

# **AESOP4Food\_Sustainable Food Planning Seminar 2023**

## *Assignment type 2*

Group:

Ghent Living Lab - *Leveraging publicly owned farmland for an agroecological transition in the peri-urban fringe of Ghent*

---

## **Connecting local food policy & farmland: The case of Santarém, Brazil**

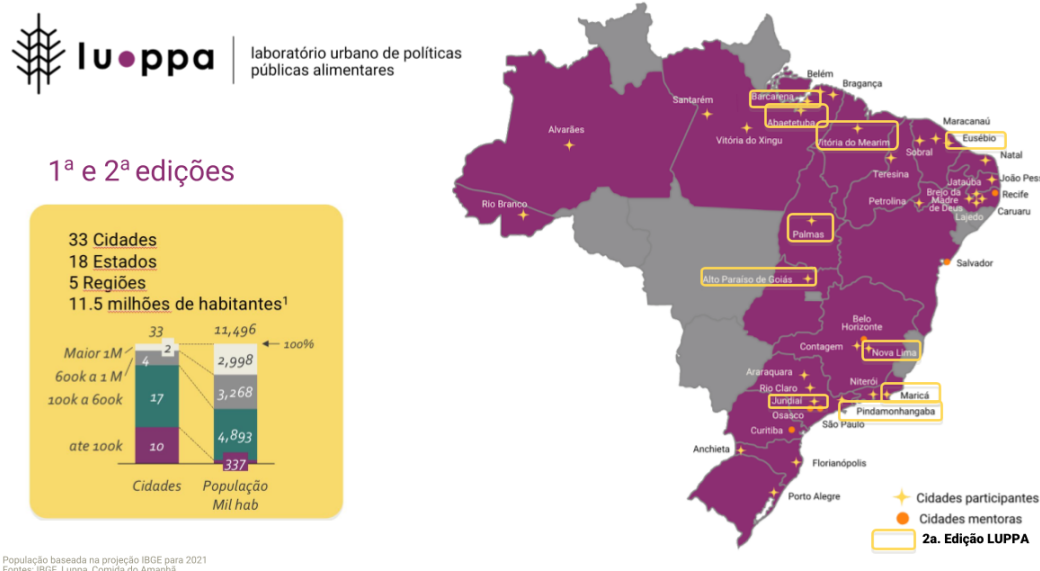
---

Juliana Tângari, Brazil  
(Comida do Amanhã Institute)  
June 2023

## I. Background; context of current living lab in progress; research aim.

[The Laboratory on Urban Food Policies - LUPPA](#) is a collaborative platform to support and facilitate the design of local food policies with an integrated, participatory, and systemic approach. LUPPA was launched in Brazil by Comida do Amanhã Institute, in partnership with ICLEI South America, in August 2021.

The program supports local policymakers in shaping food systems that are healthy and just for people, sustainable for the planet, resilient to climate and economic changes, and grounded on a rights-based approach. LUPPA focuses on strengthening democratic policy-making processes and highlighting initiatives that address local food challenges through systemic and holistic approaches by creating a collaborative platform on city-level food policies through network building, knowledge sharing and interactive activities among municipalities and their food policy councils.



LUPPA's [1st edition](#) ran between August 2021 and July 2022. The regular 12-month format includes interviews and food systems rapid assessment with each local government representatives, monthly webinars offered by LUPPA's expert partners, immersive LAB workshops - the main activity of the LAB where attendees work intensively on the laboratory's journeys -, bimonthly virtual workshops, and the mentoring workshops of the small groups led by each "mentor city".

The LAB's 1st edition gathered 23 cities that had committed themselves to the project, besides 3 "mentor" cities. At the [2nd edition](#), 10 more cities were selected - 4 from the Amazon region -, and "mentor" cities increased to 5. LUPPA's participant cities comprehend Brazil's 5 regions, along 18 of the 26 Brazilian states, and comprise more than 11 million people together.

During the ongoing 2nd edition, LUPPA partnered with the Brazilian Agricultural Research Corporation (Embrapa) and the European Union - Brazil Dialogues cooperation program to support an international case study project on Food and Cities, by which 5 LUPPA cities were

selected (Maricá, Santarém, Recife, Curitiba and Rio Branco) to have their food systems assessed, as well as to benefit from a mission to EU to interchange experiences with 5 other European cities, one of them being Ghent.

All LUPPA cities' policy experiences are being studied from a systemic approach. Moreover, LUPPA activities are designed to support and facilitate the development of local food policies and local food strategies oriented to ensure resilient and democratic food systems, through systemic mapping and governance strengthening.

Therefore, this paper aims to select one of the LUPPA cities to, by a brief case study, assess existing practices connecting food policy and public land management, more specifically, how specific local food policies end up supporting local food production that benefits local citizens and local smallholder farmers and access to farmland.

Santarém, located in the Amazon/North region of Brazil, is advancing its city-level food policies from a food sovereignty approach, making it an interesting case for assessing the linkages between food policy and public land management.

## **II. Findings. School feeding program, public food procurement and technical assistance.**

### **a) Brief context<sup>1</sup>:**

Santarém is located in the western part of the state of Pará, in North of Brazil, located midway between the larger cities of Belém at the coast and Manaus upriver. It is an important regional market centre in the Lower Amazon, at the confluence of the Tapajós and Amazon Rivers

It was once home to the Tapajós Indians, a tribe of Native Americans after whom the river was named. They were the leaders of a large, agricultural chiefdom that flourished before the arrival of Europeans. The city boundaries span over an area of roughly 23,000 km<sup>2</sup>, being only 97 km<sup>2</sup> in urban perimeter. Its population of more than 300,000 inhabitants, distributed among 350 communities in the regions of rivers, plateaus and floodplain areas, has the waterway modality as the most important means of transporting passengers and transporting cargo, and plays an important role in local economy.

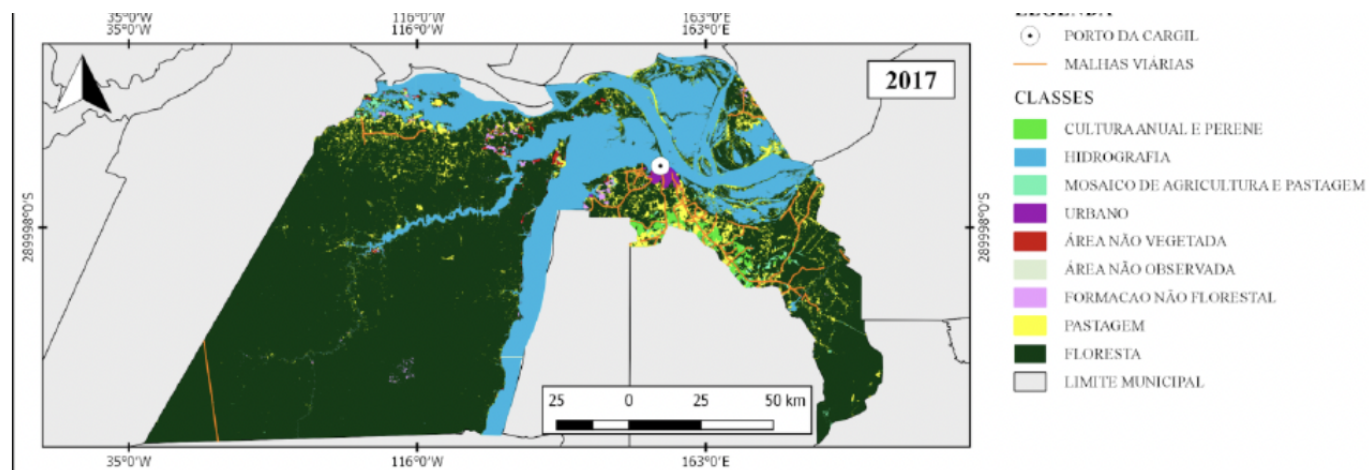
The regional economy is based on agriculture, cattle, and mining. The city has seen many 'cycles' of development dominated by one or a few economic activities, including rubber extraction (in the last century), coffee production, and gold mining. Most recently, there has been a massive growth in the area of soybean plantations, boosted by a controversial<sup>2</sup> grain terminal held by Cargill in the port of Santarém since 1999. The city can be considered one relevant entry and exit point for the large soybean monoculture plantations in Brazil<sup>3</sup>.

---

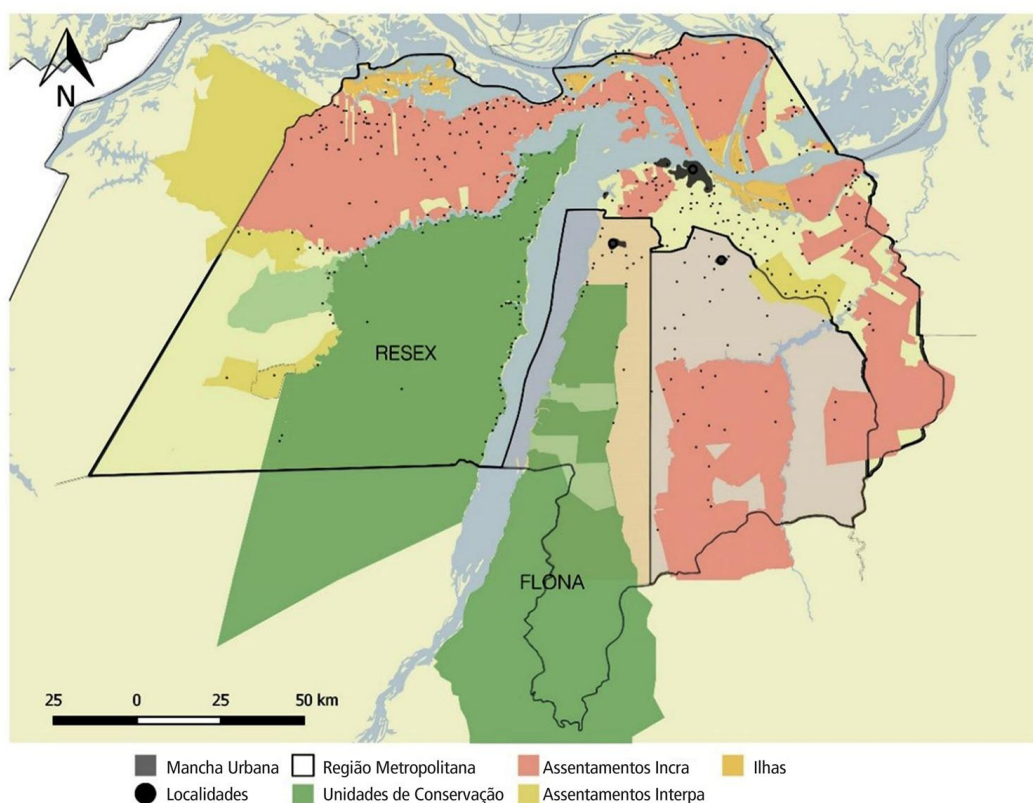
<sup>1</sup> Source: <https://cidades.ibge.gov.br/brasil/pa/santarem/panorama>

<sup>2</sup> [Estudo revela impactos provocados pela instalação do porto da Cargill em Santarém \(PA\) - Notícias | Terra de Direitos](#)

<sup>3</sup> [1 A EXPANSÃO DA FRONTEIRA AGRÍCOLA DA SOJA NO MUNICÍPIO DE SANTARÉM \(PA\) E SUAS TRANSFORMAÇÕES SOCIOESPACIAIS Bárbara Ele.](#)



Map by Teixeira, Barbara & Santos, Thiago & Terra, Ademir (2019)<sup>4</sup>.



Map by Gomes, Taynara & Cardoso, Ana Claudia Duarte & Coelho, Helder & Oliveira, Kamila (2017)<sup>5</sup>.

<sup>4</sup> Teixeira, Barbara & Santos, Thiago & Terra, Ademir. (2019). A TRANSFORMAÇÃO DO TERRITÓRIO A PARTIR DO USO DA TERRA NO MUNICÍPIO DE SANTARÉM PARÁ. Nova Revista Amazônica. 7. 99

<sup>5</sup> <https://doi.org/10.1590/2236-9996.2017-4009>

b) Policy developments and challenges<sup>6</sup>:



Santarém has been looking to develop and strengthen initiatives that seek the effective universality of good food in schools and in the offer to citizens. Among the actions aimed at access to decent and balanced food for the most vulnerable populations in the municipality, the following can be considered major achievements: (i) the continuous implementation and expansion since 2005 of the Brazilian Food Acquisition Program ("PAA"), a national food procurement program that, among other features, purchase food produces from family farmers to donate them directly to social assistance institutions and social assistance official programs; (ii) another relevant food program is the "public restaurant", in

operation since 2014, which provides free meals in the central area of the city based on the purchase of products from local family farming; (iii) the third most prominent element of the local food policy is school feeding, the target of special dedication since 2017, as it is considered by the local government as an opportunity for local development, the retention of the rural exodus, for food sovereignty and food and nutrition education.

Santarém has 404 municipal schools and 34 state public schools. Among the 404 schools, 42 offer full-time education from 7am to 5pm offering four meals a day. The secretary of education reports the problem of childhood obesity and the need for campaigns to change eating habits, which has been conducted through the Hortas Escolares and Escola do Parque program.

On the other hand, the city, which has 50% of its territory defined as a rural area by its master plan, including forest reserves, settlements of family farmers and areas of traditional communities, has more than 20,000 local farmers linked to around 7,000 local farms (IBGE 2017), large part of family farmers and agrarian reform settlers, in addition to traditional communities, despite the pressure that soy monoculture exerts on the site.

The city hall mapped family producers and dialogues with the cooperatives before launching public procurement notices. There are 5 cooperatives providing public school meals in Santarém, out of a total of 12 cooperatives in the region:

- *Cooperativa de Agricultores Familiares da Comunidade de Boa Esperança* (COOPBOA), with 148 farming families whose primary production is cassava;

<sup>6</sup> Source: activities and interviews held at [LUPPA - Laboratório Urbano de Políticas Públicas Alimentares](#), LUPPA/Embrapa/UE-BR Dialogues, Food and Cities project final report - in preparation.

- *Cooperativa de produtores rurais da Várzea* (Coopruvas): with 45 farming families from riverside communities, producing, especially watermelon, banana, cassava, corn, peppers and vegetables, honey, artisanal fishing and raising free-range chicken. Coopruvas has been supplying food to the city hall since 2021;
- *Cooperativa dos Produtores da Agricultura Familiar de Santarém*- COOPAFS, with 122 families, producing mainly vegetables and fruits such as cupuaçu, banana, pineapple, watermelon and açaí;
- *Cooperativa Mista de Agricultores do Planalto Santareno* (COMAPLAS);
- *Ccampo Alimentos*, with 200 families, is one of the largest local suppliers. It produces and benefits fruit pulp such as cupuaçu, açaí, guava and acerola, in addition to the cultivation of cassava and its derivatives.

The municipal government has been strengthening and creating ties with local producers, encouraging sales to public purchase programs for food from local family farming, to increase the income of communities and give students access to healthy food.

The city hall also supports an annual gastronomic festival, "Cozinha Tapajós", which promotes local biodiversity in food. The initiative brings together kitchen chefs and aims to disseminate the use of local ingredients in gastronomy, such as açaí, tucupi, tapioca and butter beans. Manteiguinha beans from Santarém are gaining popularity and can already be found in different combinations in local restaurants. Manteiguinha beans generate income for family-based producers and contribute to further differentiate the typical dishes of local cuisine.

The city hall also has the Support Unit for the Distribution of Family Agriculture, equipment derived from federal support in 2017, which has a cold room and works as a logistics centre for the cooperatives. Since 2022, some school food items have been delivered by cooperatives directly in schools. The space at the City Hall's logistics centre, which previously received food, became insufficient due to the large volume of deliveries.

Some cooperatives report that delivering food purchased by the school feeding program directly to schools without having their own boat, raft, or truck increases too much the logistical cost of production. In fact, due to the geographic characteristics of the municipality, logistics is very costly and has been proving to be a crucial challenge in the flow of family farming production.

The City Hall is preparing a project to strengthen the production of free-range chickens in the Várzea region. Producers point out that the high price of feed with corn bran for chickens is an impediment to increasing production, but if public purchases open up a market for the product, there is a way to strengthen production.

Although vegetables and legumes grown locally are present in school meals, there is still a lack of fish and free-range chickens produced in the communities themselves. The city hall does not purchase fish for school meals in Santarém due to the lack of municipal inspection for fish. The Integrated Artisanal Fishing Center (Cipar), a project that is being implemented by the city hall, plans to make it possible to purchase fish for school meals. The city hall will



also launch a notice so that fishermen's cooperatives can occupy the space. The animal protein consumed in the 33 riverside schools is generally canned. The difficulty is in the storage of food. The schools in the riverside communities do not have freezers to preserve fish and meat due to the lack of energy (generated with fuel). For the Santarém education department, eliminating canned food from school meals at all 33 schools is still challenging.

**c) Key players:**

The Education Secretariat and the Agriculture and Fishery Secretariat are responsible for coordinating and advancing all the actions mentioned above. There is a great deal of commitment from the teams at these units, in addition to a highly integrated action, so that public procurement programs value and encourage not only local production but also native production, seeking to counterbalance the pressure of agribusiness and the standardisation of diets that are not committed to socio biodiversity.

Santarém is part of the Traditional Food Commission of the Peoples of Amazonas (Catrapoa), created in 2021 and coordinated by the Federal Public Ministry. Catrapoa values biodiversity and privileges the local food culture, advocating for adaptation of legislation to this reality, in addition to supporting the registration of small producers and extractivists to meet public purchases, which ends up fostering income generation in the locality.

Catrapoa has a strong advocacy role to press for the fulfilment of the purchase, via PNAE, of the mandatory quota of food products from family farming and guarantee the right of traditional peoples and communities to school meals adequate to their own production processes and to their food culture, and encourages the sale of community production directly to schools. One of its main achievements was the guidance to release the typical sanitary inspection requirement of industrialised products for local socio-biodiversity foods to be consumed in the indigenous and *quilombola* communities themselves.

Relevant spaces for concertation, dialogue, and pressure from civil society, especially from farmers, are considered to be the Municipal Public Policy Councils: the Council for Sustainable Rural Development, the Fisheries and Aquaculture Council, and the Municipal Council for Food Security, which help much in raising awareness and implementing programs and regulations.

Movements of local chefs to value local cuisine and food production have also been an important factor in raising awareness and consequent appreciation of local family farming.

All these instances have been relevant agents for the advances identified in recent years.

#### **IV. Conclusion:**

It is considered that the city government's efforts to encourage and encourage public purchases of food from family producers and local extractivists, both for food programs and for feeding vulnerable populations, were successful, with improvements in quality of life identified through investments in rural properties and resistance of local farmers to the pressures of agribusiness, which helped to reduce the rural exodus.

It is also considered that these actions valued the work of peasant women in the communities, acknowledging their role in the food production and marketing process, as they are often the holders of the necessary identification/accreditation access to the policy for purchasing food from family farming.

It is reported that initially, local producers suspected that selling to public programs and institutions would be a bad deal due to the price to be paid for the food. Today, especially after the last 4 years, public purchases are a great achievement for developing and strengthening local family farming cooperatives.

The Municipal Department of Agriculture and Fisheries has been seeking to improve trafficability and also to encourage family production through mapping, sorting for technical assistance and donating inputs and equipment, even if this is not enough.

The municipality of Santarém recognises the need to work on some key issues such as: (i) institutionalisation of regulatory frameworks and creation of structuring public policies; (ii) listening and greater participation of society in its processes, connecting its food system to the habits and needs of the population; (iii) education and campaigns to promote and raise awareness for a change in culture and healthy eating habits; (iv) constant strengthening of family farming, with partnership actions between producers and government agencies, through training, technical assistance, access to mechanisation and qualification/adding value to their production, encouraging associations and cooperatives with more commercialisation spaces and facilitating access to rural credit; and (v) improvement in food logistics and transportation.

In this sense, the mechanisation project for small producers, carried out by the Secretariat of Agriculture and Fisheries, can contribute a lot to this strengthening of communities and, with the expected increase in production volume, increase the volume of sales for public procurement programs.

Some actions to leverage the city's food system have already been identified by public management: expansion of composting in Parque da Cidade, to collect organic waste from markets, fairs and the main University located in the city - which usually ends up in the landfill - and your donation to local producers and school gardens; support the creation of small agroindustries linked to cooperatives, to expand the supply of food products from local biodiversity (such as pulps and dehydrated products); and invest in the food transport and logistics system, to reduce costs and losses and waste, including refrigerated fleets and subsidy for local family producers.

Therefore, considering the role and range of Santarem food policies on school feeding, public food procurement and food education, an increase in support for local smallholder farmers and traditional communities committed to farming biodiverse non-commodity food is expected. The path these local policies are taking and the civil society strengthening seem to be supporting a constraint to agribusiness monoculture expansion in the region. However, much is yet to be implemented regarding artisanal fisheries and fishing traditional communities.