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Pesticides Residue on Brazilian Tomatoes, Food Safety and Regulatory Framework

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Abstract

Brazilian economy is especially focused on agriculture. Even though the Constitution establishes individual rights and human dignity as a priority, economic forces generally surpasses individual wellness on day to day issues. The current development on policies concerning pesticides exemplify this. In order to analyse changes on allowed pesticide residues and food regulations, this research evaluates one of the most consumed vegetable in Brazil, the tomatoes. Brazilians eat 21 tomatoes per capita early. The item is consumed by 205 million people, since tomatoes are one of the most important vegetable on everyday meals. However, it also has one of the highest scores on pesticide residue levels according to ANVISA, the Brazilian health surveillance agency. From 2013 to 2015, ANVISA analysed 730 tomato samples. Unauthorised pesticides were identified in 200 of them. Even knowing each Brazilian consumes 7 to 9 liters of pesticides, the government discusses new regulations to make new products approval faster by lowering criteria and creating a committee linked to Agriculture Ministry which would have no direct interference of environmental public agencies. During the first year and half of President Bolsonaro, more than 600 pesticides were authorised, 150 of them up to May 2020 and 474 in 2019. There is a clear incentive on pesticide usage whereas residue control is put aside just as discussions about healthier nutrition, working conditions and environmental impacts. By analysing one of the most important vegetables in everyday consumption in Brazil, especially the regulations on pesticide residue and statistic data on its impacts on health, nutrition and environmental preservation, one is led to the conclusion that residue control can cause not even health damage to people, but will also reduce soil quality and bring negative economic consequences in the long run. Thus, this research, based on deductive method, follows the premise in which expanding pesticides usage needs stronger regulations on residue control as it is determined by the Constitution.

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