the main results of a former Workshop, carried out ten years earlier, in 2002, whose results we analyzed and classified as: a) those no longer relevant; b) those showing an evolution, and c) those showing no changes.

The Workshop conducted at IEA in 2012 had a specific dynamics. A total of 80 players from the diverse segments of the supply chain were asked to read a text concerning recent changes in the evolution of the organic farming industry in the state. They also attended short lectures given by representatives of Sao Paulo's organic sector, who showed this selected audience their approach on a number of topics such as inputs, growers, extensionists, certifiers, suppliers, processors, retailers, associations, entrepreneurs, consumers, consumption groups, professors, NGOs, policy makers and researchers.

Our main results can be seen on the Table 1.

Table 1. Recent evolution and trends of organic netchain in the state of Sao Paulo

SEGMENT	ACHIEVEMENTS	DIFFICULTIES
<b>INPUTS</b>	- Organization / rules	- Lack of a systemic view to valorize production processes and unify registry concessions
<b>GROWERS</b>	- More confidence with the National Growers Database, Clean Markets Program, Food Acquisition Program (PAA) and National Policy on Agroecology and Organic Production (PNAPO)	- Regularize inputs supply, mainly for animal production - Lack of technical assistance and rules for organics and GMOs to co-exist, as well as adaption of sanitary rules to organic production
<b>PROCESSORS</b>	- Differentiation between conventional and organic products	- Weak relationships among growers / processors / supermarkets - Few tools to strengthen these relations
<b>RETAIL</b>	- New sales formats of processed and <i>in natura</i> , such as virtual social networks and specialized stores	- Few mechanisms able to offer a new relation with consumers, such as the <i>on line</i> tools

		- Low perception of the value and differences in organic produces
<b>CONSUMERS</b>	- Creation of Responsible Consumption groups, organization of markets for agroecologic fair trade products	- Farmer consumer partnerships
<b>FEDERAL PUBLIC POWER</b>	- Significant evolution of regulation and creation of the SISORG label	- National cadastre lacks information - Lack of rules for seeds, seedlings and animal residues
<b>STATE PUBLIC POWER</b>	- Creation of the Research & Development Unit in Sao Roque, the Technical Commission of Ecologic Agriculture, the Sectorial Chamber of Agroecology and the Sao Paulo Agroecology Forum	- Lack of appropriate coordination among the several collegiates acting in SP state and between them and the municipal and federal collegiates
<b>MUNICIPAL PUBLIC POWER</b>	- Expansion of organic fairs and sale points in municipal regular markets - Creation of the Municipal Program of Clean Agriculture or Low Environmental Impact, and the Protocol of Good Agro-environmental Practices	- Budget restrictions - Lack of qualified technical staff - Growers' assistentialist vision
<b>CERTIFYERS</b>	- National rules and collegiates, as the Organic Production Commissions	- Concept of agroecology not internalized - Low supply and diversity of products - Different types of product certification
<b>QUALIFICATION</b>	- Partial achievements introducing agroecology in schools	- Lack of continuous qualification and of measures to reduce growers education deficits

Source: Research data

Participants, divided into five groups, also deepened discussions on several issues, whose results were shown to the entire audience at the final plenary. Furthermore, it was possible to collectively build the recent scenario of Sao Paulo's organic production drawing on the views of a wide range of organic agents.

## CONCLUSIONS

This paper consolidates both the contributions of experts and focus group discussion results about the organic sector in the state of Sao Paulo state's organic sector in the last decade, under the netchain approach. These were driven by the recent changes in Brazilian society affecting the development of organic agriculture.

Some of the axes of cooperation aimed at providing guidance to the different social agents working on this market should focus on a few points. First, that there is a lack of information about organic food. Secondly, that learning practices are required at all levels. Last, but not least, that there is a strong need for a scheme to support conversion into organic agriculture, which mainly includes credit and marketing mechanisms.

The social structures, training and network externalities that compose the potential sources of value generation show a dynamics within the organic network-system which influences not only the definition of the material and human resources and of knowledge generation and dissemination, but also the different forms of relationships and institutional arrangements among the production agents.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

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