*Multidisciplinar (Montevideo)*. 2023; 1:71
doi: 10.62486/agmu202371
ISSN: 3046-4064

ORIGINAL

# Reconstruction of the history of the agroecological transition experience: El Cananguchal case in the municipality of Florencia, Caquetá

# Reconstrucción de la historia de la experiencia de transición agroecológica: Caso El Cananguchal en el municipio de Florencia, Caquetá

Paola Andrea Medina-Castañeda[1], Ingrith Mirlency Toledo-Garzón[1], Verenice Sánchez Castillo[1]

[1]Programa Ingeniería Agroecológica, Universidad de la Amazonia. Florencia, Caquetá, Colombia.

**Cite as**: Medina-Castañeda PA, Toledo-Garzón IM, Sánchez Castillo V. Reconstruction of the history of the agroecological transition experience: El Cananguchal case in the municipality of Florencia, Caquetá. Multidisciplinar (Montevideo). 2023; 1:71. https://doi.org/10.62486/agmu202371

**Submitted:** 20-07-2023 **Revised:** 25-10-2023 **Accepted:** 28-12-2023 **Published:** 29-12-2023

**Editor:** Telmo Raúl Aveiro-Róbalo

**Corresponding Author:** Paola Andrea Medina-Castañeda

## ABSTRACT

The present investigation was carried out in order to reconstruct the history of the property "El Cananguchal" of the Ortegón Jiménez family in relation to the process of agroecological transition that takes place in it. The information was collected through interviews and participant observation on the property, later, it was processed in the Atlas.ti version 23 software through two types of analysis (exploratory and deductive). Among the main findings is that the agroecological experience has the purpose of reconsidering different agroecological productive events aimed at promoting improvements in the quality of life in homes, related to food sovereignty, food security and economic capacity from maintenance. uniform agricultural production to meet demand and improve development.

**Keywords:** Agroecology; Development; Experience; Family; Production.

## RESUMEN

La presente investigación se realizó con el fin de reconstruir la historia del predio "El Cananguchal" de la familia Ortegón Jiménez con relación al proceso de transición agroecológica que se lleva en la misma. La información se recolectó a través de una entrevistas y observación participante en el predio, posteriormente, se procesó en el software Atlas.ti versión 23 mediante dos tipos de análisis (exploratorio y deductivo). Dentro de los principales hallazgos se tiene que la experiencia agroecológica, tiene como finalidad replantear diferentes eventos productivos agroecológicos orientados a promover mejoras en la calidad de vida en los hogares, relacionados con la soberanía alimentaria, la seguridad alimentaria y la capacidad económica a partir del mantenimiento de una producción agropecuaria uniforme para satisfacer la demanda y mejorar el desarrollo.

**Palabras clave**: Agroecología; Desarrollo; Experiencia; Familia; Producción.

## INTRODUCTION

### International

Agroecology emerged as a response to the Green Revolution model, which was based on mass food

production through the excessive use of chemicals and the implementation of monoculture to address the food shortages experienced by the population.[1] Establishing itself as a science that not only recognizes and values the experience and knowledge of farmers but also promotes the use of natural resources and the preservation of biodiversity, agroecology has become a model for sustainable agriculture.

Producers accumulate knowledge over the years and establish a constant dialogue with them. This valuable experience, mostly acquired empirically, has generated local knowledge adapted to the specific conditions of each region.[2]

Thus, Cieza et al.[3] and SAAE[4] confirm that agroecology can address the various problems facing the current conventional agricultural model and produce a variety of healthy foods. However, agroecology is little known among farmers. Therefore, different techniques are needed to promote it, one of which is the systematization of experiences. This is based on generating a moment of reflection and evaluation of what has been experienced and, with this, the transition, together with the articulated construction of knowledge,[5] whether at the ancestral, peasant, or scientific level.[6,7]

**National**

In Colombia, agroecology was promoted in 1980 by peasant societies, environmental leaders, non-governmental organizations, and specific public institutions,[8] giving credit to the work of family farming for providing healthy and environmentally friendly foods. It was welcomed under sustainable agriculture to intertwine environmental, social, and political issues with the same goal: strengthening the different designs of family, peasant, and community agriculture.[9] social and political aspects aim to improve different models of family, peasant, and community agriculture.[9] This occurred amid confusion with the concepts of organic and ecological agriculture. However, the evolution of agroecological practices and ideas in the country has transcended as a form of sustainable agriculture with increasingly clear environmental, social, and political purposes.

**Departmental**

As a result, the department of Caquetá is known as a livestock-farming region since most of its inhabitants engage in this type of production on an extensive scale, leaving aside food production. This has meant that the region cannot guarantee its food security and sovereignty, implying that it depends on other regions of the country for nearly 90 % of its food to meet the population's demand. Since the productive potential of the region's land, which is currently producing 10 %, is not being exploited. For this reason, the role of farmers is fundamental in promoting agroecology, as they will be the precursors of a healthier way of life that includes other people who choose to strengthen the development of rural societies in each territory.[10]

Therefore, the lack of systematization of agroecological experiences in this area is a problem that must be solved, considering that systematization contributes to strengthening rural development through practices or experiences that other people have gone through. In this way, experiences committed to an unconventional model aimed at good living that is still unknown in the territory can be made known. The problem is based on the question: What are the agroecological transition processes of the El Cananguchal experience? to reconstruct its history?

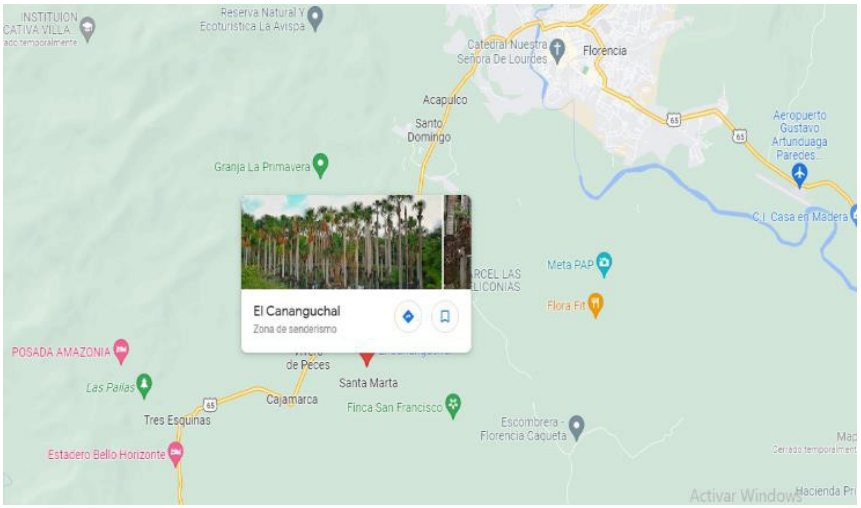
## METHOD

**Location**

**Source:** Wikipedia, 2023

**Figure 1.** Location of the municipality of Florencia, Caquetá

https://doi.org/10.62486/agmu202371




**Source:** Google Maps, 2023
**Figure 2.** Location of El Cananguchal property

The El Cananguchal property is located in the municipality of Florencia, department of Caquetá (figure 1), El Venado village via Morelia, San Julián subdivision, with coordinates 1°33'23,7"N 75°39'27,8"W (figure 2).

### Methodological approach

This research was developed under the historical-hermeneutic research paradigm, which is based on knowledge constructed from other people's interpretations of a phenomenon.[11] In terms of the type of research, descriptive research was carried out, given that its objective was to reconstruct the history of the El Cananguchal property. As its name suggests, this type of descriptive research describes everything the researcher observes in the study environment.[12]

In addition, this research uses a qualitative approach, which allows for the collection of data based on the researcher's participant observation. Regarding the tool, an interview was used to provide key elements for reconstructing the process of this experience. According to Corbetta[13], in qualitative research, events occur naturally without altering reality.

## METHOD

A five-question questionnaire was designed and administered during the interview to reconstruct the story. The information collected was recorded and then transcribed into a Microsoft Word document. It was then processed using Atlas. Ti version 23 software, where two types of analysis were carried out: exploratory and deductive. For both analyses, the interview document was uploaded in plain text format. For the exploratory analysis, a word cloud was generated to visualize the frequency of these keywords. Next, the most representative phrases were selected, and an image was created in PNG format.

On the other hand, in the deductive analysis, phrases of interest were identified and assigned categories. The "Create group" option in the Codes tab of the software was used to create the corresponding codes. The groups were named Environment, Knowledge, Work, and Economy, and the corresponding codes were assigned. The "Create group" option in the Codes tab of the software was used to create the corresponding codes. The groups were named Environment, Knowledge, Work, and Economy and assigned a category within the already established categories. A network was generated for each group: environment family, knowledge family, work family, and economy family. Finally, each network was exported as an image in PNG format.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Exploratory analysis - Word cloud

*Agroecological transition*

On the path to agroecological transition, small contributions begin with the implementation of seedbeds and vegetable gardens, which, in the long run, are the basis of a healthier and more environmentally friendly food system.[14] In this sense, this transition is not only about producing healthy food but also about changing how we eat and live since by consuming products from our gardens; we nourish ourselves with fresh, chemical-free food that benefits our health.[15] Furthermore, it is an invitation to conserve biodiversity and be responsible towards future generations since every step we take towards agroecology is a step towards a more sustainable and resilient future (figure 3).[16]


**Figure 3.** Word cloud about the agroecological transition

Finally, Ms. Amparo recalls how her mother passed on her love of planting, caring for trees and seeds, knowing that every act of planting contributed toward change. She also recalls with nostalgia, "Those times when I watered the plants, from vegetables to fruit trees, and we harvested the fruits of our labor with such joy." All of this becomes a living testimony to our commitment to ecological balance, knowing that we were contributing to the preservation of the environment and our well-being.

**Deductive analysis - network**

The interviewees' reflections on the history of their agroecological process revealed around 48 codes of interest that formed four families of analysis, which are described below:

*Family atmosphere*

As for the family's agroecology activities, changes have been made to focus their work on new production models that enable them to acquire products by harvesting food that allows them to produce what they need. This is related to what Sarandón[2] proposes, establishing that these efforts present new approaches that seek to replace the current system to move toward sustainable agriculture (figure 4).

These activities seek to satisfy food needs and give rise to other environmental alternatives. The first is the recovery of land through improvements that allow the landscape to be strengthened once again, enabling the development of natural and functional biodiversity. The second is environmental care, which is developed through reforestation processes. This is one of the essential aspects of agroecology, as it helps to improve biodiversity and all the functions of the system, conserving plants and animals in order to respect life and preserve it through their recovery.[17]

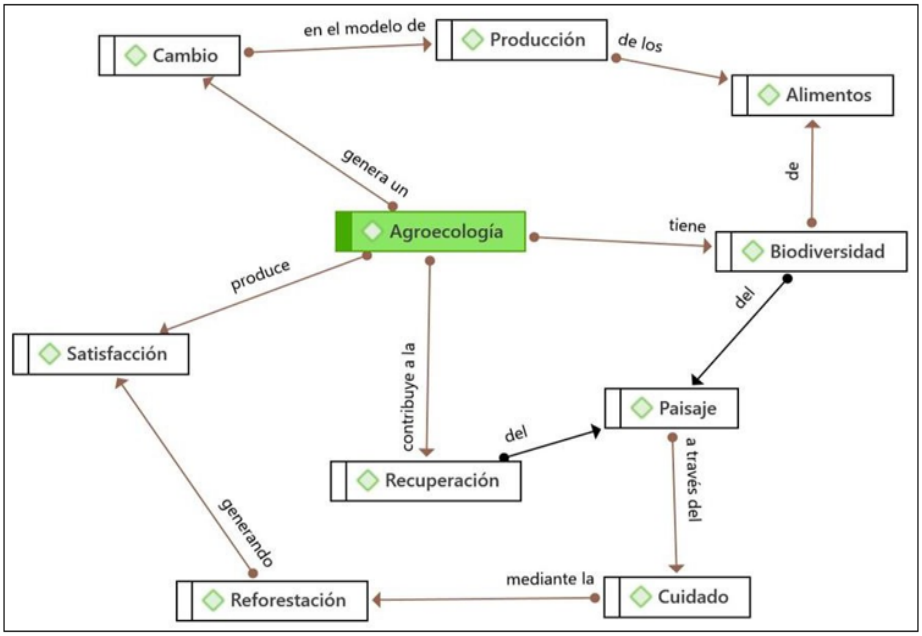



**Figure 4.** Family atmosphere

*Knowledge family*

The functioning of the agricultural and livestock sector is primarily based on the knowledge and perspective of farmers, valuing their experience and empirical knowledge without requiring a high level of education to achieve successful results in their activities.[18] It should be noted that the role played by the family is also

important in both sectors (figure 5).[19]

Firstly, the initiative to start growing food for self-consumption, making use of small spaces, and establishing vegetable gardens not only promotes an environment of connection and equality but also allows people to enjoy the process of planting, as well as fostering an open and positive mindset towards others, strengthening relationships and generating benefits for all family members as a result of teamwork.[20]

On the other hand, bartering allows for the exchange of any variety of products, in this case seeds, ensuring the sustainability of crops. Each seed contains the potential for a new life cycle, which preserves the genetic diversity of plants.[21,22] This variety of seeds adapts to different climatic conditions and develops resistance to diseases and pests. Furthermore, conserving seeds ensures a sustainable agricultural legacy for future generations.[23]

In conclusion, the combination of farmers' empirical knowledge and experience, together with the active participation of the family in agriculture and seed exchange, contributes to the successful functioning of these sectors, ensuring the sustainability and diversity of crops for present and future benefit.[24,25,26]

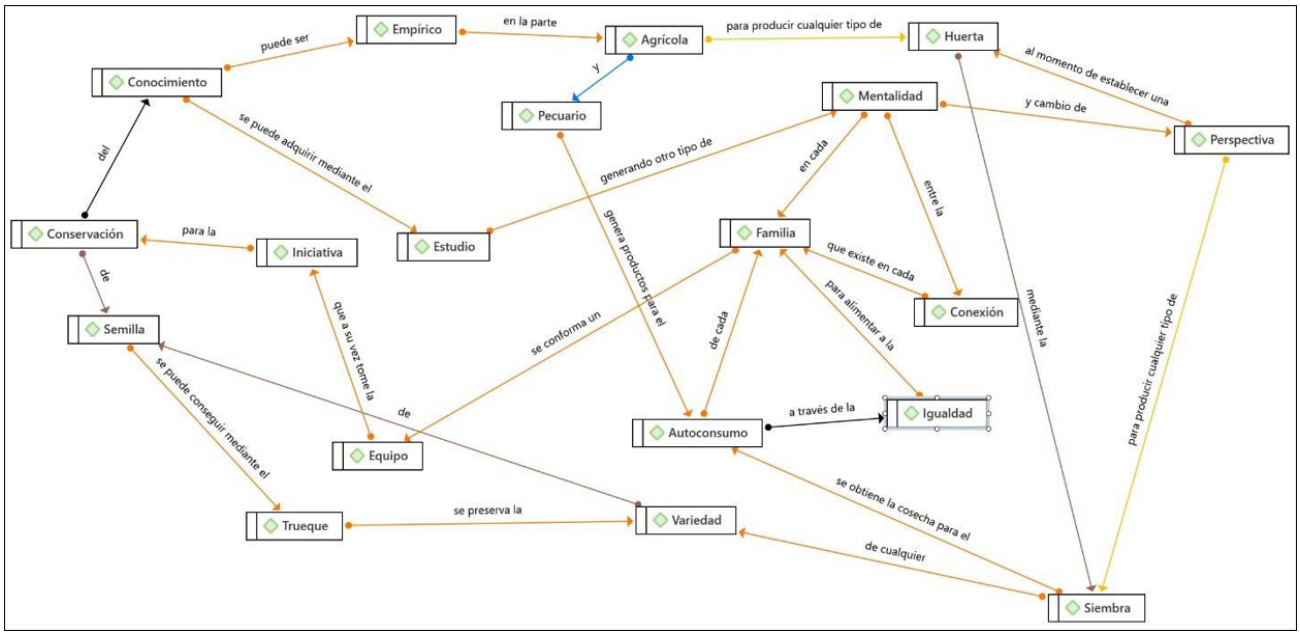



**Figure 5.** Knowledge family

*Family chores*

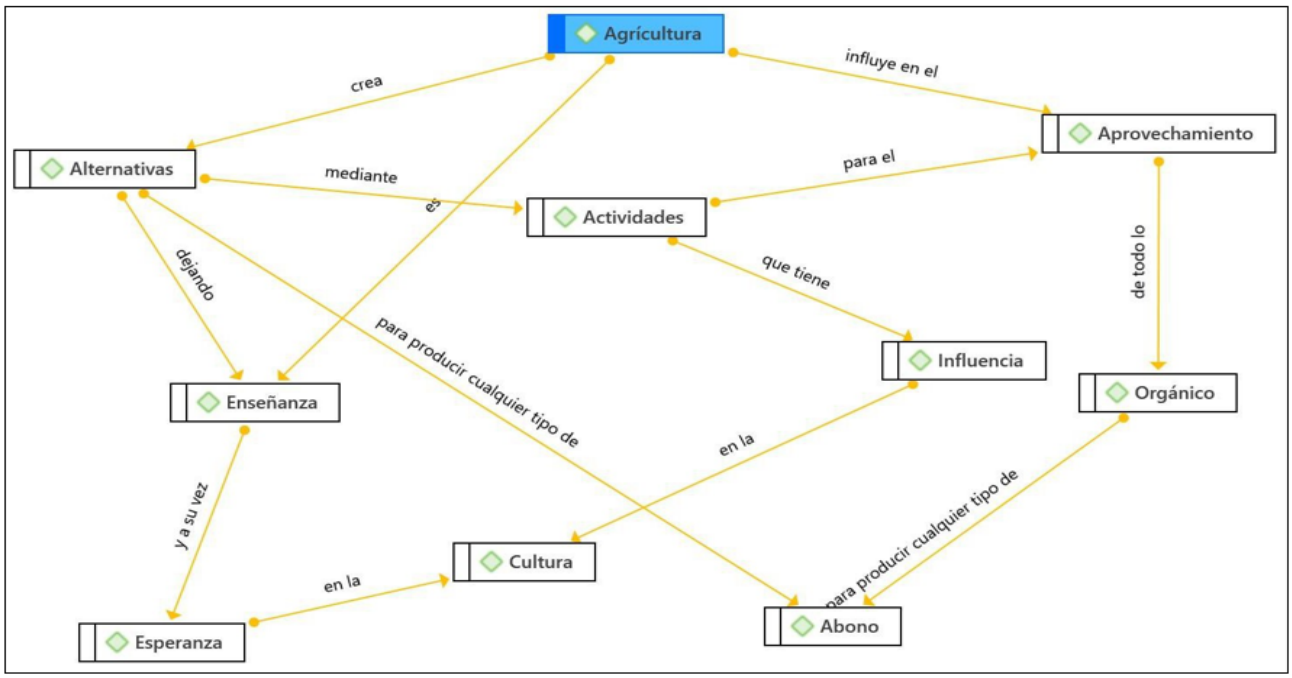



**Figure 6.** Family tasks

For the Ortegón Jiménez family, agriculture is how humans intervene in natural ecosystems to create an agri-food system and, from there, establish the activities that will be carried out in agricultural units. These traditions are still maintained as a culture that transcends time and also provides a wide range of designs that increase functional biodiversity in agroecosystems to enhance adaptation and resilience in production systems (figure 6).[27]

Organic waste has become significantly important, as it is used from agricultural harvests in such a way that plants and macro-mesofauna enrich their nutritional properties by using this waste as natural fertilizers.[28] Farmers use it as an alternative to enhance and produce good quality food and thus have a stable economic flow through organic production.

*Family economy*

For Mr. Ortegón, the result of a good harvest is reflected in the profit farmers receive from selling their surplus. However, to achieve this, a careful planning process is required, taking into account what is to be implemented without ignoring the various constraints that may arise, including climate, soil, water, etc., since planning seeks not only to maximize the efficiency of the system but also to minimize damage,[29] taking into account the agroecological conditions of the place where the planting will take place (figure 7).[30]

In an agroecological production experience, some things matter more than the economic issue or profit itself, as this is related to the pleasure that the producer derives from healthily growing their food. It is work that guarantees their family's livelihood and access to fresh, clean products.[31] In this regard, the interviewee states that it is gratifying to receive some incentive or recognition for his work.

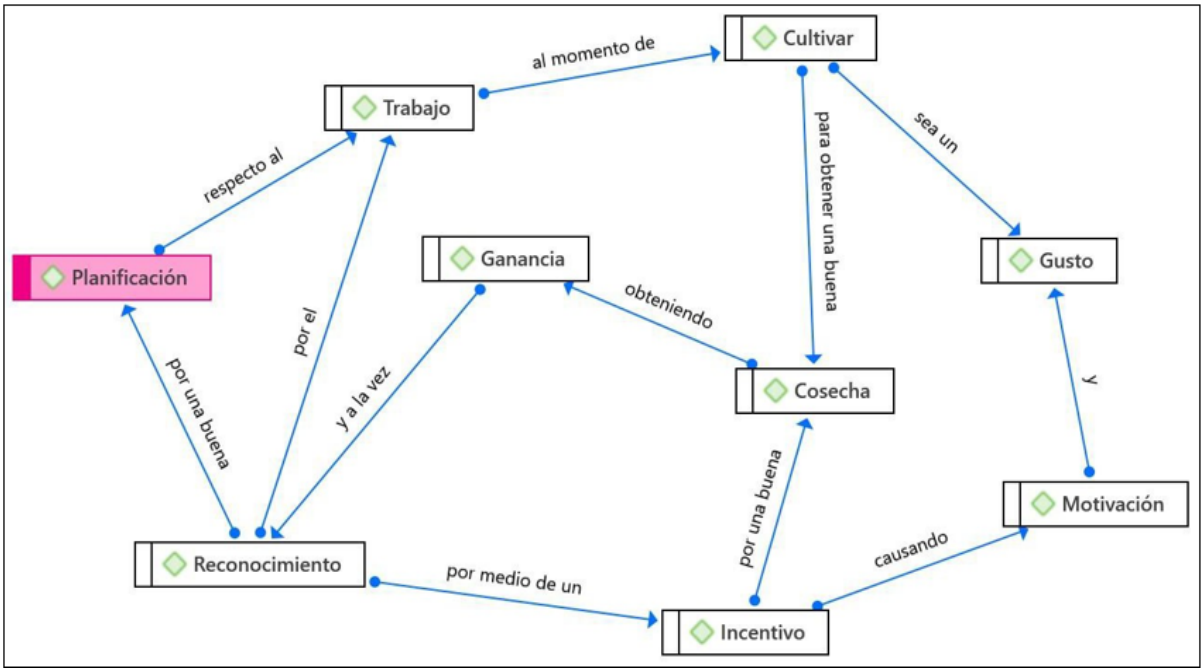



**Figure 7.** Family economy

## CONCLUSIONS

The historical reconstruction of the El Cananguchal farm has positioned the production unit as sustainable thanks to sustainable agricultural production, which provides and promotes the conservation of Amazonian fruits and the production chain that stands out in the region with the initiative to promote economic development at the family and regional levels. It is essential to recognize the different agroecological experiences established in the territory, as this allows us to understand the processes that generate significant changes in those productive families that implement agroecological transformation in their daily productive activities and preserve ancestral and environmental traditions. Our department is considered a livestock area, indicating this is a predominant activity in the region. However, awareness is being raised about implementing sustainable and environmentally resilient agri-food systems. In addition, support from local authorities is recommended to strengthen the territory's agricultural sector.

## BIBLIOGRAPHIC REFERENCES

1. Hernández M. Agroecologia y sustentabilidad de la vida. una mirada desde la organización campesina cafetalera vida de las altas montañas de Veracruz, México. 2021. https://repositorioinstitucional.buap.mx/

handle/20.500.12371/11805

2. Sarandón S. Agroecología: una revolución del pensamiento en las ciencias agrarias. Rev Cienc Tecnol Polít. 2021;4(6):055. https://doi.org/10.24215/26183188e055

3. Cieza R, Sánchez G, Tamagno N, Sarandón S. Estrategias de base agroecológica para y con agricultores familiares de la Región Pampeana. Construyendo faros agroecológicos. Rev Ext Univ. 2021;11(14):e0005. doi: 10.14409/extension.2021.14.

4. Sociedad Argentina de Agroecología-SAAE. ¿Qué nos propone la agroecología? 2020. https://www.biodiversidadla.org/Documentos/Que-nos-propone-la-Agroecologia

5. Alegría G. La agroecología: una estrategia en educación ambiental. Universidad del Cauca; 2020. https://books.google.es/books?id=qkxhEAAAQBAJ&printsec=frontcover&hl=es&source=gbs_ge_summary_r&cad=0#v=onepage&q&f=false

6. Peterson P. Construcción del conocimiento agroecológico. Rev Agric: Exp Agroecol. 2013:4-6.

7. Cuartas M. Prácticas comunicativas: una mirada comunicacional a la agroecología. Trabajo de grado para optar por el título de Comunicadora. 2022. https://bibliotecadigital.udea.edu.co/bitstream/10495/30493/1/CuartasMelissa_2022_AgroecologiayComunicacion.pdf

8. León-Sicard T, Sánchez De Prager M, Acevedo-Osorio Á. Toward a history of agroecology in Colombia. Agroecol Sustain Food Syst. 2017;41(3-4):296-310. https://doi.org/10.1080/21683565.2017.1285843

9. Acevedo Á, Jiménez N, editores. Agroecología. Experiencias comunitarias para la agricultura familiar en Colombia. Bogotá: Corporación Universitaria Minuto de Dios - uniminuto; Editorial Universidad del Rosario; 2019. (2). doi: 10.12804/tp978958784232

10. Rosset PM, Martínez Torres M. Agroecología, territorio, recampesinización y movimientos sociales. Estud Soc Rev Aliment Contemp Desarro Reg. 2016;25(47):274-299. https://www.redalyc.org/pdf/417/41744004011.pdf

11. Gutiérrez B. Los enfoques filosóficos de generación del conocimiento y las apuestas metodológicas que exigen. Universidad Javeriana; 2014.

12. Hernández R, Fernández C, Baptista M. Metodología de la Investigación. 5ª ed. McGraw-Hill; 2010. https://www.icmujeres.gob.mx/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/Sampieri.Met.Inv.pdf

13. Corbetta P. Metodología y técnicas de investigación social. Investigación cuantitativa e investigación cualitativa. 2003:40-49. https://diversidadlocal.files.wordpress.com/2012/09/metodologc3ada-y-tc3a9cnicas-de-investigacic3b3n-social-piergiorgio-corbetta.pdf

14. Organización de las Naciones Unidas para la Alimentación y la Agricultura-FAO. Los 10 elementos de la agroecología. Guía para la transición hacia sistemas alimentarios y agrícolas sostenibles. 2017. https://www.fao.org/3/i9037es/I9037ES.pdf

15. Urcola M, Noriega M. Producir alimentos en tiempos de pandemia. El rol esencial de la agricultura familiar. Rev Temas Debates. 2020:267-275. http://www.scielo.org.ar/pdf/tede/n40s1/n40s1a27.pdf

16. Schwab F, Calle-collado A, Muñoz R. Economía social y solidaria y agroecología en cooperativas de agricultura familiar en Brasil como forma de desarrollo de una agricultura sostenible. Rev Econ Pública Soc Coop. 2020;98:189-211. https://doi.org/10.7203

17. Altieri M, Rosset P. Agroecología Ciencia y Política. Los principios de la agroecología. 2018:38. https://www.biodiversidadla.org/Documentos/Libro-Agroecologia-ciencia-y-politica

18. Alcázar J. Diálogo de Saberes y Agroecología. Monografía para obtener el título de Profesional en Desarrollo Territorial. 2021. https://bibliotecadigital.udea.edu.co/bitstream/10495/22547/9/AlcazarJose_2021_

DialogoSaberesAgroecologia.pdf

19. Laborde B. Agricultura familiar: una estrategia agroecológica de desarrollo rural. Trabajo de grado para optar por el título de Ingeniera Agrónoma. 2021. http://dspace.utb.edu.ec/bitstream/handle/49000/10220/E-UTB-FACIAG-ING%20AGRON-000328.pdf?sequence=1&isAllow

20. Barthel S, Folke C, Colding J. Social-ecological memory in urban gardens: retaining the capacity for management of ecosystem services. Glob Environ Change. 2010;20(2):255-265. doi:10.1016/j.gloenvcha.2010.01.001

21. Castro G. Dinámica del intercambio de productos en un sistema agrícola de dos comunidades del municipio de Mocomoco, departamento de La Paz. Trabajo dirigido para optar el Título de Ingeniero Agrónomo. 2019. https://repositorio.umsa.bo/bitstream/handle/123456789/23801/TD-2744%20%281%29.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y

22. Bonicatto M, May M, Tamagno N. Biodiversidad, agroecología y agricultura sustentable. Las semillas: base biológica y cultural de la diversidad cultivada. En: Sarandón S, coordinador. 2020:89-91. http://sedici.unlp.edu.ar/bitstream/handle/10915/109141/Documento_completo.pdf-PDFA.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y

23. Shiva V, Bhatt V, Panigrahi A, Mishra K, Tarafdar D, Singh V. Seeds of Hope, Seeds of Resilience. Navdanya, New Delhi; 2017:27-28. https://www.navdanya.org/attachments/article/617/Seeds-of-Hope-Report-Download.pdf

24. Arcadio C, Torres B, Orta S. Desarrollo económico, social y empresarial en Iberoamérica. La protección jurídica de los conocimientos agrícolas tradicionales en La Huasteca Potosina. 2020:776. https://www.eumed.net/actas/20/desarrollo-empresarial/desarrollo-empresarial.pdf

25. Perelmuter T. Derechos de los agricultores vs Derechos de Obtentor: historia de una tensión irresuelta. 2020. http://gergemsal.sociales.uba.ar/wp-content/uploads/sites/208/2020/05/12_Perelmuter-Tamara-Perelmuter.pdf

26. Quiñones X, Muñoz D, Aguilera N. Comunidades campesinas, patrimonio agrario y mercados en los cultivos del ají y la quinua. Rev Pensam Acción Interdiscip. 2021;7(1):112-128. https://doi.org/10.29035/pai.7.1.112

27. Nicholls C, Altieri M. Bases agroecológicas para la adaptación de la agricultura al cambio climático. UNED Res J. 2019;11(1):55-61.

28. Ramos D, Terry E. Generalidades de los abonos orgánicos: Importancia del bocashi como alternativa nutricional para suelos y plantas. Red Rev Científicas Am Lat Caribe España Port. 2014;35(4):52-59.

29. Westreicher G. Economipedia. 2020. https://economipedia.com/definiciones/planificacion.html

30. Castellanos M, Vejarano I, Flórez E. Manual de cosecha y mercadeo. Tegucigalpa: Secretaría de Educación República de Honduras; 2012. https://www.se.gob.hn/media/files/media/Modulo_8_Manual_Cosecha_y_Mercadeo.pdf

31. Rodriguez E. Propuesta estratégica para incentivar el consumo y la producción de productos orgánicos en la feria el trueque en barrio El Carmen de Paso Ancho. Trabajo de grado para optar por el título de Licenciatura en Planificación Económica y Social. 2020. https://repositorio.una.ac.cr/handle/11056/21337

## FINANCING

No financing.

## CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest.

## AUTHORSHIP CONTRIBUTION

*Data curation:* Paola Andrea Medina-Castañeda, Ingrith Mirlency Toledo-Garzón, Verenice Sánchez Castillo.
*Methodology:* Paola Andrea Medina-Castañeda, Ingrith Mirlency Toledo-Garzón, Verenice Sánchez Castillo.

*Software:* Paola Andrea Medina-Castañeda, Ingrith Mirlency Toledo-Garzón, Verenice Sánchez Castillo.

*Drafting - original draft:* Paola Andrea Medina-Castañeda, Ingrith Mirlency Toledo-Garzón, Verenice Sánchez Castillo.

*Writing - proofreading and editing:* Paola Andrea Medina-Castañeda, Ingrith Mirlency Toledo-Garzón, Verenice Sánchez Castillo.

https://doi.org/10.62486/agmu202371