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## BRAZILIAN FOOD ACQUISITION PROGRAM FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF FAMILY FARMERS IN THE MACIÇO DE BATURITÉ REGION

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### ABSTRACT

The emergence of public policies that favor activities developed by family farmers can reduce the rural exodus that mainly affects the young population of the Brazilian semi-arid Northeast. Among these policies, the Food Acquisition Program (PAA) stands out. In this sense, the objective of this work was to know the main challenges and benefits of the Food Acquisition Program for family agriculture in the rural territory of the Baturité Massif, Ceará, through the perspective of the farmers themselves. For this purpose, one municipality was selected from each of the three sub-regions of the Baturité Massif, which had a higher absolute number of farmers benefited from the program. The PAA DATA, a system of the Ministry of Social and Agrarian Development (MDS) was used as the basis for these numbers. Following this criterion, the municipalities of Mulungu, Capistrano and Barreira were selected, where a semi-structured questionnaire with farmers was subsequently applied. The answers obtained with the questionnaire showed that some products from family agriculture cannot be purchased by the program, among them the fruit pulp and products of animal origin. Both products are not commercialized due to health issues imposed by regulatory agencies. Regarding the difficulties encountered in the implementation of the program, it is worth emphasizing, mainly, the scarcity of technical assistance found in most of the municipalities surveyed. This research concludes that the Food Acquisition Program is fundamental for strengthening family agriculture, and this fact is demonstrated by farmers. However, many problems still prevent this program from expressing its full potential, problems that range from logistics and storage to assistance difficulties.

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### INTRODUCTION

Public policies are actions and programs created and executed by the government to guarantee constitutional rights or rights foreseen in other laws.

They are measures executed by governments to guarantee the well being of the people. In addition to these rights, others that are not in law may be guaranteed through public policy. This can happen with rights that, over time, are identified as a need of society.

Among all public policies, one of the most important is related to food security. Food is a fundamental right to ensure the survival and maintenance of the health and dignity of populations, as confirmed by Article 25 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights:

Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, especially with regard to nutrition, [...] or in other cases of loss of livelihood due to circumstances beyond his control. (UN, 1948).

The Food Acquisition Program is a public policy, created by the Lula administration, with a basic purpose: to encourage family agriculture, including actions linked to the distribution of agricultural products to people in food insecurity situations and the formation of strategic stocks (BRAZIL, 2003). In order to insert family agriculture products into the market, Sacheto (2006) reports that it is necessary to have favorable institutional conditions for producers. In this context, the Purchase with Simultaneous Donation modality promotes the articulation between family agriculture production and local demands for food supplementation, in addition to the development of the local economy. Law 11.346, of September 15, 2006, which creates the National System of Food and Nutritional Security - SISAN, states that it is the duty of public authorities to respect, protect, promote, provide, inform, monitor, inspect, and evaluate the realization of the human right to adequate food, as well as guarantee the mechanisms for its demandability (BRAZIL, 2006). Thus, the products acquired from family farmers are donated to food insecure people through the assistance network or public food security equipment and the public and philanthropic education network. The rural territory of the Maciço de Baturité has an area of 3,709 km<sup>2</sup> and is composed of thirteen municipalities: Acarape, Aracoiaba, Aratuba, Barreira, Baturité, Capistrano, Guaramiranga, Itapiúna, Mulungu, Ocara, Pacoti, Palmácia and Redenção. These municipalities are organized in three homogeneous sub-regions: Serrana: Aratuba, Mulungu, Guaramiranga, Pacoti and Palmácia; Valleys/Sertão: Aracape, Redenção, Baturité, Aracoiaba, Capistrano and Itapiúna and of transition (Sertão / Litoral): Barreira and Ocara (BRAZIL, 2010).

Historically, the economic activity with the greatest offer of jobs in the region has been family agriculture, with an emphasis on horticulture in the highland area, due to the rugged terrain and fragmented land structure and the exploitation of grains, cashew and sugar cane in the valley/sertão and transition regions. However, today, a significant percentage of the population (55%) that survives from rural activities is unable to provide sufficient income for their subsistence (CEARÁ, 2002). The lack of social and economic incentives found by the small farmer (TENÓRIO, 2011), associated with the low technological level and the weak commercial organization of producers, and reduces the competitiveness of the region, promoting later, a process of migration of the population to the periphery of urban centers. Thus, the use of technologies appropriate to the local environment, identification of market niches, including in the metropolitan region and obtaining scale of commercialization are among the main challenges of the primary sector in the territory (CEARÁ, 2002). Due to the difficulties imposed by the lack of opportunities, the youth increasingly exchange the countryside for the city (SILVA et al., 2006). According to the

same authors, in Brazil, the difficulty of adopting public policies aimed at rural areas, strengthening family agriculture, and the lack of incentive/attractive to the permanence of men/women be young, adults, children and elderly in the countryside, has been contributing to the urban population growing every year at an accelerated pace. Abramovay et al. (1998), emphasizes that currently the rural exodus reaches the young population with more emphasis than in previous times.

In this context, the objective of the present work was to learn about the main challenges and benefits of the Food Acquisition Program (FAP) for family agriculture in the rural territory of the Baturité Massif, through the perspective of the farmers themselves.

## METHODOLOGY

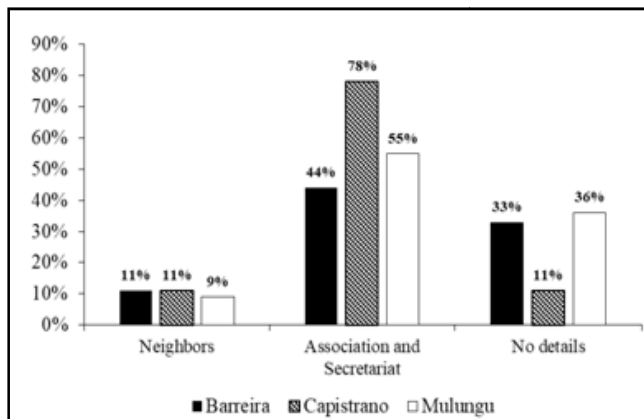
This study was conducted during 2017 in three municipalities in the rural territory of Maciço de Baturité, Ceará. It is worth noting that before the study sites were determined, a survey was conducted on the FAP DATA system in order to identify the situation of each municipality in the Baturité Massif in relation to the number of farmers benefited by the program during the entire period of dissemination of the tool, which covers the years 2011 to 2015. The FAP DATA is an Integrated Information System (SII), which was developed to support monitoring, management and planning, and to present information on the FAP to the public considering all the program's implementers. These are: 1. CONAB (National Supply Company); 2. States and 3. Municipalities. Based on this information, it was possible to verify which municipalities had the most farmers benefited throughout this period. As the Massif is divided into 3 sub-regions, 1 municipality per region was selected, the one with the highest absolute number of farmers benefited. Based on these criteria, the following were selected: Mulungu in the Serrana sub-region with 72 farmers; Capistrano in the Valleys/Sertão sub-region with 598 farmers; and Barreira in the transitional sub-region (Sierra/Litoral) with 223 farmers.

Among the various FAP modalities, only the purchase with simultaneous donation is executed in the municipalities of the Baturité massif selected in this survey. Thus, the data collected were in accordance with this modality. The universe of this survey was made up of unionized farmers benefited by the FAP from 2011 to 2015 and public agents. To evaluate the farmers, a semi-structured interview was conducted, taking into account the saturation of information obtained in the interviews to build up the population sample of each municipality. The inclusion criteria for farmers were: individuals participating in the FAP buy with simultaneous donation and living in the municipalities of Barreira, Capistrano and Mulungu. The farmers involved in this survey are men and women over 18 years. Based on these criteria, among the 68 farmers registered in Barreira, a semi-structured interview was conducted with 18. Regarding the municipality of Capistrano, out of 64 registered, 9 answered the questionnaire and in Mulungu, out of 26 registered farmers, 11 were interviewed. The technique of direct interview with administered questionnaire was used, i.e., to control the interviewer and data were obtained according to the statements and declarations of the interviewee. Prodanov and Freitas (2013) define the questionnaire, in a survey, as a data collection tool or program. Kauark, Manhães and Medeiros (2010) complement this by stating that the language used in the questionnaire must be the questionnaire must be simple

and direct so that the respondent clearly understands what is being asked. Finally, the data were tabulated separately with the help of Microsoft Excel software and based on these, a set of graphs and tables were prepared.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

As for questioning whether the producers knew the program and how they had known it, 100% said they knew it. In the municipality of Barreira, 11% reported getting to know the program through their neighbors, 44% attributed the knowledge to the association meetings and agricultural secretariat and the rest did not give details about where they had got to know the program (Figure 1).

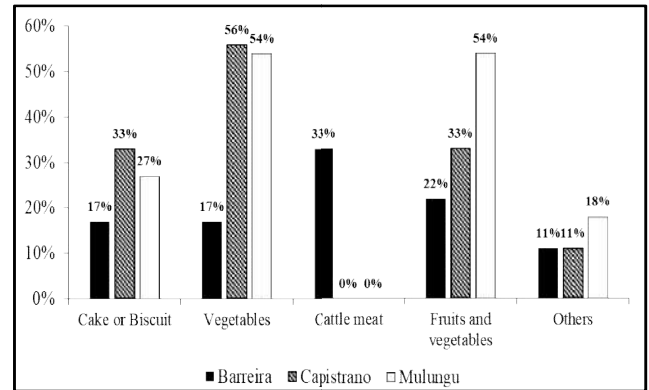


**Figure 1. Percentage of farmers' responses to the question of how they learned about the PAA**

In the municipality of Capistrano, 11% reported having known the program through neighbors, 78% attributed it to the association and agriculture secretariat meetings and 11% did not give details about where they had known the program. In Mulungu, 9% attributed it to neighbors, 55% to association meetings or agriculture secretariat, and 36% gave no further details. The wide dissemination of the existence of social programs in a simple and objective way can result in a comprehensive involvement enabling the engagement of the whole society in the search for a common good that is the overcoming of misery. It is not by chance that one of the Principles of the Organic Law of Social Assistance - LOAS (art. 4, V) provides for the wide dissemination of benefits, services, programs, and assistance projects, as well as the resources offered by the Public Power and the criteria for their concession (BRAZIL, 1993).

On the other hand, the Federal Constitution, in its art. 194 determines that: Social security comprises an integrated set of initiative actions by public authorities and society, aimed at ensuring rights related to health, social security, and social assistance (BRAZIL, 1988). In this way, the importance of associations of rural producers in the process of disseminating relevant information to farmers is perceived. It is emphasized that this type of organization is of fundamental importance for the development of family farming. Esquerdo and Bergamasco (2015), when analyzing access to public policy programs for family farming in the fruit circuit municipalities in São Paulo, realized that, despite the existence of associations in the surveyed municipalities, there is still low participation of farmers, which it ends up reflecting on their low participation in the current public policies. Another question referred to the

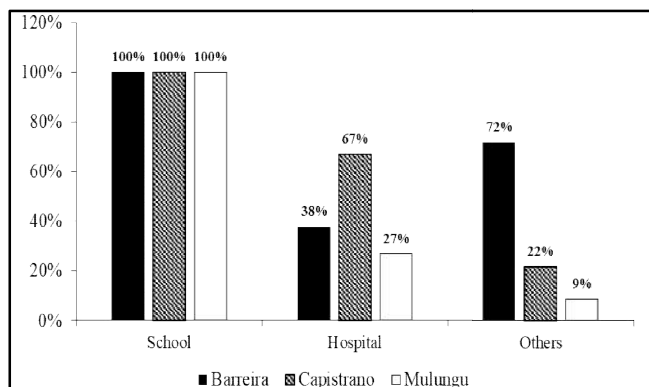
product offered and supplied by the interviewed farmer. For the purpose of the organization in a graph and to facilitate the reading of the results obtained, some products were grouped (Figure 2). Cakes and cookies formed a group; green scent, lettuce, peppers, potatoes, and manioc were grouped in Vegetables; Cattle meat; tomatoes, bananas, beans are part of the Fruits and vegetable group; sweets, snacks, flour, and gum, as the representation was low, were included in the group.



**Figure 2. Percentage of farmers' responses to the question about what products they provide to the FAP**

Still on the products supplied by family agriculture, there was a diversification of genders. Among the items cited by farmers are: flour, gum, beef, cake, potatoes, cassava, chestnut and gum cookies, green smell, fish, papaya jam and milk, banana, sweet potato, beans and pumpkin. With regard to the observed variation of products, it is noted that the FAP has been responsible for restoring polyculture (GRISA et al., 2010). According to the same authors, in many regions of Brazil, the "modernization of agriculture" in the 1960-1970s led farmers to enter production specialization, monoculture and production of commodities, often destined for the foreign market, which in turn exposed these farmers to contexts of marked social vulnerability. In this sense, the FAP has been outstanding for encouraging production diversification as it connects supply to diversified demand.

According to Ellis (2000), diversification of agricultural production and sources of income reduces the effect of a crop's loss of income as it dilutes the impact on other possible incomes, reduces the inconstancy of incomes and the effect of seasonality, as well as the impact of climate and financial risks and other tensions. In the municipality of Barreira, the highlight was the representativeness of cattle meat suppliers, 33% of those interviewed stated that they supply this item, which does not appear in any other municipality surveyed (Figure 2). Because of the program's requirements, the animals must be slaughtered in duly registered and inspected locations. Possibly, cattle meat does not present itself as a commercial product in the other two municipalities due to its edaphoclimatic conditions, which make animal raising difficult. Mulungu, for example, presents steep relief in most of its territory and Capistrano, possibly because it is located in a transition area between Atlantic and semiarid forests, presents stony soils, which makes the formation of pastures difficult. Besides these productive issues, the lack of sanitary inspection services ends up limiting the marketing of animal products (GRISA et al., 2010). In this survey it is important to note that some percentages may exceed 100%.



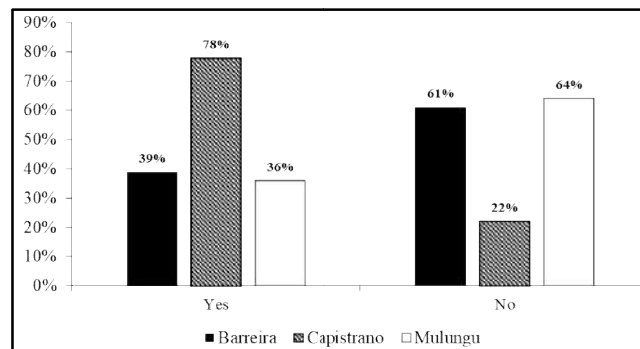
**Figure 3. Percentage of farmers' responses to the question about the entities benefiting from the products supplied by them**

This is due to the fact that some producers supply more than one product and this product can be classified in more than one group of those we selected in our survey. A similar situation was observed by Becker and Anjos (2010), who, when studying the limits and possibilities of the family farming food acquisition program in municipalities in the south of the state of Rio Grande do Sul, found that some producers supplied more than one product, and it can be concluded that in general, the productive units had a considerable diversification of their activities and types of crops. Still related to Figure 2, in the municipality of Capistrano the item group that was most cited was Hortaliças, representing 56% of the interviewed producers. In Mulungu, the interviewees whose products were part of the vegetables and fruits and vegetable groups represent 54% each.

According to Faulin and Azevedo (2003), the production of vegetables, both commercial and subsistence, has an important role for family agricultural activity, contributing to its strengthening and ensuring its sustainability, mainly because it is a type of crop that needs a very small extension of land in relation to other agricultural productions in order to be economically viable, besides requiring little technical knowledge and a low level of investment to start the activity.

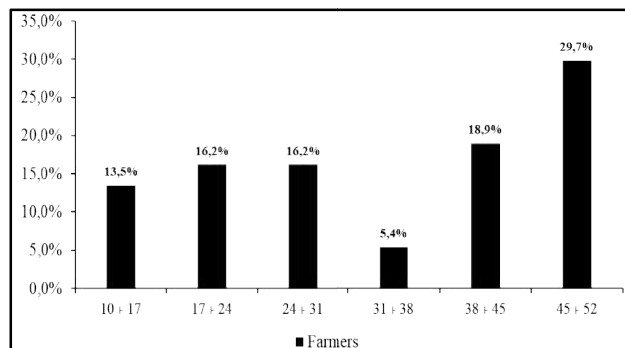
Questioned if they knew the entities (Receiving Units) benefited with their products, 100% of the interviewed were categorical in affirming that yes and cited the schools (Figure 3). Besides, some complemented that besides school, the products were supplied to hospitals. It was also interviewed that cited other entities, such as: CRAS, Association, Recovery House, Delegacia and Union, grouped in the name others. It was also interviewed that cited other entities, such as: CRAS, Association, Recovery House, Delegacia and Union, grouped in the name others. It is observed that the FAP is contributing substantially to the improvement in the nutritional aspect of the people benefited, according to Agapto et al. (2012). It is important to point out that some institutions were remembered exclusively in the municipalities in a spontaneous way, for example: Mulungu was the only municipality in which the interviewees cited the CRAS. On the other hand, in Capistrano the Union was cited and in Barreira the Association and the House of Recovery was cited. These exclusive responses were included in the "Others" group. In a brief analysis, based on what was declared by the supplier beneficiaries, it is possible to affirm that the food purchased by the P FAP, in the Purchase with Simultaneous Donation modality, in the researched locations of the Maciço de Baturité, is having its correct destination. In this way, according to what was defined in the above mentioned Resolution. Regarding the question

about the existence of technical assistance for the production of the food supplied, 78% of the Capistrano producers stated that they received some kind of assistance. On the other hand, the municipalities of Barreira and Mulungu presented results almost inverse to that of Capistrano. Barreira with 39% and Mulungu with 36% of affirmative responses show that the public authorities have not yet reached, despite all the effort, all farmers who supply products in this modality of the FAP (Figure 4).



**Figure 4. Percentage of farmers' responses to the technical assistance question received**

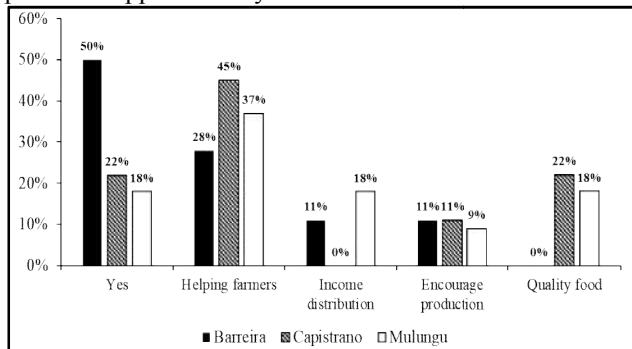
What was observed in Barreira and Mulungu corroborates with Botelho et al. (2007), who state that the lack of technical assistance is a limiting factor for the development of FAP. In addition to this factor, in a survey conducted in the municipalities of the fruit circuit, in São Paulo many public agents linked to technical assistance and rural extension services were unaware of the FAP, which ends up directly affecting the program's development (ESQUERDO; BERGAMASCO, 2015). In addition to this issue, Mattei (2007) also states that it is necessary to have a better articulation between production support policies and marketing support policies. Asked if the program would be the only source of income for their family and the percentage that this resource represented over their total income, the responses ranged between 10 and 50%. As several answers were obtained, in order to facilitate the reading and construction of the graph, the Sturges Formula ( $k = 1 + 3.322 (\log_{10} n)$ ) was used to define the quantity and size of the frequency classes that grouped the percentages used (Figure 5).



**Figure 5. Percentage of farmers' responses to the question about the representativeness of FAP in family income.**

Based on the general data we have a minimum of 10% and a maximum of 50%, which gives us a data range of 40. The total sample was 37 respondents. Using this formula we defined that the data would be divided into 7 Classes with class amplitude also equal to 7. It draws attention the percentage of farmers

who declared that the resources obtained through this program represented approximately 50% of their income.



**Figure 6. Percentage of farmers' responses to the question that addresses their knowledge about the main objectives of the FAP**

Almost one third of the total researched (30%) declared that around half of all resources entering their homes comes from this public policy.

When asked about the objectives of the program, they all said they knew about it. In Barreira 50% of the interviewees answered that they knew the program (Figure 6). In Capistrano and Mulungu, the most representative response was that the objective of the FAP is to help producers, which is given by 45% and 37% of farmers in Capistrano and Mulungu, respectively. In a survey in Rio Grande do Norte, Martins and Cavalcanti (2007) observed that 42% of the beneficiaries started to produce new products, seeking diversification. This fact demonstrates the importance of the FAP, which through the distribution of resources, strongly helps rural producers to develop. Regarding the contribution of programs such as the FAP to the permanence of farmers in rural areas, 61% of those interviewed in the municipality of Barreira stated only that the FAP contributes to permanence in the countryside, and there is no complement in the responses (Table 1). Complementing this question, 22% of the interviewees also responded positively, affirming that the FAP helps with income through production incentives and that without the FAP, it would not be possible to produce. It is worth noting that in this municipality, 16.6% of the interviewees did not want to answer. In Capistrano, all the interviewees stated that the FAP contributes to the permanence of farmers in the field (Table 1). 66.6% of these revealed that the FAP assists income through production incentives, similar to the municipality of Barreira. Other responses observed within this percentage showed that in addition to encouraging production, farmers work with the certainty of commercialization and that the resource is guaranteed, and there is no fear of losses and, consequently, the need to seek opportunities elsewhere. Besides these 66.6% interviewed, another 33.3% stated only that the FAP encourages production.

Like Barreira, Mulungu also had the highest percentage of interviewees who answered affirmatively without adding any details or observations, totaling 27.3% of those interviewed in this community. Another 36.42%, besides affirming that the FAP encourages production and that this program is important for the maintenance of man in the field. Another four responses were observed, each with 9.1%. In these, besides the interviewees affirming "yes," they complemented by answering that the FAP is important for income and helps the producer who no longer needs to seek employment in other territories. Similar data were found by Hespanhol (2013) who, when assessing the limits and potential of the FAP in the

municipality of Dracena-SP, found that out of the total, 95% of respondents rated the program as very good, since the FAP has represented the guarantee of marketing a portion of production. In addition, the same author observed that (60%) of the producers informed that since the beginning of the program in the municipality in 2006, they have already expanded the cultivated area and diversified their production, with the cultivation of new products destined to FAP. In summary, with the data collected it is possible to state that, excluding the farmers who did not answer this question, 100% declare that the FAP is a program that encourages the permanence of the farmer in the rural home, besides adding several other reasons. Another question was regarding product quality control (Table 2). As in the previous question, in the municipality of Barreira, some interviewees (44.6%) gave up answering. All the others said that there was, yes, some quality control on the products by the public agent. Of the producers interviewed in Barreira, 16.7% affirmed that there was only quality control. The same perceptual said the existence of this control and added that it is "made on the deliver" of the products on the supplying central. In addition, the same percentage answered "yes" and added that it is required "product without agrototoxic".

Despite the incentive to produce without agrochemicals, it is observed that in the municipality of Barreira only 16.7% of farmers claimed not to use such products (Table 2). Becker and Anjos (2010), in a survey conducted in southern Brazil found that 60.0% of farmers used the organic/ecological production system. This fact caught the authors' attention, and it was possible to find evidence that the program served, among other aspects, to decisively boost ecological production. This impetus found in the authors' research diverges from the data obtained in this study, and it can be concluded that many farmers have not yet acquired this environmental awareness. Only 5.5% of those interviewed in Barreira stated that there was quality control and also informed that this inspection is carried out from the beginning of the process until the product is delivered to the municipality's supply center, where a final analysis is made by the public authorities (Table 2). In Capistrano, most of the interviewees (33.3%) answered "yes," only. The percentage of those who acknowledged there was control and added that "the product cannot be damaged" was 22.3%. Other producers cited "cleaning and washing", "label, Styrofoam transportation", "quality product is required" and "demand on cleaning and care", each group of these represented 11.1% of the total interviewed in this municipality. In the municipality of Mulungu, all interviewees affirmed that there was some type of quality control, and 18.2% did not want to give more details (Table 2). The same percentage added that this measurement is "made on delivery", as those who detailed that "products are required hygienic and healthy" and also those who said that "the products must be clean. A lower percentage (9.1%) was from the groups that answered that there is "quality and hygiene inspection", that "products must be sanitized" and that "inspection regarding product quality". Regarding the greatest difficulties faced by the program, in Barreira, 50% of the interviewees preferred not to answer anything, another 16.7% said that the transport of the product is one of the difficulties (Table 3). 5.6% of those interviewed stated that among the greatest difficulties faced are: the program's delay, lack of municipal support, out-of-season production, perishability of products, slimming of cattle aiting for the program, and difficulty in delivering the

**Table 1. Percentage of farmers' responses to the question about the influence of the AAP on their stay in the field**

Answer	Barreira	Capistrano	Mulungu
Yes	61.0%	11.1%	27.3%
Yes. For sale	0	0	9.1%
Yes. Help the producer	0	0	9.1%
Yes. It encourages you to produce	0	33.3%	18.2%
Yes. Source of employment and income	0	0	9.1%
Yes. Because it complements income	5.5%	0	0
Yes. Feeding the most needy people	0	11.1%	0
Yes. Don't go out to work anywhere else	0	11.1%	9.1%
Yes. It encourages production and helps with income	5.5%	0	0
Yes. Source of income. Produce with incentive	5.5%	0	0
Yes. It is important because it keeps them in the field	0	0	18.2%
Yes. You already know the destination of the product and it is a guaranteed resource	0	11.1%	0
Yes. Without this program it was difficult for me to produce and maintain myself	5.5%	0	0
Yes. It improves income and helps you stay at home	0	11.1%	0
Yes. Producing and working with the certainty of having a place to leave the product	0	11.1%	0
Did not answer	16.6%	0	0
Totals	100%	100%	100%

**Table 2. Percentage of farmers who responded on the existence of requirements related to product quality control**

Answer	Barreira	Capistrano	Mulungu
Sim	16.7%	33.3%	18.2%
Sim. Feito a entrega	16.7%	0	18.2%
Sim. Limpeza e lavagem	0	11.1%	0
Sim. Produto sem agrotóxico	16.7%	0	0
Sim. Do processamento à entrega	5.5%	0	0
Sim. Etiqueta, transporte em isopor	0	11.1%	0
Sim. Os produtos devem ser limpos	0	0	18.2%
Sim. É exigido produto de qualidade	0	11.1%	0
Sim. Exigência na limpeza e cuidado	0	11.1%	0
Sim. Fiscalização da qualidade e higiene	0	0	9.1%
Sim. Produtos com higiene e saudáveis	0	0	18.2%
Sim. O produtor não pode estar agitado	0	22.3%	0
Sim. Os produtos devem ser higienizados	0	0	9.1%
Sim. Fiscalização a respeito da qualidade do produto	0	0	9.1%
Não respondeu	44.6%	0	0
Totals	100%	100%	100%

**Table 3. Percentage of farmers who responded on the difficulties they faced in the program**

Answer	Barreira	Capistrano	Mulungu
Not	0	0	18.2%
Others	0	0	27.3%
Requirements	0	0	9.1%
Product transportation	16.7%	0	0
Program takes too long to exit	5.6%	0	0
Lack of municipal support	5.6%	0	0
Off-season production	5.6%	0	0
Declaration of Aptitude to PRONAF	0	0	9.1%
It has no difficulty	0	44.4%	0
Perishability of products	5.6%	0	0
Lack of water to irrigate production	0	11.1%	9.1%
Cattle lose weight waiting for the program	5.6%	0	0
Drought periods that affect production	0	0	18.2%
Difficulty delivering to the supply center	5.6%	0	0
Disbelief on the part of farmers regarding the seriousness of the program	0	33.3%	9.1%
They did not answer	50%	11.1%	0
Totals	100%	100%	100%

**Table 4. Percentagem de agricultores que responderam sobre as possíveis melhorias que ajudariam a implementar o programa**

Answer	Barreira	Capistrano	Mulungu
Local slaughterhouse	33.3%	0	0
Gas and transportation help	5.6%	0	0
Longer execution time	5.6%	33.3%	0
Transport and local slaughterhouse	5.6%	0	0
Facilitate receipt of the appeal	0	0	9.1%
Financial investment for production	0	0	18.2%
Fertilizer supply or transport aid	5.6%	0	0
Technical advice and publicizing the fair	0	0	9.1%
Increased interest on the part of farmers	0	0	9.1%
Increase resources and cut red tape	0	0	18.2%
More resources for other families to enter	11.2%	0	9.1%
Increase the range of products purchased by the program	0	33.3%	9.1%
They did not answer	33.3%	33.3%	18.2%
Totals	100%	100%	100%

products to the supply center. In general, the answers were quite varied. Some complaints about the delay in the execution of the program, difficulty in the transportation and delivery of your product to the supply center, were verified. Besides these claims, greater support from the municipal government was requested. The delay in the release of resources and consequent delay in the execution of the program was also pointed out by Carvalho (2007). In Capistrano, most of the interviewees (44.4%) declared that they did not have any difficulty in executing the program. In divergence to this fact, 33% of the interviewees showed disbelief regarding the seriousness of the program. Among the problems pointed out, 11% of the farmers affirmed that the lack of water to irrigate the products makes production difficult. The same percentage chose not to answer this question (Table 3).

In Mulungu, 18.2% of the interviewees simply denied there were any difficulties in executing the program. This same percentage stated that periods of drought affect production causing difficulties in the performance of the program. Another group, representing 9.1% of the total for this municipality, cited the "demands" as one of the main difficulties. The same percentage said that the Declaration of Aptitude to PRONAF (DAP) would be one of the factors that lead the program to present some difficulty in its execution. Disbelief on the part of farmers regarding the seriousness of the program was the response of another 9.1%, the same number who remembered the lack of water (Table 3). The following question was related to possible improvements in the program, from the perspective of the farmer. In Barreira, 33.3% of the interviewees did not want or could not answer, while the same percentage declared that a local slaughterhouse would help improve the program in this municipality (Table 4).

Help in gas and transportation was also one of the responses observed, with 5.6%. Identical rate for those who cited "longer execution time", "transportation and local slaughterhouse" and "Fertilizer supply or transportation aid". In addition, the response "more resources for other families to enter the program" was represented by 11.2% of the Barrier interviewees (Table 4). In Capistrano the responses were less diffuse than in other municipalities. Of all respondents in that municipality, 33.3% did not want to respond. The same percentage was observed for those who requested "more resources for other families to enter" into the program and also for those who said that a "longer execution time" would help improve the FAP (Table 4). In Mulungu it was found that 18.2% of respondents did not want to answer this question. Among the answers collected, "financial investment for production" and "increasing resources and reducing bureaucracy" were the most frequent answers, with 18.2% (Table 4). The other responses among farmers in this municipality were "facilitating the receipt of the resource," "technical advice and dissemination of the fair," "greater interest by farmers," "more resources for other families to enter," and "increasing the range of products purchased by the program," each with 9.1%.

## Conclusion

The Food Acquisition Program is fundamental for the strengthening of family agriculture in the rural territory of the Baturité, Ceará Massif. It can be seen that the greater incentive to local production ends up generating an increase in the income of farmers, which directly influences the maintenance

of these in the rural environment. However, despite all the benefits achieved by farmers in the Baturité Massif through this public policy, many problems still prevent the program from expressing its full potential, problems ranging from logistics and storage to assistance difficulties.

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