



Manifest in Repudiation of ABA-Agroecology for the resignation of the researcher Vicente de Almeida by the presidency of Embrapa

The dismissal of Vicente it's not isolated and represents a intimidation to all workers of Embrapa committed with the risk assesment of impacts of agrochemicals and transgenics, with the developement of Family farming, of agroecology and the struggle for decent work in public institutions.

The Brazilian Association of Agroecology (ABA-Agroecologia) brings together professional and students from the most diverse areas of knowledge, since it's criation in 2004, and has been carrying out and supporting actions dedicated to the construction of agroecological knowledge. Since its inception, the number of associates has grown significantly, given the last Brazilian Congress of Agroecology held in Brasília in 2017, which brought together more than 4000 people, as has the participation of ABA-Agroecology in the different spaces where Agroecology is emerging as a solution for the sustainability of agriculture.

Through this manifest the ABA- Agroecology repudiate the dismissal of **Vicente Eduardo Soares de Almeida** of the Brazilian Company of agricultural research (Embrapa) in February 28th, 2018. The ABA- Agroecology comprehend that we are facing a borderline situation, emblematic and representative of a inclination that seems to threaten all professionals committed to the construction of agroecology, decent work and democratic public institutions, which consequently compromises the construction of Agroecology in the country.

Vicente is na agronomist, and has supported and participated in spaces of constrution of agroecological knowledge jointly with ABA- Agroecology since it's origin. Master in environmental impacts, Vicente joined Embrapa through a public tender in 2005 to work in the area of Environmental Impacts. Vicente is doubly recognized in the spaces where he participates. Firstly for his contribution as a researcher on public policies for agroecological transition, at the environmental and health interface, and socio-environmental impacts of agrochemicals in agriculture. His contributions in several multidisciplinary research groups in the country on the subject have also repercussions within the ABA-Agroecology. Second, and of equal importance, for his history of union leader at Embrapa. Vicente was president of the National Union of Agricultural Research and Development Workers (Sinpaf).

The professional performance of Vicente, as well as several other Embrapa workers and researchers, has been essential for the construction of the agroecological field in Brazil, which has grown a lot in the last 15 years. This has a strong relationship with the organizational progress, both in the articulation between popular organizations of rural workers, between agroecological producers and consumers, as well as between research groups in different institutions in our country. The strength of agroecology, as scientific field, practices and social movement is unquestionable. As an example, we mention the [EMBRAPA \(2006\) Reference](#)

[Framework in Agroecology](#) that represents an achievement and historical contribution of its workers and researchers to the advancement of more sustainable agriculture. Several Embrapa workers participate in the construction of ABA-Agroecology and our Association seeks to contribute to the advancement of agroecology with the Company through a cooperation that materializes in the participation of the Embrapa Agroecology Forum and in the cooperative coordination of the [Agroecological Transition Collection](#), which published three of the ten volumes planned. There is no doubt that Embrapa can contribute greatly to the advancement of agroecology in Brazil, as well as the need to retake the Reference Framework in Agroecology in the Company's strategic debate.

More broadly, in the last 15 years some public policies and strategic programs have been achieved in our country, among which we highlight the National Policy on Food and Nutrition Security, the National Food and Nutrition Policy, the Brazilian Food Guide for the Population, the Program for the Acquisition of Food, National School Feeding Program and National Policy on Agroecology and Organic Production. The set of these policies and programs, as well as the Embrapa Agroecology Reference Framework, support the work of the researcher Vicente de Almeida and all the Company's workers committed to the agroecological field and family agriculture.

The persecution of researchers who reveal the impacts of agriculture based on the paradigm of agriculture as a business is a recurring practice in the international arena and in Brazil. Considering the persecutions promoted by multinationals that concentrate the market for pesticides and transgenic seeds, we highlight three (3) international cases: [Andres Carrasco](#), from the Faculty of Medicine of the University of Buenos Aires, Argentina; [Gilles-Eric Séralini](#) of the University of Caen, France, and [Tyrone Hayes](#) researcher at the University of California at Berkeley, USA.

In Brazil, the persecution of researchers has also multiplied in recent years. Taking as an example three recent cases: Fernando Carneiro, a researcher from the Oswaldo Cruz Foundation, has been [censored and intimidated](#) for discussing the impacts of agricultural poisons through a judicial challenge demanded by the Agriculture Federation of the State of Ceará. Marcos Sorrentino, a professor at the Luiz de Queiroz Higher School of Agriculture (ESALQ / USP), was [submitted to an investigation](#) for organizing academic activity with settlers from Agrarian Reform. Carlos Monteiro, a researcher at the School of Public Health at USP and coordinator of the Center for Epidemiological Research in Nutrition in Health, has been suffering [attacks from the food industry](#) after publishing studies and advocating a new classification for food.

In the case of Vicente, he was notable for the denunciation of abuses and for the defense of less favored segments of the countryside, as well as friendly technologies regarding the environment, and for the autonomy and respect for Embrapa workers' rights, as well as about the company's social responsibilities. In this sense, we understand that Vicente's dismissal constitutes a threat to a form of work and a vision of development, which presupposes the need for autonomy for Embrapa itself, in relation to the wishes of transnational companies and the subservience of public agents.

It is well known that among the causes of the persecution of Vicente is the fact that he collaborated in the elaboration and placement of a documentary called "[Life is not an experiment](#)", as it may be related to its scientific production, as in the article "[Use of genetically](#)

[modified seeds and agrochemicals in Brazil: cultivating damages](#)". We understand that these documents, as opposed to testifying against Embrapa, contribute to the consolidation of Agroecology as a strategic line of the company and strengthen the democratic exercise and the attempt to improve working conditions in the Company.

Vicente's resignation is not an isolated fact and represents a clear intimidation of all Embrapa workers, universities, federal institutes and related public institutions, committed to assessing the impacts of pesticides and transgenics, with the development of family agriculture and agroecology and the struggle for decent work in public institutions. It is a clear message of marginalization and criminalization that violates the democratic principle of critical scientific production and serves the majority of Brazilian society.

For ABA-Agroecology, Embrapa is straying from its historical role, and Vicente's resignation clearly illustrates a tendency that compromises the future. Embrapa needs to strategically retake an agenda in the service of social and environmental sustainability in the country. We understand that Agroecology is a scientific, theoretical, practical and methodological approach that extends to several areas of knowledge in a broad dialogue, which proposes to study development processes from an ecological and sociocultural perspective and, from a systemic - aimed at developing more sustainable agro-food systems in all its dimensions. Therefore, it is necessary to build capacities and this requires strengthening instead of dispensing functional frameworks.

Brazil, March 6, 2018.

ABA - Agroecology