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AGROECONOMIC EVALUATION OF FOOD PRODUCTION IN CONVERSION SYSTEMS TO ORGANIC FARMING IN ORIZONA, GOIAS STATE, BRAZIL

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OBJECTIVE

To describe the most important characteristics of farms in conversion from conventional to organic farming in Orizona, Goiás state, Brazil.

METHODOLOGY

The study was carried out in Orizona municipality, Goias state, Brazil.

Rapid Participatory Appraisal (RPA) was a guiding tool whose application was aimed at the social, economic and environmental situation present in Embrapa Rice & Beans' partner communities before and after the implementation of the participatory research project "Development of alternative fertilizers to support agroecological management of family farming systems in the state of Goiás".

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Farm characteristics

- Traditional, low input agriculture;
- Small farms (< 50 ha);
- 8 – 20 km away from local markets;
- Produce mainly cow milk, fruits and vegetables;
- Residues generated in production being used for compostation (cheaper than buying fertilizers).

Technological profile and farm management

- Low access to formal education (farmers' generation; kids have access now);
- Traditional knowledge regarding production practices is still very important;
- Often young generation migrates to urban area; some are returning to their parents' farms (expectation of improved livelihoods);
- Most farmers do not have adequate technical advice (extension);
- Farmer organizations (cooperatives and associations) are enabling improved market access;



Doing compostation from residues (Picture by Pricila Rizo)

CONCLUSIONS AND OUTLOOK

- Promising market for organics in the region, with an average price premium of 20%;
- Farmer associations are beneficial to facilitate marketing;
- Lack of qualified ag extension limits advances in organic production;
- Reuse on-farm of residues can improve sustainability.

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