

# Food Security as a Fundamental Human Right

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**Abstract**— *The objective of this article is to identify and evaluate public policies for Food and Nutritional Security in the country, establishing the relationship between them and policies aimed at family farming, based on their effects on the development of the most vulnerable populations and their fixation on the field. The search for information included national and foreign authors who are experts on the topic, as well as annual reports from 2016 onwards, from international organizations such as FAO, IFAD, IFAD; WFS; UNICEF, WORLD BANK and others, who keep the safety assessment on their agenda. food and nutrition in the world, detecting advances and setbacks, to suggest to nations, policies and action strategies capable of correcting dysfunctions. The conclusions point Brazil out of the world map of extreme hunger, however it indicates the increase of people in situation of food risk in the country, for not having the economic conditions sufficient to have a healthy diet.*

**Keywords**— *Food Security, Family farming, Public policy, Law 13.345.*

## I. INTRODUCTION

Although the concept of food security may vary from country to country, given that factors such as food culture, education, type of housing, health concept and others, strongly influence this formulation, the definition adopted by Law 11.345 that creates the National System of Food and Nutritional Security - SISAN, explains in Art.3 “the food and nutritional security consists in the realization of the right of everyone to regular and permanent access to quality food, in sufficient quantity, without compromising access to other essential needs, having as a basis, health-promoting food practices that respect cultural diversity and are socially, economically and environmentally sustainable. ” (Organic Law on Food and Nutritional Security, art. 3, 2006). Therefore, this Law places the State as responsible for the food well-being of its population. Reinforcing the State's commitment to the quality of life of the population, the Federal Constitution of 1988, in its art. 6th says: “Education, health, food, work, housing, leisure, security, social security, maternity and child protection, assistance to the helpless are social rights, in the form of this Constitution. ” (Brazil, 2010). Despite the existing legislation in the country to ensure a decent life for all, and to be Brazil one of the largest world producers of food and, even if there is not an explicit situation of hunger, approximately 46 million individuals live in a situation of risk, as their income is insufficient for them to be able to eat in the recommended quantities and with the necessary quality and regularity (FAO, 2020)

The concept of Food Security emerged from the First World War (1914-1918), when in Europe the term was linked to the notion of national security and with the capacity of each country to produce its own food, so as not to be vulnerable in embargoes, boycotts or for political or military reasons (GALEAZZI, 1996). It returned to the surface, in the Second World War, when the devastated European countries, with their physical and material structures destroyed and their population without the necessary means to produce their own food, started to discuss the matter, putting the need to create a multinational organization, to encourage agriculture and food, which, regardless of wars, calamities, natural weather, would guarantee all peoples access to food, in quantity, quality and regularity. At the same time, the implementation of the UN - United Nations Organization and the IMF - International Monetary Fund (GALEAZZI, 1996) was being discussed, to create policies and funds capable of restructuring world economies. After a wide debate, in 1945 the FAO - Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations is created, whose purpose is to fight hunger and poverty, promote agricultural development, improve nutrition, seek food security and the access of all people, at all times, to the foods necessary for an active and healthy life (BELIK, 2003).

However, not with this terminology, but with the same essence, since the eighteenth century this topic was addressed by the English economist and demographer

Thomas Robert Malthus (1798), whose theory he defended supported the idea that demographic growth would exceed capacity the land, generating hunger and misery. This theory served as the basis for the Conservative Modernization of the Green Revolution that changed the way of planting and harvesting between the 1930s and 1980s of the 20th century worldwide.

In Brazil, the Green Revolution, despite increasing the productivity of crops, especially commodities, did not reduce hunger as promised, because its cause was never the lack of food, but a set of elements such as the lack of access to land to produce ; the lack of money to buy food and the ignorance of the technologies generated by research bodies for the people of the countryside to make appropriate choices for each geographic context. This scenario is decisive for the social injustice that has been affecting the poorest since colonization. In addition, the Green Revolution left a legacy of soil erosion and compaction, especially in the northeast; reduction of water resources, since so-called modern agriculture is responsible for 70% of the consumption of existing fresh water; flooding and salinisation of irrigated land; contamination of soils and workers with agrochemicals, with a relevant impact on the health of the population (LAZZARINI, 2018).

In the post modern concept of food security, in addition to the availability in quantity, quality and regularity of food, since the 2nd National Conference on Food and Nutritional Security, held in March 2004 in the city of Olinda - Pernambuco, it has been advocated that each people has the right to define policies that guarantee the preservation of traditional production and food practices of each culture, carried out on an environmentally, economically and socially sustainable basis. From then on, Brazil adopted the following concept:

“(…) Food and Nutritional Security consists in realizing the right of everyone to regular and permanent access to quality food, in sufficient quantity, without compromising access to other essential needs, based on health-promoting food practices that that respect cultural

diversity and that are environmentally, culturally, economically and socially sustainable”(Law 11.345).

This understanding was reaffirmed in the Organic Law on Food and Nutrition Security, approved by the National Congress and sanctioned by the President of the Republic on September 15, 2006, a legal instrument that constitutes an advance for considering the promotion and guarantee of DHAA as the objective and goal of the Policy Food and Nutritional Security (BELIK, 2003).

The initial idea on Food Security, which was guided by food production, only remained until the 1st World Food Security Conference promoted by FAO, in 1974. In 1996, more than 180 nations participated in the World Food Summit, and there have pledged to halve, by 2015, the rate of malnourished people in the world. This commitment was renewed in Rome, on June 11, 2002, by the same 182 signatory countries of the previous declaration (BELIK, 2003).

Referring to the issue of hunger and food production, Amartya Sen (2000), states Malnutrition, chronic hunger and collective famines are influenced by the functioning of the entire economy and society as a whole - not just the production of food and agricultural activities [...] food is not distributed in the economy through charity or any other means. automatic sharing system. The potential to buy food has to be acquired. [...] people go hungry when they cannot establish their “entitlement” on a sufficient amount of food (SEN, 2000).

Thus, it can be observed that the concept of food security is constantly changing, always incorporating new elements in its understanding, such as, safe food, one free from chemical or biological contamination; food quality, incorporating nutritional aspects; balancing the diet; cultural and other aspects, which subsidized the International Conference on Nutrition, promoted in 1992 by the UN and FAO, with the presence of 159 countries and the leaders of the European Economic Community. At this event, the World Declaration on Nutrition was drafted, where all participants declared that hunger and malnutrition are unacceptable and that access to nutritionally adequate and safe food is a right of every person. The World Food Summit met in Rome in 1996, addressing the issue and highlighting: “Poverty is an important cause of food insecurity, and sustainable progress in its eradication is fundamental to improving access to food” (WORLD DECLARATION OF ROME,

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## II. FOOD SECURITY IN BRAZIL

In Brazil, the fight against hunger is not recent. In the postwar period, the Brazilian physician Josué de Castro mapped hunger in Brazil and “his ideas were decisive for the institution of the minimum wage, which established a basket of 12 foods, which would compromise 50% of the salary estimate and would meet 100% of the recommendations for calories, proteins, minerals and vitamins ”(BATISTA FILHO, 2003). In Geography of Hunger, Josué de Castro (1980), defines as an objective of his study, to carry out an ecological survey on the phenomenon of hunger in Brazil, guided by the geographic principles of location, extension, causality, correlation and land unity. It innovated by introducing in the work the concepts of food areas, areas of endemic hunger, areas of epidemic hunger, areas of malnutrition, Brazilian food mosaic, in order to draw the first map of hunger in the country.

By food areas, the author understood, a region that had typical resources, a habitual diet based on certain regional products and with its inhabitants reflecting, in their biological and socio-cultural characteristics, the marked influence of the diet. Endemic famine areas were those in which at least half of the population had permanent nutritional deficiencies, while in epidemic hunger, the nutritional deficiencies of half the population are transitory. Malnutrition areas, in their classification, include small groups in a given region. Finally, it defines regional and ethnic food diversity as the Brazilian Food Mosaic (CASTRO, 1980).

In the methodology used, Josué de Castro, divided the country into five food areas:

1. Amazon area, covering the states of Amazonas, Pará, Mato Grosso, Goiás, Maranhão, Amapá and Rio Branco (the last two, at the time, were territories).
2. Northeastern sugar, covering the entire northeastern coast.
3. Sertão Nordestino, comprising the central lands of the states of Piauí, Ceará, Rio Grande do Norte, Paraíba, Pernambuco, Alagoas, Sergipe and Bahia.
4. Midwest, comprising the states of Minas Gerais, Goiás and part of Mato Grosso.

5. Extreme South, at the time covering the states of Guanabara, Rio de Janeiro, São Paulo, Paraná, Santa Catarina and Rio Grande do Sul (CASTRO, 1980).

The food consumed in each of these areas was defined by the culture of its population. For example, in the Amazon area, the diet consisted of manioc flour, fish, beans and rapadura, which were the components of indigenous food, seasoned with plenty of pepper. Chestnuts, açaí and buriti, although nutritionally rich, were little eaten at the time, making the population's diet very poor. In the sugar northeast, the diet was rich in protein and mineral salts, marine foods (fish, molluscs and crustaceans). In addition to these, there were coconut, cashew, cocoa and jerky, which made the coastal population's diet nutritionally balanced (CASTRO, 1980).

In the case of the Sertão Nordestino, the diet was the most varied and rich, with Portuguese and Arab colonizers as the main influence. The population fed on corn and its derivatives, such as mush, hominy, couscous; mugunzá; angú; bean; beef, mutton; buchada; sarapatel; flesh of the sun; beef jerky; rapadura; milk; curd; cheese; butter; pumpkin; gherkin; okra; sweet potatoes, which made the diet of this population both in quantity and in complete quality, meeting all nutritional needs. This balance was only broken in prolonged periods of drought, when the population was experiencing nutritional deficit, the lack of water to plant and to give water to animals. In the prevalence of this situation for a long time, the sertanejo started to feed on roots, seeds, rustic plants and wild animals, as a survival strategy (CASTRO, 1980).

In the Midwest, the basic diet was corn, beans, corn flour and bacon. Although high in calories, from a nutritional point of view it was to be desired. However, this diet was supplemented with fruits, bananas, oranges, papayas, avocados and vegetables. In the area of the Far South, the region most developed in industry, agriculture and commerce, the diet was complete. Rice, bread, potatoes, meats, vegetables, legumes, fruits, the result of the influences of the colonizers: Italians, Germans, Poles, Japanese, Lithuanians, forming an immense food mosaic (CASTRO, 1980).

In 1948 the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) was signed, which internationally enshrined food as a fundamental human right. In Brazil, despite the social inequality that separates rich and poor, in terms of food and nutrition conditions, there are significant advances, with repercussions on reducing extreme poverty. Between 1990 and 2008, while the Brazilian population grew from 141.6 to 186.9 million, the population in extreme poverty decreased from 36.2 to 8.9 million people (IBGE,

2010). It is worth mentioning that Brazil is the only country in the world that has a specific law in the field of food security and the right to food. Law nº 11.346, places Brazil in a position of global protagonism in this matter, even as an alert for government officials less committed to the citizenship of its population, by stating in Art.2 that “adequate food is a fundamental human right of the human being, inherent in the dignity of the human person and indispensable to the realization of the rights enshrined in the Federal Constitution, and the public power must adopt the policies and actions that are necessary to promote and guarantee the food and nutritional security of the population”. It also emphasizes in Art. 3 that “it is the duty of the public power to respect, protect, promote, provide, inform, monitor, inspect and evaluate the realization of the human right to adequate food, as well as guarantee the mechanisms for its enforcement”. This text makes it evident that having an adequate diet is not kindness, sensitivity or charity of the governors who exercise it in their management for the poor, but a legal obligation of the State, as a representation of society. Law 13.415 is based on the following guidelines:

- a. The promoting the intersectorality of governmental and non-governmental policies, programs and actions;
- b. decentralization of actions and articulation, in collaboration, between the spheres of government;
- c. monitoring of the food and nutritional situation, in order to subsidize the cycle of management of policies for the area in the different spheres of government;
- d. conjugation of direct and immediate measures to guarantee access to adequate food, with actions that expand the population's autonomous subsistence capacity;
- e. and. articulation between budget and management;
- f. encouraging the development of research and the training of human resources.

These guidelines were drawn up with the participation of society through social movements, hence reflecting the concerns of the population. Food insecurity is disrespect for human rights and directly affects the right to life. Food sovereignty favors the economic, political and cultural sovereignty of peoples.

In Mali, in 2007, at the World Food Sovereignty Forum, the traditional peoples present or represented there (indigenous, quilombolas, riverside dwellers, fishermen, farmers, people of African origin and others), reformulated the then concept of Food Security, adding other



components to the text, in order to feel contemplated. They state:

“Food sovereignty is the right of peoples to decide their own food and productive system, based on healthy and culturally appropriate foods, produced in a sustainable and ecological way, which places those who produce, distribute and consume food at the heart of systems and policies above the demands of markets and companies, in addition to defending interests and including future generations.”(WORLD FORUM FOR FOOD SOVEREIGNTY, 2007).

What changes in this conception, according to Via Campesina (2003), an important movement of rural workers, is the valorization of those who produce, including:

- Agrarian Reform, so that workers have access to land, water, seeds, agricultural inputs, to produce under competitive conditions.
- Priority of national products, avoiding that imported products that are too cheap, due to the subsidies they received from their governments, may harm local farmers, especially family members.
- The participation of farmers in the definition of agrarian and agricultural policies.
- The recognition of peasant women who play an essential role in agricultural production and food.
- The appreciation of the local food culture, both for those who produce and those who consume.
- Encouraging family farming, free of agrochemicals (VIA CAMPESINA, 2003).

These are the guidelines that qualify Brazilian family farming.

### III. MAIN PUBLIC POLICIES FOR FAMILY AGRICULTURE THAT STRENGTHEN FOOD AND NUTRITIONAL SECURITY IN BRAZIL

Public policies aimed at the agricultural sector have been an important tool for the development of regions and countries in recent decades. However, as discussed above, agricultural policy in Brazil, from the post-war period, was focused on the capitalized rural company, which has large tracts of land, focusing on the modernization of its productive structures, privileging the increase in productivity through technological advances and government subsidies (SILVA, 2008). Only from 1999, with the intense mobilization of social movements in the countryside, PRONAF - National Program for Strengthening Family Farming was created, an important tool of financial increase for family farmers, because in addition to reducing poverty and social inequalities among the urban and rural population, it provides movement of capital in the countryside, boosting the local market and reducing the rural exodus.

Established by Decree 1.946 / 1999, it was organized to operate in three different lines: credit; municipal infrastructure and services and training, whose sources of financing are the general budget of the union, the workers' support fund and cooperative banks and constitutional funds (SILVA, 2008). It covers the following lines of credit:

- Pronaf Agroindustry - aimed at processing and future commercialization.
- Pronaf Cota-Parte - aimed at members of cooperatives.
- Pronaf Custeio - aimed at financing production.
- Pronaf Floresta - aimed at agroforestry projects.
- Pronaf Jovem - aimed at young people working in agriculture.
- Pronaf Mais Alimentos - aimed at improving the production infrastructure.
- Pronaf Mulher - aimed at women working in agriculture.

Since its implementation, the program has undergone changes to adjust to legal and market requirements. Given its national relevance, it now includes a set of programs to support family agricultural production, such as:

- National Policy for Technical Assistance and Rural Extension (PNATER), created in 2003 with the objective of restructuring the technical assistance system in Brazil, focusing on family rural properties;

- Food Acquisition Program (PAA), which allows the public purchase of products from family farmers at prices established by the National Supply Company (CONAB), for donation to social assistance organizations, school lunches or stock building;

- National School Feeding Program (PNAE), which, according to article 4 of Federal Law No. 11,947, aims to contribute to the growth and biopsychosocial development, learning, school performance and the formation of healthy eating habits of students, for through actions of food and nutrition education and the provision of meals that cover their nutritional needs during the school year. Article 14 of the aforementioned law establishes that of the total financial resources transferred by the FNDE, within the scope of the PNAE, at least 30% (thirty percent) must be used in the acquisition of foodstuffs directly from family farming and the rural family entrepreneur or their organizations, giving priority to agrarian reform settlements, traditional indigenous communities and quilombola communities. Coelho (2012), states that PNAE is currently considered the largest dietary supplementation program in Latin America, considering the length of activity, continuity, universal character, the number of students served and the volume of investments made.

- National Land Credit Program, facilitates the financing of rural properties, for those who have not yet had access to land, and can pay the financing in up to 25 years, with a grace period of 36 months.

- Unified Animal Health Care System (Elesa), aims to ensure the health quality of food, decentralizing the process of monitoring good practices for states and municipalities.

- Land Registration and Land Regularization Program, which aims to provide legal certainty to small landowners and rural property owners targeted for regularization.

- National Program for the Production and Use of Biodiesel (PNPB), created in 2004 to encourage the production of biodiesel, energy from renewable sources. Oil extraction can be castor, sunflower, soy, palm, peanut and others.

All of these programs have a positive impact on rural families, however, the public policy that has brought the greatest benefits to the rural population is Rural Social Security, through pensions and pensions, which have

transformed the quality of life of the elderly population, when wear and tear due to the expenditure of energy in hard work for the production of food, would not allow him the deserved rest. It was the 1988 Constitution, complemented by Laws 8,212 (Costing Plan) and 8,213 (Benefit Plans), of 1991, which determined universal access for the elderly and disabled of both sexes in the rural sector to social security, in a special regime, provided that they prove the situation of rural producer, partner, sharecropper and tenant, garimpeiro and artisanal fisherman, as well as respective spouses who carry out their activities in a family economy regime, without permanent employees. (BRUMER, 2002).

In Brazil, family farming plays an important role in food and nutrition security, in protecting the environment, in generating employment and income and in local development. The term family farming proposes several nuances of meaning in its definition. Law No. 11,326 of July 24, 2006, characterizes family farming as “that developed on rural properties with up to four fiscal modules, where family work predominates over the total labor of the establishment”. The value of the “fiscal module” unit is fixed by INCRA, and varies from municipality to municipality, based on the criteria of art. No. 4 of Decree 84.685 / 80 (BIANCHINI, 2005). However, as Altafin (2005) states, “Brazilian family farming is an evolving concept, with significant historical roots and linked to traditional peasant production”. For Chayanov (1974), “family farming is one that does not hire outside labor, that owns a certain extent of land and its own means of production, and that, at times, is forced to continue to employ part of its workforce in other activities outside the property”.

Public policy is being considered “the field of knowledge that seeks, at the same time, to put the government into action and / or analyze this action and, when necessary, propose changes in the direction or course of these actions” (SOUZA, 2006). For Cunha and Cunha (2002), “public policies have been created by the State as responses to the demands that emerge from society and from within, representing the public commitment to act in a given area in the long term”. According to Lima and Pitaguari (2005), public policies that include public spending capable of reducing production costs and making the productive sector viable improve the structural conditions for growth and development of the local economy. Summarizing the importance of public policies, (Cornwall & Brock, 2005; Cabral, Favareto, Mukwereza, & Amanor, 2016), they say that policies guide the conduct of public managers for the relationship of the State with Society, being formulated through laws, norms, decrees or

even programs for its effective application, providing improvements in the quality of life of all its citizens.

Although it is possible due to the evaluations made by international organizations, such as FAO (2016; 2017; 2019) and the World Bank (2016; 2017; 2019), to note advances in agricultural and agrarian policies aimed at rural populations, with regard to family farming with a view to food and nutritional security, serious deficiencies in the State's performance can be identified, such as the low participation of workers in the definition of these policies; the marginalization and worsening of the social situation, with loss of rights and omission in the application of the law for offenders; unequal food distribution, formation of an economically strong employer category to the detriment of the family productive sector, in addition to irreversible environmental problems (GUEDES PINTO, 1995; BUAINAIN, 1999; PESSANHA, 2002). But rural workers have resisted, and the consolidation of the ideal of equality and social justice is gradually taking place. More recently, this productive segment has sought to implement agroecology in its production processes, from the perspective of environmental sustainability, the preservation of biodiversity and the commitment to life. The agroecological model of production proposes the production of safe food without the use of agrochemicals, based on traditional knowledge and methods of environmental management and management produced over many generations, in a meeting between human beings and nature. (ANA, 2010; NAVOLAR et al., 2010; PACHECO, 2010).

#### IV. METHODOLOGY

This research is exploratory and descriptive, whose objective was to identify with the national and international organizations that address the theme of Food and Nutritional Security the policies implemented in the country by the State and its relationship with the guidelines of Family Agriculture, verifying that Brazil is the only country in the world that has a specific law to ensure the quality of food for its population. Authors from the areas of health and social sciences who stand out as scholars of the subject were sought, but the basis of the information was the reports developed by the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), by the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), the World Health Organization (WHO), the World Food Program (WFP), and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), on the State of Food and Nutrition Security in the World (2016; 2017; 2018). These documents inform that Brazil in Latin

America has the best position in the implementation of policies to combat poverty and hunger, having already fully achieved the targets set for 2015 and many of the SDGs - Sustainable Development Goals recommended in the Agenda 2030, without disastrous State actions being recognized as obstacles to development.

#### V. FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

The creation and application of incentive programs for food and nutrition security in order to provide improvements in the quality of life for family farmers, has contributed to promote the socioeconomic development of rural communities as a whole in Brazil. The democratization of public policies represents a promising way to build a new social reality, with a view to reducing inequalities.

Brazil has been employing strategies that combine income transfer programs and support for production, supply and access to food, which contribute to the improvement of food and nutritional security indices, and in the expansion of conditions of production, supply, distribution and consumption of food, adequate and healthy, even at that moment lived around the world with COVID 19, where hunger started to increase, with unemployment and the restrictions imposed on social interaction, making poorer those who survive informal jobs.

The Emergency Aid given by the federal government, has already directly and indirectly benefited 125.4 million people in the pandemic, guaranteed some food for families (Ministry of Citizenship, 2020). Data released by FAO on July 15, 2020 in the Report "The State of Food and Nutritional Security in the World", reveal that Brazil remains outside the World Hunger Map, however, according to the entity, 37.5 million people lived a situation of moderate food insecurity in the country in the period between 2014 and 2016, between 2017 and 2019 this number reached 43.1 million. In percentage terms, the number also rose, from 18.3% to 20.6%. The document says that, although Africa is the region where the highest levels of total food insecurity are observed, it is in Latin America and the Caribbean that food insecurity is increasing most rapidly: it grew from 22.9% in 2014 to 31, 7% in 2019, and also a cause for alarm, the fact that it is in that part of the world where the cost of the diet that meets the minimum energy needs per day, is 34% more expensive in the world, US \$ 1.06. This means that for that amount, more than 104 million people cannot afford a healthy diet.

A relevant fact in Brazil was the approval of Law 14,016, enacted in June 2020, which provides for

combating food waste. The text authorizes establishments that operate with food production and supply, including fresh, industrialized products and ready meals, to donate the surplus that has not been commercialized, but that is still fit for human consumption, guaranteeing the poor intake necessary for poor families. maintaining health.

The document infers that the food security and nutritional status of the most vulnerable population groups will deteriorate further due to the health and socioeconomic impacts of the pandemic caused by Covid-19 and ends with the discussion of policies and strategies to transform food systems, the in order to ensure affordable healthy diets as part of the efforts needed to end hunger and all forms of malnutrition. It signals the significant challenges that remain in the fight against hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition in all its forms, and calls for action on two fronts:

- 1) Safeguard food and nutrition security through economic and social policies that help to neutralize the effect of economic slowdowns or contractions;
- 2) Address existing inequalities at all levels through multisectoral policies that make it possible to eradicate food insecurity and malnutrition.

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