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**SEMEAR - CREOLE
SEEDS**

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Abstract: The project arose out of curiosity about Creole Seeds, especially their benefits, and then the concern of the students and, consequently, the families. Through dialogues and surveys, it was discovered that this habit practically no longer existed in our community, due to various factors. In view of this, the school and the school community decided together to take action and look for strategies to find solutions and ensure that they did not become extinct.

Keywords: Seeds. Preservation. Action.

INTRODUCTION

The Alberto Pasqualini Municipal Elementary is located in the rural area of the municipality of Agudo/RS-Brazil. Most of the students are descendants of farmers, so their curiosity about seeds, storage and planting aroused interest in the subject in class 51. So, after some research, we came across Creole seeds and the importance of preserving them so that they don't become extinct.

Creole seeds are those used and stored by traditional communities, farmers, family members and indigenous communities. According to the booklet *União Pela Semente Crioula* from the GAIA Seed Bank:

What are Creole seeds? They are local seeds, more resistant to disease, more rustic, linked to the tastes of the producer. They have a higher nutritional value, as they have more genetic variability. They are environmentally beneficial seeds, as they are better adapted to planting without pesticides (BERNARDO, 2002).

Among the objectives of our project are: to revive the customs of our ancestors regarding the storage of seeds; to identify creole seeds in families; to collect seeds; to research the correct storage of seeds; to exchange seeds between families ; to research the planting time of each species and the interference of the moon in this process; to plant creole seeds on the students' properties.

The project aims to make families aware of the importance of storing and cultivating Creole seeds on their properties, in order to preserve these varieties and prevent their extinction. The activities promoted not only encourage sustainable agricultural practices, but also value the local genetic heritage and foster biodiversity. These efforts are in line with the United Nations (UN) 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which sets out 17 goals and 169 global targets to promote comprehensive sustainable development (UN, 2015).

METHODOLOGICAL PROCEDURES

As part of our method, we conducted a survey in the class group to identify the families that store seeds. We also carried out an investigation into the seeds stored on the students' properties, and held talks with the EMATER coordinator, as well as the Seed Guardians, Rosiele Lüdtke and Diulie Almansa. We proceeded to plant and disseminate seeds among the students and the entire school community. We also organized an event for families to exchange seeds and seedlings, strengthening community awareness and participation in caring for the environment.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Our investigative expedition started with a conversation with the families about what species they have in their homes. As an exploratory question, the class chose "Do you usually store seeds on your property?". We carried out a poll among the students' families, where the family members voted on whether they were in the habit of storing seeds on their properties, a fact that worried the class, as the vast majority voted no. This indicated that our research was correct, that we need to become guardians of these seeds and perpetuate this culture.

Secondly, a survey was carried out on the habits of storing and planting Creole seeds, and then the students took part in an active search to collect seeds from their families' properties, with prior identification of the seeds. To continue with the project, they sought advice from Cláudia Bernardini, an EMATER technician.

Among the factors on the importance of preservation we find: the taste and quality of traditional varieties, food and nutritional security, maintaining biodiversity, valuing family customs, conserving the environment and preserving health.

Some of the creole seed species found in our region were: corn, popcorn, beans, rice, pumpkin, strawberry, wheat, fava beans, peas, melon, watermelon, porongo, onion, vegetable bush, potato and peanut. we did some research into planting and the lunar calendar, the interference of the moon and the most favorable time for each species of seed found on the farms.

The difficulties encountered in cultivating Creole seeds were: greater care and lack of labor; young people's lack of interest in the subject and the difficulty of family succession; ease of access and practicality of acquiring other seeds; lack of public policies aimed at preserving genetic material; contamination of Creole seeds by transgenic seeds and lack of information about the harmful effects of hybrid and transgenic seeds and the pesticides used in their cultivation.

Strategies to overcome the difficulties include: exchanging creole seeds through regional meetings and exhibitions; creating a database of producers and cultivated species; creating groups guardians and encouraging seed banks to more available and easier to access; encouraging young people to value creole seeds and involving schools in the projects; implementing public policies to encourage the cultivation of creole species and research.

When sowing Creole seeds, it is crucial to choose an isolated location, far away from non-creole crops, in order to prevent genetic contamination. It is important to select the best quality seeds to ensure healthy plant development. Sowing can be done manually or with the aid of specific tools. Before planting, the area should be properly mulched and fertilized to provide essential nutrients. Spontaneous plant control should be carried out regularly, either by manual or mechanical weeding, to keep the field free of interference that could harm plant growth. In the case of diseases or pests, it is recommended to use alternative, manual methods, such as specific treatment syrups.

To guarantee the quality of the seeds, it is essential that they are harvested when they are ripe, but not too late, as this can increase the risk of deterioration. The seeds can be dried in different ways: in the shade, in the sun or using a dryer. If you opt for sun drying, the seeds should be spread out in thin layers to promote good ventilation. It is advisable to do this on a cemented floor or using light-colored tarpaulins, which reflect the heat without overheating the seeds. During the process, it is important to stir the seeds periodically to ensure even drying and to avoid exposing them during the hottest part of the day. At night, it is advisable to remove the seeds from the outside environment to protect them from dew, which can increase their humidity. After complete drying, the seeds are ready for immediate use or to be stored for future use.

For cleaning and storage: remove leaves, twigs, pebbles and clods mixed in with the seeds. Separate punctured, shriveled or moldy seeds from good ones. Leftover seeds or those not to be used immediately can be packed in Pet bottles, plastic jugs or dry canning jars. Identify the variety and storage date on the packaging and keep in a cool, dry place for later use.

It is worth highlighting the contribution of Diulie Almansa, from the Casa de Sementes in Paraíso do Sul, who enriched our project with an enlightening talk. On this occasion, we had the opportunity to get to know a variety of Creole seeds of different species, such as beans, peas, rice and corn. During the talk, we learned important techniques for storing these seeds, such as how to store them in a freezer or fridge to avoid the appearance of . It was also emphasized that Creole seeds preserve their original characteristics, containing more starch and remaining free of alterations or laboratory genetic modifications.

The collaboration of Rosiele Lüdtko, a dedicated guardian of Creole seeds who lives in Paraíso do Sul, was fundamental to the project. During her presentation, Rosiele shared that being a Guardian implies preserving the diversity of varieties, storing them properly and promoting the exchange of these gems. She revealed that, at her home in Recanto Fonte da Vida, she keeps more than 100 different species of seeds. This practice is a family tradition that she honors and continues, caring for and preserving the seeds that belonged to her grandparents. Rosiele pointed out that creole seeds are particularly resilient to climate change and soil variations, offering production guarantees and contributing to food sovereignty. They are known for their high nutritional value and distinctive taste, significantly differentiating them from conventional products.

In an interview with Cláudia Bernardini from EMATER, we asked her about the importance of preserving Creole seeds. According to Bernardini, maintaining the genetics of varieties that are no longer used on a large scale, but are used for family consumption. They are more resistant to climate change, they adapt well. They have a distinctive flavor. She also spoke about the Safe Seeds for Life Project - at state level - in which

the municipality of Agudo has a permanent seed exchange space and exchange moments at the Colonial Fair and on field days.

We planted seeds around the school and on the students' properties, as well as spreading porongo and vegetable bush seeds among students from other classes. This project was highlighted at the XV Verde é Vida Science Exhibition, at the regional and state stages, where two students represented the class, sharing their experiences and the work they had done so . This presentation was very well received, resulting in the students being classified for the next stage. Some students also went to represent the class with the project at the 8th MoEduCiTec at UNIJUI, in Ijuí/RS.

As a result, we organized an exchange of seeds and seedlings with families from the local community, further strengthening the bond between the school and its surroundings and promoting sustainable practices among the participants.

CONCLUSION

The project confirmed that Creole seeds exhibit greater resistance to temperature variations, as well as maintaining their original characteristics and their high nutritional value. These results demonstrate the critical importance of preserving creole seed varieties, which represent an invaluable natural wealth of our lands and, as such, must be carefully maintained and widely disseminated.

As well as preserving biodiversity, the practice of storing and exchanging Creole seeds sustains local culture, promotes healthy eating habits, reinforces environmental sustainability and strengthens the country's food sovereignty. Finally, this project proved to be an effective tool for expanding students' understanding of the importance of sustainability, encouraging a deeper awareness of the impact and relevance of sustainable agricultural practices in their lives and in society as a whole.

THANKS

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