

COOPSAFI: Production Cooperative in Agroforestry Systems

A project to support the development of community activities aimed at sustainable food processing in the region of the 'Deus te Ama' peasant community.

Context and challenges

The peasant community 'Deus te Ama' is the result of settlements for the right to land, the settled families are there since 2001 and, in this occupation process the farmers adopted the conventional harvest model through cutting and burning of native vegetation for agricultural production (monoculture, use of pesticides and chemical fertilizers). Around 4 years ago, through the incentive of the Comissão Pastoral da Terra, a group motivated in adopting the agroforestry system (SAF in portuguese) was started, based on the principles of agroecology. For the execution of the SAF implementation activities, the families were encouraged to adopt the joint effort model of work, and were able to reduce the hardships of the work due to the increase in labor and appreciation of the exchange of knowledge. Today, the group is made of seven families committed to sustainable and regenerative harvesting.

This way of production, new to the farmers in the region, is already bringing benefits to the group, who are profiting from the diversification of crops allied to the non use of fire pesticides and chemical fertilizers which promotes the resilience of the ecosystem resulting in better harvests. However, this production is not verticalized and part of what is harvested in the agroforestry system is not sold for lack of processing, generating loss and waste of fruits. In this way, the group proposes the construction of a fruit processing micro-industry, to add value to the production and facilitate commercialization.

The initiative to develop the pulp processing micro-industry in the community gives great autonomy so the agroecological production and work are valued and give economical return to the community. The group idealizes the production of pulps of the following regional fruits: açaí, acerola, pineapple, passionfruit and mango. The fruit processing is already done in the area, however the lack of sanitary regularization results in the impossibility of tacking the production to market. In this way, the group faces waste of fruit due to the lack of proper storage and commercialization structures.

To solve this problem, the project offers support to the community in the development of the micro-industry idealized by its members, ensuring the autonomy and strengthening their livelihood. The creation of the micro-industry will result in the obtaining of the Municipal Inspection Seal (Selo de Inspeção Municipal, SIM), which will enable the community to access the local market and enable the group's participation in governmental programs for food acquisition with the National School Food Program (Programa Nacional de Alimentação Escolar, PNAE) and other related initiatives.

The sustainable production is the group's main goal engaged with the idea inside the community, so they can guarantee the permanence of future generations in the territory. The idea of a pulp processing micro-industry in the Deus te Ama community was visualized in this context, focusing in the harvest of local species and strengthening the community income. By producing natural pulp of native species, the micro-industry creates a product with added value, what attracts consumers interested in regional products. This strengthens the local economy and allows

partnerships with other businesses in the region, establishing a sustainable commerce network. Therefore, the general idea of the project collaborate to nourish bonds inside the community, while preserving their cultural identity and socio-environmental values.

Locality

The Deus te Ama community is located in the Br 222 highway, right margin 30km in, no number – Rural area of Rondon do Pará – PA. It’s territorial extension is 2765 ha.

Benefited

In total, 7 families will be directly benefited with the development of the project, summing 20 people, being 13 adults (7 women and 6 men) and 7 children.

Planned activities

So the project can be made, the community members highlight the following activities:

1. Group meeting with the Comissão Pastoral da Terra to discuss the creation of the cooperative;
2. Go to the regulatory sector to obtain the project plan;
3. Identify needs: construction, setting up micro-industry and commercial relationships;
4. Visit from the academic community to evaluate the location;
5. Joint work effort to build the agro-industry.

Schedule of activities

The estimated time for the implementation of the proposed activities is 2 months.

Weekly Activities	Month 1: Deus te Ama / 2023			
Activities	1st week	2nd week	3rd week	4th week
Initial meeting: general definitions	x			
Group meeting		x		
Raising necessities: general construction			x	
Raising necessities: micro-industry				x

Weekly Activities	Month 2: Deus te Ama / 2023				
Activities	1st week	2nd week	3rd week	4th week	5 th week
Raising necessities: commercial relations	x				
Regulatory sector: project plant		x			
Material acquisition for the micro-industry			x		
Joint effort: micro-industry construction				x	
Joint effort: micro-industry construction					x

Construction price

Description	Value in Reais (BRL)	Value in Euro (€)
Material	20.000,00	4.000,00
Counterpart	18.000,00	3.600,00
TOTAL	38.000,00	7.600,00

Team and partners

The Deus te Ama community, members of the Nova Canaã community, the Associação Rede Meli Brasil and Sindicato dos Trabalhadores Rurais Agricultores e Agricultoras Familiares do Municipio de Rondon do Pará. CNPJ – 04.997.755/0001-63

Specific and ample impacts of the projects

The production in agroforestry systems promotes the recovery of degraded areas and the diversification of family production. To guarantee the processing of surplus production is the challenge proposed by this project, in a way that, by producing pulp of locally produced species, the micro-industry creates a product with added value. In this sense, the intention is - to achieve the following goals:

Specific goals:

To organize and plan the production of pulp starting the sustainable food production cycle;

Value resources produced with local species, ensuring their cultivation;

Generate income and guarantee financial autonomy for community members;

Ensure the permanence of other generations in the territory through food production;

Regularize production to enable the group to enter the market;

Promote meetings to discuss and share ideas with other communities and residents of the region.

General goals:

Preserve the agrobiodiversity of local species and the peasant way of life;

Raise awareness about agroecology and regenerative practices;

Strengthen links between residents of the region, sharing information for agroecological production and sustainable production.

