

# International Journal of Human Sciences Research

## EFFECTS OF THE FOOD ACQUISITION PROGRAM – PAA, IN THE STATE OF ALAGOAS FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF RURAL TERRITORIAL DEVELOPMENT

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**Abstract:** The family farmer is part of a social category that plays an important role in food production, however, he faces difficulties regarding the flow of his production and access to markets. This way, the creation of the Food Acquisition Program – PAA becomes essential for the productive inclusion of family farming, while at the same time promoting food and nutritional security in the context of rural development in the territory. The object of study of this thesis seeks to identify the PAA as a program to combat hunger and strengthen family farming, considering access to markets and guaranteeing income, settlement in the countryside and autonomy. From this perspective, the Purchase with Simultaneous Donation Modality - CDS, enables the distribution of food to the neediest represented in entities receiving social assistance networks, causing a considered social and territorial impact, helping to reduce hunger and poverty in Alagoas, following the example of the Territory of wild regions of Alagoas. The main objective of the thesis was to analyze the PAA from the perspective of rural territorial development and its effects in the state of Alagoas. For practical purposes, two municipalities in the Wild regions Alagoas Territory (‘Palmeira dos Índios’ and Arapiraca) were selected and we sought to understand the actions of the PAA in terms of their territorial and social reach. The research is empirical-analytical in nature, evaluating qualitative and quantitative data that were collected in public bodies, bibliographical survey in response to the theme of territorial policies and the PAA itself. Currently, the PAA is led by the action of states and municipalities that are still more dependent on federal resources, in search of overcoming and maintaining the program in contradiction to the resource cuts that generated a crisis in it. The resistance of these institutional entities comes from the importance of maintaining

the PAA due to its social importance in combating hunger and poverty.

**Keywords:** Family farming; Rural Territorial Development – Hunger; Public policy; Food Safety.

## INTRODUCTION

The agrarian and agricultural context of Alagoas, based on sugarcane monoculture, has brought problems over time, as its territorial and economic formation generated land concentration, and even transforming the old mills into modern sugar and alcohol plants, this adopted economic model did not bring development, as it concentrated power in the agrarian oligarchies, worsening poverty in the state and consequently causing hunger, as a consequence of it.

Interventionist policies become a way to overcome historical problems, with the aim of promoting social justice, with regard not only to the agrarian issue, but also to agriculture in the direct fight against poverty and hunger. Among the policies, the Food Acquisition Program – PAA stands out, which is the object of study in the research, as an agricultural policy for socio-territorial transformation from the perspective of rural development.

## THE AGRARIAN CONTEXT IN ALAGOAS AND THE ORIGIN OF HUNGER

Understanding the agrarian issue in Alagoas means following this entire evolutionary process of sugarcane production that has materialized in space for centuries, today in more modern conditions (agribusiness), but with old forms of action related to the domination of the territory through land concentration, which causes territorial, economic, social and political power.

The state of Alagoas is one of the smallest in the Northeast region, with a territorial area of 27.843295km<sup>2</sup>. This state borders

the Ocean to the East, Sergipe to the South, Pernambuco to the North and West and Bahia to the Southwest (Map 1).

The State of Alagoas, similar to the Northeast, presents a characteristic of land concentration, given that the current state previously belonged to the Captaincy of Pernambuco in the colonial period, when it already had sugar cane as its main economic activity, therefore, it can be said which are five centuries of sugarcane latifundia in Alagoas, an activity that presents itself as a major concentration of land.

The tripod of the colonial economy extended to Alagoas, based on the commercial monopoly, which favored the growth of sugarcane monoculture and the effective use of slave labor. The Sesmarial System predominated, generating the first concentrations of land in the state, initially on the coast, an area until then suitable for sugarcane planting. This economic model predominated throughout the colonial period, favoring the emergence of large estates.

The land ownership structure, with the consequent system of power, created in the first three centuries of colonization, forever marked the economic and social model of Alagoas. The external strips of land donated by the grantee captains – the sesmarias – at the time they expelled the indigenous people from their territory, allowed the establishment of occupation centers that would be the territorial base for future Banguês mills (CARVALHO, 2009, p. 10).

The settlement of Alagoas was determined by sugar mills, next to cattle farms. It is known that many of the cities in Alagoas today originated after the installation of old sugar mills, therefore, directly influencing the formation of Alagoan society, creating an agrarian elite within the state to the detriment of a submissive and dependent people (TENÓRIO; DANTAS, 2008).

The plants were established in Alagoas at

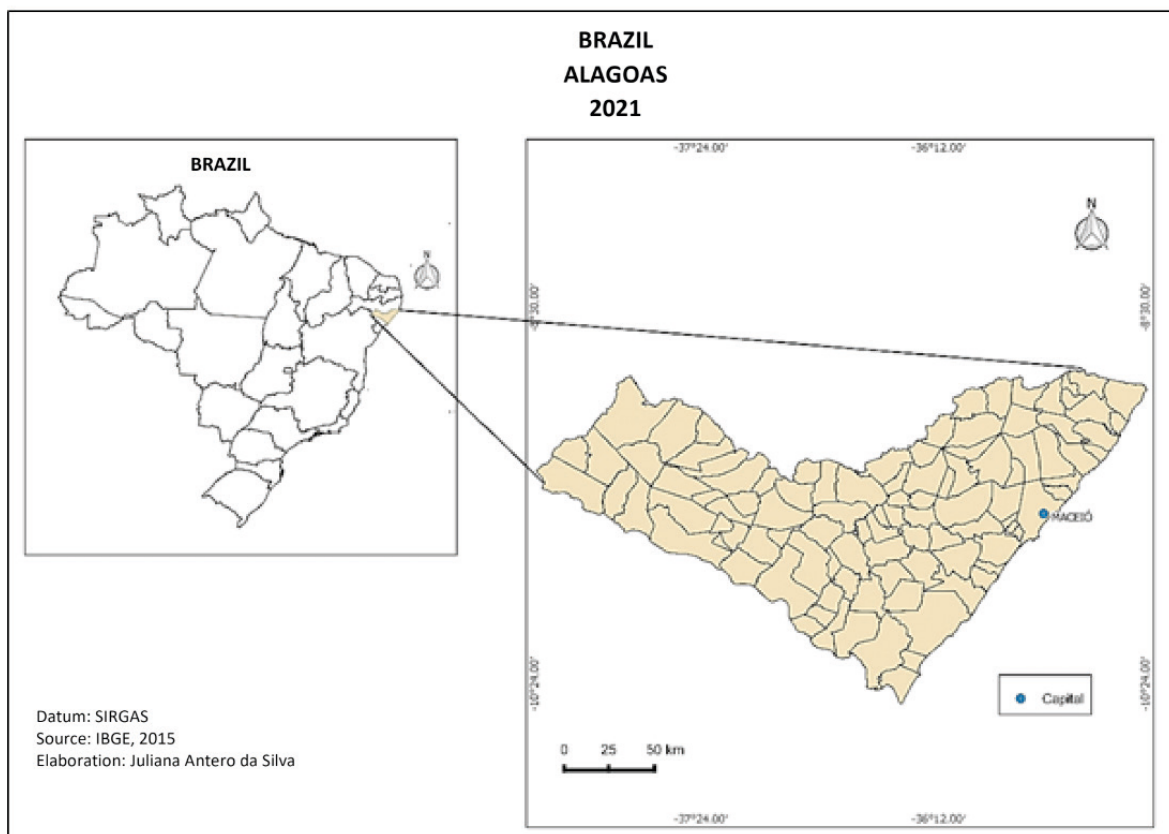
the end of the 19th century and took many decades to increase their production capacity. The sector would only be modernized from the 1940s onwards, with the sugar mill owner consolidating his capital and obtaining economic, social and political power, completely controlling the entire economic process of sugar production, as he began to concentrate two means of production: industry and land.

The mill owner, with the mentality more of a landowner than an industrialist, always considers it a symbol of progress, of prosperity in his business, to gather more land around his factory. This way, valleys and municipalities that once belonged to many owners are now owned by just a few (ANDRADE, 2005, p. 66).

The plant in Alagoas increased its production not only of sugar, but also of alcohol (sugar-alcohol sector) as new markets were opening internally and externally. This entire process led to new agricultural frontiers, with sugarcane plantations occupying the fields, which was facilitated by the process of modernizing the countryside.

As the model of agricultural development is based on sugar cane, a legacy of the colonial period, where very little was changed from the point of view of land structure and power and work relations, the fruits of the extraordinary development observed in the sugar and alcohol sector in the decades of 70 and 80 in Alagoas did not result in improvements for the population as a whole. In a State where the economy was heavily dependent on agriculture for a long time, land concentration ends up determining a high concentration of income (LAGES; RAMOS, 1999, p. 43).

Therefore, it is worth highlighting the Northeast Sugar Industry Area, and this includes Alagoas, in the understanding that sugarcane monoculture in cooperation with large estates brings deficiencies in food production, favoring the presence of hunger.



**Map 1:** Location of Alagoas

**Source:** IBGE, 2015.

**Elaboration:** Juliana Antero da Silva, 2021.

YEAR	Number of farmers suppliers	No. entities	Number of calls	Resources (R\$)	Products (Kg)
2011	6.337	356	818.573	31.836.498,12	35.852.555,93
2012	7.653	538	850.523	39.578.299,04	41.174.138,34
2013	6.411	555	800.952	37.129.061,08	34.768.286,73
2014	7.660	327	1.453.307	49.796.946,06	42.031.787,48
2015	7.899	399	1.415.828	47.611.651,45	35.994.344,05
2016	6.899	184	1.387.312	30.797.822,02	26.219.216,68*
2017	-4.692	526-	661.843-	29.008.887,55-	18.586.349,65*-

**Table 3:** Panorama of the PAA in Alagoas from 2011 to 2017

**Source:** SAGI/PAA DATA (Adaptation of data from PAA-DATA/2011-2017).

With the development of sugar cane, which took place in the mid-17th century, polyculture was stifled, small agricultural properties were swallowed up by large estates, and the island's food reserves became increasingly difficult. This unfavorable economic revolution gave way to the mass exodus of white inhabitants to other lands" (CASTRO, 2004, p. 101)

In this understanding, it is worth analyzing the Food Acquisition Program – PAA and its performance in the state of Alagoas as an interventionist policy seeking to combat poverty and social exclusion, presenting itself as an alternative policy with the objective of improving the income of the population. family farming, enable men to settle in the countryside and increase food production.

## **GENESIS OF THE FOOD ACQUISITION PROGRAM – PAA AND FOOD SECURITY**

In Brazil, the discussion on food and nutritional security is present, and now has its legitimacy based on its legal framework, with Law No. 11,346, of September 15, 2006 – Organic Law on Food and Nutritional Security – LOSAN, which creates the National Food and Nutritional Security System – SISAN, with the objective of ensuring adequate nutrition. (BRASIL, 2006).

The Food Acquisition Program – PAA, previously created by article 19 of Law No. 10,696, of July 2, 2003 within the scope of the Zero Hunger Program, aims to promote access to food and encourage family farming. However, this Law was amended by Law No. 12,512 of October 14, 2011 and regulated by several decrees. What is in force is Decree No. 7,775, dated July 4, 2012. This legislation constitutes the legal framework of the program. (BRAZIL, 2015).

The Law resulted in a new instrument that allowed family farmers to choose to sell directly to the government, without the need

for bidding, at prices close to market prices and, in specific situations, have access to advance resources for planting, stimulating food production. As a result, family farming products began to be used in food security actions, in municipal food supply programs and for the formation of stocks for food security, overcoming the historical obstacles of previous laws that made it difficult to favor local agriculture, an important employment generator. Furthermore, the obstacle of minimum prices, which did not cover family farmers' production costs, was overcome (TAKAGI; SILVA; GROSSI, 2007, p.172).

The PAA, at the beginning of the Program (2003), had a purchase limit of R\$2,500 per year; subsequently the value rose to R\$4,500, then R\$6,500 until reaching the limit of R\$8,000 in sales per year/per family farmer, depending on the modality adopted (MDA, 2015).

The PAA budget was made up of resources from the Ministry of Social Development and Fight Against Hunger – MDS and the Ministry of Agrarian Development – MDA. The execution of the program was consolidated into six modalities: 1- Direct Purchase, 2 – Purchase with Simultaneous Donation, 3 – Incentive to Production and Consumption of Milk-PAA Leite; 4 – Support for Stock Building, 5 – Institutional Purchase; 6 – Acquisition of seeds.

The research in question emphasized the method of Purchase with Simultaneous Donation, implemented in 2012, with the objective of purchasing food acquired from family farming for automatic donation to social assistance network entities and public food and nutritional security equipment (Popular Restaurants, Community Kitchens and Food Banks). The products to be purchased by the Program prioritize those of a food nature suitable for human consumption, local eating habits, perishable foods and products *in nature* or processed.

Purchase with Simultaneous Donation was the modality that stood out, and is the one

that practically sustained the Program even in times of crisis. Even due to its dual nature of guaranteeing income to family farmers at the same time as distributing their products to people in situations of food insecurity, which avoided storage, thus deterring criticism like that of the past about products spoiling in warehouses.

## FAMILY FARMING AND THE PAA IN ALAGOAS

The state of Alagoas is present in the agribusiness production cycle with its sugar and alcohol sector, which, over the decades, has been modernizing, while generating less employment, expanding land, thus suffocating family farming and other rural people. Given the importance of preserving agriculture as a food producer and strengthening family farming, policies such as the PAA make all the difference in the process of establishing men in the countryside, in productive inclusion and in the search for autonomy.

Family farming properties comprise 90% of establishments in Alagoas, and present more difficulties in obtaining credit and technical assistance than non-family farming, which is reflected in the value of final production (Table 1).

Establishments	Numbers	Area (ha)	Production Value
Family Farmer	111.750	682.405	834.798
Unfamiliar	11.582	1.430.169	2.570.156
<b>Total</b>	<b>123.332</b>	<b>2.112.574</b>	<b>3.404.954</b>

**Table 1:** Agricultural Structure of Alagoas (family and non-family farming)

**Source:** IBGE (2012), adapted by Alagoas 2016.

Family farming, on the other hand, is partially or totally devoid of these elements, which implies greater problems for its development, requiring better organization on the part of family farmers and greater

capacity to demand plausible public policies to correct, or adjust, these differences.

In Wild regions, family farming activity is based on polyculture, which generates an important diversity in production: rice, beans, cassava and corn, in addition to great representation in livestock production and also in horticulture. This characteristic of diversified production favors food security, as its production targets the internal market of foodstuffs that are part of our society's eating habits.

Agricultural production in Alagoas (Table 2) is diversified due to the presence of family farming, mainly in Wild regions and countryside.

Agricultural production	Family	Non-Family
Rice (ton)	19.831	675,69
Beans (ton)	130.567	10.758
Cassava (ton)	415.761	78.608
Corn (ton)	142.565	18.551
Livestock	Family	Non-Family
Cattle (head)	411.600	508.265
Pigs (head)	52.036	41.234
Cow's Milk (liters)	87.851.968	88.735.840
Goat's Milk (liters)	336.247	85.705
Eggs (dozen)	15.194.467	9.761.910

**Table 2:** Agricultural Production in Alagoas (family and non-family farming)

**Source:** IBGE, 2012 (Adaptation). In: ALAGOAS, 2016

The data reported demonstrate the relevance of family farming production in Alagoas, mainly in food production, showing its social and economic role, with potential for food security, despite technical differences, difficulty in accessing credit, infrastructure in relation to non-family farming.

Here we present data from the Secretariat for Evaluation and Information Management – SAGI/ PAA DATA in the period from 2011 to 2017, referring to the PAA's performance in

Alagoas and which gave us an overview of the Program in the state, while also enabling an analysis the degree of involvement of farmer suppliers/benefiting entities in order to show the scope and importance of this public policy in strengthening family farming.

In relation to the information in the table above, it can be seen that the results became less favorable; With the end of the MDA, resources for the Program practically ceased, resulting in lower production and participation of farmer suppliers/Entities. It was a time of crisis for the Program in the state, with many uncertainties, as the permanence of the Program was considered essential, but its continuity was compromised in the face of changes in the political scenario at that time. Cooperatives had to reinvent themselves in search of new markets, at the same time that, together with other entities, they pressured the state government for a policy that could guarantee the purchase of products from family farming, which gave rise to the emergence of the first ideas for creating the state PAA.

### **CRISIS IN THE PAA, PROPOSAL FOR A STATE PAA AND NEW PAA IN CHANGING THE POLITICAL FRAMEWORK**

It is clear that the Union had been reducing resources for the PAA since 2016. The state of Alagoas had a drastic reduction in federal resources, from R\$25 million to just R\$5.2 million released in 2017, which ended up compromising the Program and generating great apprehension among family farmers in the state, who did not know how to dispose of your products. Therefore, they needed to organize themselves through their associations/cooperatives/unions and similar, to demand protective measures from the government of the state of Alagoas, with public action that could guarantee the purchase of

family farming products. (ALAGOAS, 2017)

The mobilizations that took place, as well as the political convergence actions with the state government, favored support for the cause, giving rise to the idea of creating a State PAA. For this to happen, the first discussions about it began and were strengthened in the State Nutritional Food Council; the commitment was signed by the Governor of Alagoas, who guaranteed the contribution of resources in the order of R\$15 million to family farming in 2018. (ALAGOAS, 2017)

All this effort on several organizational fronts made it possible to format a project for the creation by the State of Alagoas, in a pioneering way, of its own food acquisition program, the PAA Estadual. For the viability of this proposal, it was necessary to create and approve a new law (State Law n° 7950), especially because the resources foreseen to start the Program came from the State Fund for Combating and Eradicating Poverty - FECOEP, which would be transferred to the Institute of Innovation for Rural and Sustainable Development - EMATER, remaining as the state body responsible for implementing the PAA/AL.

Thus, the active modality in the new PAA/AL is purchase with simultaneous donation, foreseen in its creation to benefit 1,875 farmers from 78 municipalities in Alagoas, covering all regions of the state, which are organized in associations and cooperatives, which would favor, initially, 25 thousand families in vulnerable situations, which would receive food (fruits, vegetables, tubers, grains, dairy products, free-range chicken, homemade cakes and sweets, among others) through institutions linked to social assistance networks.( ALAGOAS, 2017)

The simultaneous donation modality was still being operated, but increasingly the National Supply Company - CONAB was losing its leading role to the Municipalities and

States, as they are interested in this social role. Thus, in the Alagoas countryside, emphasis is placed on the municipalities of Arapiraca and Palmeira dos Índios, which took on this leading role in the implementation of the PAA. Although this period saw a decrease in these resources, it is still important for the families who receive the food. Therefore, the program demonstrates resistance to adversity, largely due to meeting the social context.

## **FINAL CONSIDERATIONS**

The Food Acquisition Program – PAA is not the determining factor for rural territorial development, but it favors the process to be achieved as it promotes family farming to have access to institutional markets, as it enables productive inclusion, appropriation of land income, settling in the countryside and seeking autonomy reflected in improving his family's life and also collaborating in food security policy.

The PAA contributes to a policy that helps reduce one of the most basic and essential deprivations in life, which is the right to food. In its purchase with simultaneous donation modality, it seeks to serve people in a state of food insecurity and social vulnerability. The cut in resources suffered by the PAA

weakened its agricultural policy, which could characterize a deprivation of family farmers' freedom to access markets due to the new difficulties they faced, preventing the flow of their production and generating other deprivations due to the lack of income.

PAA's action – in the form of purchase with simultaneous donation – is important because food is distributed to networks of social assistance entities helping to combat hunger and poverty, having a double role as a policy. Both PAA guidelines, both the productive inclusion of family farmers and the social action to combat hunger, are aspects that collaborate with the rural development process, but cannot work in isolation.

The program reached its peak after a decade of existence, however years later it experienced a setback, with the entry of conservative governments, leading the program to a crisis with significant cuts in resources, resulting in the return of hunger. Only recently with the change of government at the federal level, the program was re-presented as a new model in a return to the original policy that prioritized combating hunger and food and nutritional insecurity, bringing new perspectives and conditioning us to continue this research.



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