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## PRELIMINARY ASSESSMENT OF THE GEOGRAPHICAL INDICATION PROJECT INVOLVING *FEIJÃO-MANTEIGUINHA DE SANTARÉM*

## AVALIAÇÃO PRELIMINAR DO PROJETO DE INDICAÇÃO GEOGRÁFICA DO FEIJÃO-MANTEIGUINHA DE SANTARÉM

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### Abstract

Motivated by the original possibility of a Geographical Indication (GI) product in the western state of Pará and its potential benefits for local producers, this paper carries out a preliminary assessment of the GI project involving the beans traditionally known as Feijão-Manteiguinha de Santarém – a variety of *Vigna unguiculata* (L.) Walp beans cultivated in Santarém in state of Pará, Brazil. The study of the conditions in which this project is emerging – via an ethnographic field work – allows identifying its main actors and their respective ways of working, which unveil likely potentials and limits in regard to the current proposal. Representatives of the public and private sectors linked to the project enthusiastically expressed their interest in it, but the local producers absolutely lack the necessary knowledge in connection with it. Thus, some important criteria for the issuance and management of a GI seal – which have been extensively treated and discussed by the literature on the topic – must still be met. Considering the necessary requirements for carrying out this initiative, it can be said that the Feijão-Manteiguinha from Santarém is not yet ready to receive this distinctive sign.

**Keywords:** *Vigna unguiculata* (L.) Walp. Feijão-manteiguinha from Santarém. Geographical indication. Distinctive signs. Santarém, Pará, Brazil.

### Resumo

Instigado pela originalidade de uma possível Indicação Geográfica (IG) no oeste do Pará e pelo seu potencial de gerar benefícios para agricultores locais, este artigo propõe uma avaliação preliminar do projeto de IG do Feijão-Manteiguinha de Santarém, uma variedade de *Vigna unguiculata* (L.) Walp cultivada nesse município. O exame das condições em que tal projeto está sendo gestado, realizado por meio de trabalho de campo etnográfico, permite identificar seus principais responsáveis e as respectivas formas de atuação, revelando potenciais e limites da proposta. Com

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efeito, há forte entusiasmo entre representantes dos setores público e privado envolvidos no projeto, mas falta absolutamente aos produtores locais conhecimento do assunto. Assim, restam inobservados importantes critérios para concessão e gestão da IG, já amplamente expostos e debatidos na literatura pertinente. Portanto, frente às exigências implicadas no empreendimento, conclui-se que o Feijão-Manteiguinha de Santarém ainda não está apto a receber tal sinal distintivo.

**Palavras-chave:** *Vigna unguiculata* (L.) Walp. Feijão-Manteiguinha de Santarém. Indicação geográfica. Sinais distintivos. Santarém, Pará, Brasil.

## Introduction

This article analyzes a process recently started aimed to obtain the registration of the Geographical Indication (IG) of *Feijão-Manteiguinha de Santarém* - a variety of (*Vigna unguiculata* (L.) Walp) beans, called *feijão-caupi*, whose small cream-colored grains and white hilum are very popular in local cuisine (CORUMBÁ, 2015). *Feijão-Manteiguinha* has been typically served in a traditional regional dish called *baião-de-dois*, but has been lately used in vinaigrettes, salads, risottos, and even as popcorn in some gastronomic circles in the state of Pará.

In the wake of culinary innovations that include *feijão-manteiguinha*, the production of this variety of bean has been stimulated in several cities of the state of Pará, as a promising social and economic opportunity, leading to a significant expansion of the areas planted with the variety (BOTELHO et. al., 2014). It is expected that Pará, a current importer of beans, may alternate bean crops with soybean and corn crops, which are already widely developed in locations such as Santarém, the main municipality in the Lower Amazon.

Soybean cultivation was introduced in this region in the 1990s and quickly expanded, replacing the various locally species. According to Goldfarb (2015), this process, of global proportions, is causing significant impacts on the production, circulation and distribution of food products for the regional population. On the other hand, researchers and public agencies have implemented projects aimed to promote the diversification of agricultural production, especially among small producers.

Within the scope of such projects, actions encouraging the production (including improvement) and commercialization of *feijão-manteiguinha*, as well as to support its dissemination and in gastronomic circuits have been conducted. It is worth mentioning the initiatives of the Technical Assistance and Rural Extension Company of Pará (Emater) and the State Forum of Collective Marks and Geographical Indications, created in 2016, with the purpose of increasing the use of distinctive signs for products from Pará. In consonance with a growing trend in Brazil, which involves state agencies, producer organizations, universities, development agencies and other entities, this Forum has been attempting to register Geographical Indications for selected products.

Currently, GI is intended for the following products: *Farinha de Bragança* and *Queijo de Marajó*, whose processes for obtaining GI are ongoing. *Açaí das Ilhas de Belém*, *Artesanato de Miriti de Abaetetuba*, *Farinha de Tapioca de Americano*, *Mel de Pirabas*, *o Piracuí de Prainha*, *o Tucupi de Vigia*, *Castanha-do-Pará de Oriximiná*, *Pirarucu Defumado de Santarém*, *Cuias de Santarém* and *Feijão-Manteiguinha de Santarém*, whose processes of GI have not yet been prepared.

The GI process of *feijão-manteiguinha* is in the preparation phase, and studies on the product are being developed. However, it is being celebrated in some segments of the Santarém society, as these segments hope the distinctive sign will enhance the product and bring benefits to producers and the municipality in general. It is, therefore, an innovative proposal at the regional level, since so far no other GIs have been registered in the Lower Amazon, a region where many products of agrobiodiversity are undervalued.

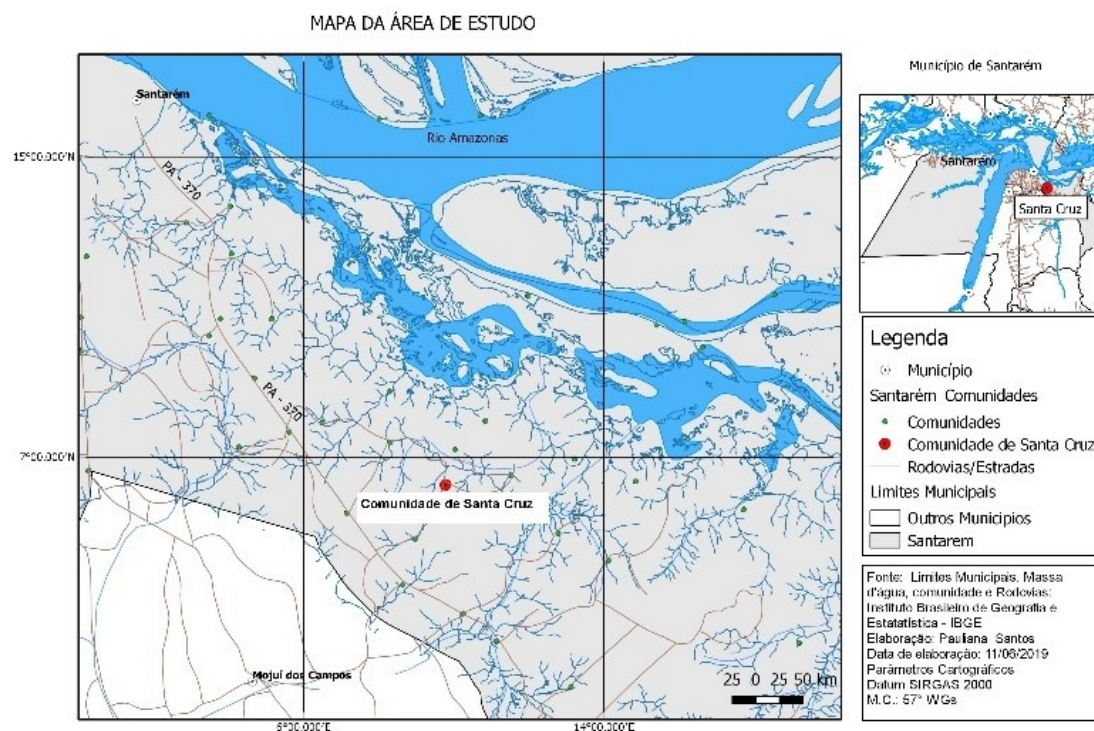
In this scenario, the present study aims to examine the conditions in which the GI project of *feijão-manteiguinha* is being developed and evaluate, in a preliminary way, its potentials and limitations. This article considers the characteristics and general criteria for the application of this mechanism of regulation of intellectual property, as well as the performance of the main agents that support the referred GI project.

## Context and methods

This article is based on bibliographic and documentary sources, as well as on an ethnographic fieldwork carried out between 2017 and 2019 with some of the main agents involved in the GI project of *Feijão-Manteiguinha de Santarém*. The secondary data aim, primarily, to identify general characteristics and criteria of the application of the mechanism of IG in Brazil, as well as to trace the history of the cultivation of *feijão-caupi* (cowpea) in the study region. The data obtained and produced in the field, in turn, seeks to describe the production and commercialization circuit of this bean, and verify the actions of the agents involved in this circuit regarding the referred GI project.

Thus, with focus on the circulation of *feijão-manteiguinha*, the fieldwork comprised spaces as diverse as lands cleared for planting, fairs, a restaurant and the office of Emater – Company of Technical Assistance and Rural Extension in Santarém. The company, in addition to being involved in the proposal of the GI, develops a project to improve the production, dissemination and commercialization of *feijão-manteiguinha* with farmers in the Santa Cruz community, defined as the locus of the ethnographic work (Figure 1).

**Figure 1:** Location of the Santa Cruz community



Source: Santos (2019).

Located in the region of Planalto de Santarém, Santa Cruz is accessible through the Poço das Antas branch line on the left bank of Highway PA-370, km 27, the main connection between the center of Santarém and the Curuá-Una hydroelectric plant, which started its operations in 1977. The community started to grow in the 1980s after the construction of the highway, and occupation was very intense in the subsequent decade with the introduction and rapid expansion of soybean cultivation in the region. Currently, the local landscape is characterized by extensive fields where soybean crops alternate with corn crops, so that other crops could hardly be grown.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>3</sup> Although it is not the focus of this article, it should be noted that the expansion of soybean production in Santarém corresponded to the emergence of agrarian and environmental conflicts related to the advances of agricultural borders and the incorporation of small producers' lands by farmers from the Center-South of the country. Nevertheless, negative impacts of soy in Santarém and its surroundings have become one of the main sources of strife in western Pará. (BARBOSA; MOREIRA, 2017; NAHUM; PAIXÃO JÚNIOR, 2014).

However, *feijão-manteiguinha* crops make a difference in Santa Cruz, and this motivated the ethnographic research in the locality, based on direct observations during visits to the fields and semi-structured interviews. The fieldwork was intermittent, as it depended on the availability of the coordinator of the Community Association of Farmers, Rural Producers, Breeders and Extractors of Santa Cruz (Acaprucesc), which provided key information for the research, as a producer of *feijão-manteiguinha* and facilitator of contacts with other farmers.

Since the necessary authorizations and research conditions in local communities are generally defined by their representative associations, fieldwork had to be carried out in the time available in the schedule of the leader of Acaprucesc, which had advantages and disadvantages<sup>3</sup>. One advantage was the possibility of counting on “an intermediate agent” who ‘can open the door to’ and clarify the doubts of the local people (VALLADARES, 2007, p. 154). On the other hand, some interlocutors may have omitted or denied possible opinions that conflicted with the Coordinator’s opinions, when interviewed in the presence of this coordinator, leading to biased results (BECKER, 1993).

An agronomist from Emater, responsible for the project aimed to support and promote the cultivation of *feijão-manteiguinha* was formally interviewed and informally consulted at different times of the research on the specificities of the production of the referred crop. In addition to providing technical information on this variety of bean, he also clarified some aspects of its planting that had not been addressed in Santa Cruz.

Finally, information provided by a chef who owns a restaurant that has been recognized as the best of the North for two consecutive years (2018 and 2019) and that includes in its menu different recipes with *Feijão-manteiguinha* was also key to this research. In addition to clarifying, from a gastronomic point of view, the advantages of this variety compared to other beans, the chef, who is an enthusiast for the GI project of *Feijão-manteiguinha de Santarém*, explained in more detail the justifications for this project.

## Theoretical and legal frameworks of Geographical Indications

The history of Geographical Indications can be traced back to the history of economic and cultural exchanges in Western societies (BERTOZZI, 1995; KAKUTA, 2006). Although the mechanism of geographical indication was formally instituted in the 20th century, the antecedents of this modality of protection for creations of human work date back to ancient times, when certain products, notably food - wines, almonds and honeys, for example - received special attention in what concerns the establishment of correlations between aspects such as origin and reputation, given the structural role of nutrition in the organization of social groups (POULAIN; PROENÇA, 2003).

Throughout the Middle Ages and the Modern Age, concern with identification was extended to the most varied products and was improved as European markets expanded. European cities and even small villages started using their own brands in order to obtain better gains in trade negotiations (PÉREZ, 2012). However, according to Chaudry (2006), due to the frequent counterfeits, the standards and systems for attesting the origin and authenticity of the products had to be improved.

Between the 17<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, different countries made efforts to deal with the issue in international treaties. In the Paris Convention for the Protection of Industrial Property, in 1883, the first international property treaty was signed, which established indications of source and appellations of origin as a matter of industrial property relating to the agricultural and extractive industries, applied to all manufactured or natural products. A few years later, the Madrid Agreement, dated 1891 and revised in the 20th century, reinforced the commitment among the signatory countries to preserve commercial products through indications of origins and trademark registrations.

In 1994, after several international agreements (called the Marrakesh Agreement) were signed in the city of Marrakesh, in Morocco, ending the so-called Uruguay Round, the GATT (General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade) system was replaced by the World Trade Organization (WTO) with the objective of supervising and liberalizing world trade. Among these agreements, it is worth citing the Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) agreement. With a section dedicated to GIs, the TRIPs Agreement defined GI as identifications which identify a good as originating in the territory of a Member, or a region or locality of that territory, where a given quality, reputation or other characteristic of the good is essentially attributable to its geographical origin” (section 3, Part II). For Pérez (2012), given the European history of protection of local goods,

this IG conception of recognizing an extensive modality of protection for goods that owe their reputation mainly to the geographical area of origin, without requiring the combination of exclusive or essential natural factors, is innovative.

This conception of GI has strongly influenced the process of construction of the regulatory framework for this device in Brazil, whose historical and legal framework is the enactment of Law No. 9,279, of May 14, 1996. Also known as the Law on Industrial Property, it institutes the IG in two modalities: Indication of Source (IS) and Appellation of Origin (AO). The former indicates that the product or service “originate from a country, city, region or locality of its territory, which has become known as a center for extraction, production or manufacturing of a specific product or for rendering of a specific service” (Art. 177). In turn, AO is the “geographical name of a country, city, region or locality, which serves to designate that a product or service whose qualities or characteristics are due exclusively or essentially to the geographical environment, including natural and human factors” (Art. 187).

In other words, the Indication of Source (IS) refers to the reputation of the geographical origin of a given product, while the AO is related to a distinctive characteristic of the product or service that is strictly linked to its region of origin (LOCATELLI, 2008). Therefore, to obtain the IS, a product must be associated to a specific geographic area that confers to it a special quality or reputation. In turn, for obtaining an AO, it must be proved that the product's advantage comes from factors intrinsic to the natural conditions (soil quality or climate, for example) or cultural (such as know-how) in which it is obtained or produced (ALMEIDA, 2001; BRANDÃO; SANTOS, 2016).

Obtaining the GI involves an administrative process at the National Institute of Industrial Property (INPI), which must include application; description of the product or service based on technical-scientific studies; documents attesting to the applicant's legitimacy; regulation of use of the geographical name; official delimitation of the geographical area; graphic representation labels, when applicable; and proof of payment of relevant fees. Producers interested in GI must be properly constituted in the demarcated region, in addition to being proven accustomed to handling the product to be registered. Also, as each registration must relate a product to a geographical name, all producers must be formally organized as applicants, which requires associative practices of a bureaucratic character, which most of them are unaware of or avoid. Finally, the process goes through a thorough analysis and possible steps are taken, and this must be done within the deadlines of the INPI.

Considering the great diversity of regional products endowed with peculiar cultural and historical characteristics in Brazil, the GIs, in theory, have high potential for development in the country. However, the instrument is still undeniably underused (DALLABRIDA, 2015). Moreover, the few GIs granted to national products are concentrated in few products (mainly wines, sparkling wines and coffee), “following a Eurocentric tradition that does not yet take into account regional contexts and cultural diversity” (OLIVEIRA; MOREIRA, 2018, p. 268).

## **Production, commercialization and promotion of feijão-manteiguinha**

Studies on *feijão-caupi* reveal that this variety of bean was introduced in Brazil, specifically in Bahia, thanks to the substantial trade with West Africa during the 16th century (GANDAVO, 2001; SOUZA, 1974). Cultivated in large scale, this bean has spread to all regions of the country, particularly to the North, as it adapted well to the soil of the region. Cowpea cultivation has become common among family and business farmers in the region, but mainly among the former, as they use traditional planting and harvesting techniques (FREIRE FILHO et. al., 2011). Besides creating opportunities for employment and being a source of income for these farmers, cowpea has become one of the most commonly consumed foods by the regional population, especially low-income families, for whom the bean has become one of the main sources of protein (ELOWAD; HALL, 1987).

In Santarém, a variety of *feijão-caupi*, popularly called *manteiguinha*, spread both in the extensive lowland areas - lands bordering the Amazon River, flooding in the winter floods - and in the mainland of the Santarém Plateau. Currently, this is the region where most of the production of this bean comes from, more specifically from the Santa Cruz community, which is recognized for their higher quality seeds, responsible for the best crops in the municipality.

Of the 98 families that live in Santa Cruz, 25 grow *feijão-manteiguinha*. According to the residents, this crop dates back to the foundation of the community, in the 1930s. The first four families installed in the locality already produced *feijão-manteiguinha* in a joint effort: first, they

cleared the land of a family for planting; then, of another one, and so on. They all worked: men, in heavy duties, cutting down large trees and weeding land; women prepared collective meals, helped weeding, prepared the land and planted the seeds, accompanied by the children. In the lunch break, *feijão manteiguinha* was served with bacon, together with rice and flour.

According to the individuals contacted in this study, although joint efforts have become less frequent, the ways of cultivating the bean in Santa Cruz are still very similar to those used in the past, which do not require machinery and chemicals. Planting occurs in May, and the crop is harvested between July and August. One characteristic of local production, which is associated with the old practices of farmers, is to sort two to six kilos of the best seeds, as follows: part for subsequent planting and part to store over the years in tightly closed containers.

Two cultivation procedures deserve attention. The first procedure concerns the selection of seeds, since seeds of *feijão-manteiguinha* should not be mixed with seeds of another type of *feijão-caupi* (*Vigna unguiculata* (L.) Walp), because "these varieties crossbreed very easily". The second procedure concerns the choice of the container to keep the seed stock: drums, carotes<sup>4</sup> and PET bottles can be used, but they must be hermetically sealed, otherwise the seeds will be attacked by the weevil (*Acanthoscelides obtectus*), a small insect that punctures through them and makes them useless for cultivation. According to farmers from Santa Cruz, this practice preserves the best seeds of the product, corroborating the statement of Freire Filho (2011) that a significant amount of the seeds of *feijão-caupi* mainly used by small producers in the North of Brazil, come from lands cleared for planting, since these producers reserve part of their crops for the subsequent year.

With the decrease in the production of *feijão-manteiguinha* in Santarém, in the 1980s, researchers and agricultural technicians were attracted to Santa Cruz due to its stock of seeds, which was made possible by the special attention dedicated to beans by many generations of farmers. For Francisco Lorens, an agronomist of Emater, revitalizing this culture was important not only because of the economic benefits it could provide - *feijão-manteiguinha* has greater commercial value on the market than the common varieties -, but also because it provides a more nutritious diet for the population, whose menu seemed to be restricted to "fish with flour, water and salt".

According to Lorens, still in the 1980s, a research and development project for the production of *feijão-manteiguinha* was started in Santa Cruz and other locations, but was short-lived. In 2013, however, this project was resumed with financial incentives from the Municipality of Santarém. Farmers from eight communities from the Planalto and the floodplains received 200 kg of seeds from Emater that should be planted on an area of 50 m<sup>2</sup> of land, each. Then, a movement aimed to promote the value of *Feijão-Manteiguinha de Santarém* was started, and it involved different agents. In June 2013, anthropologist Raul Lody wrote an editorial about gastronomy dedicated to this variety of bean. After praising the cuisine of the Amazon, which considered as a "food reserve for the world", Lody said:

[...] "Feijão de Santarém", also known as "manteiguinha de Santarém", is a tasty accompaniment to fresh or salted pirarucu, and is also served with farofa [...] Feijão de Santarém has a unique flavor, shape, color, texture and culinary use. It is part of the understanding of the "Amazonian way of eating" [...]. Legumes of many types, colors, textures and flavors, are beans. Feijão de Santarém is special, and even more special if consumed in the region and seasoned with the energy of the forest (LODY, 2013, p. 1). "

The actions led by chef Saulo Jennings in recent years impacted this movement aimed to promote *Feijão-Manteiguinha de Santarém*. In addition to choosing *Feijão-Manteiguinha* as the flagship of his celebrated and award-winning restaurant, located on a beautiful Santarém beach, Jennings has participated in food contests and events where dishes based on this product are prepared.

In August 2017, the chef represented Santarém in a special edition of the International Tourism Fair of the Amazon (FITA) held in São Paulo, where he was received at the renowned Tordesilhas restaurant to prepare dishes based on *Feijão-Manteiguinha*, *aviú*, *pirarucu* and *piracuí*. In September of the same year, Jennings went to Belém to represent Santarém in another edition of FITA. The event's program included the Gastronomic Exhibition of Pará, the Pan-Amazon Cooperation Seminar for Tourism and Gastronomy Development, the Culinary Workshop of

<sup>4</sup> Term used in the region to designate a type of container with handles, usually made of plastic, whose capacity ranges from five to dozens of liters.

Sausages and Smoked Products, and the Meeting of the Technical Forum on Geographical Indications and Collective Marks of the State of Pará. In this event, during a lunch for members of the Forum and their guests - including businessmen, public managers and authorities -, *Feijão-Manteiguinha* was one of the recipes prepared with other ingredients from Pará listed to receive the GI registration.

In addition to disseminating *Feijão-Manteiguinha de Santarém*, Chef Jennings is one of the main proponents of the GI project for this product, whose characteristics of flavor and texture of beans he finds peculiar. In his opinion, this is a great economic opportunity for Santarém:

*Feijão-Manteiguinha de Santarém* has the potential to leverage gastronomy, family farming, jobs and income generation in our region. It is a variety of bean variety that is conquering Brazil and the world. It can be used in various types of cuisine. We had an advertising campaign aired on a national network, on the Globo Repórter program, a month and a half ago, and today everyone is asking about this bean. So we really have to work on the production of this bean, on its packaging, so that it can conquer the market that waiting for it. So we really have to work on the production of this bean, on its packaging, so that it can conquer this market that is already waiting for it (verbal information).<sup>5</sup>

The statement made by Chef Jennings reveals important aspects as he associates production, advertisement and marketing, indicating that the fame and reputation of *Feijão-Manteiguinha de Santarém* should result from a conscious and devoted process of building a product for the market: "We really need to work on it". It is clear that one of the central dimensions of this "work" is the development of a special image for the product, involving not only its advertising, but also the use of a package that enhances its advantages.

The first step in this direction was taken by Emater during the Festival "Fatura - Comidas do Brasil", held in São Paulo / SP, in 2018. According to Emater, the space for the exhibition and sale of *feijão-manteiguinha* produced by Acaprucesc at the event was obtained through the "Rota Gastronômica Peixe da Esquina", which includes products considered cultural and economic references in western Pará. On the occasion, to ensure a better presentation of the product, Emater chose a label and package that included the association's name, address, logo and the number of CNPJ (Register of Legal Entities) of the association, inaugurating a method of identification entirely different from that in which *feijão-manteiguinha* is presented to consumers in Santarém, in the environment of fairs and popular markets.<sup>6</sup>

In the interviews carried out during the fieldwork, the farmers from Santa Cruz were excited about the placement of their product in events and foreign markets. According to the coordinator of Acaprucesc, the demands have grown so much in recent years, that local production is no longer able to supply the newly created export market.

In Santarém there is a great demand for this variety of bean, and there are orders for other places too, a considerable amount of beans goes from here to Belém and even to São Paulo, where I have recently been to participate in a fair. People in São Paulo are calling us to negotiate a way to send this bean there, but the production is small and it doesn't pay to send a small amount, only if it is in tons. And next year, God willing, we will organize a cooperative to export the product (verbal information).<sup>7</sup>

The statements of the coordinator of the local producers are consistent with those of Chef Jennings, for whom:

*Feijão-manteiguinha de Santarém* is now much more consumed by outsiders than by Santarém residents, and the nomenclature used is *Feijão-manteiguinha de Santarém*, or simply *feijão de Santarém*... so *feijão-manteiguinha de Santarém* is currently sold in several famous supermarkets (verbal information).<sup>8</sup>

<sup>5</sup> Interview given by Saulo Jennings to Rosiane Cunha on 05/18/2019.

<sup>6</sup> An exception to this pattern of exposure is seen at the Alter do Chão Gastronomic Space, located in the homonymous village that is one of the main tourist destinations in Pará. The space resells products from the Manioca gastronomic industry, which operates mainly via the internet.

<sup>7</sup> Interview given by Ronan Almeida to Rosiane Cunha, on 09/2018.

<sup>8</sup> Interview given by Saulo Jennings to Rosiane Cunha, on 18/05/2019.

The recent changes in the spheres of commercialization of *feijão-manteiguinha* grown in Santa Cruz are coordinated in a more incisive project of dissemination and promotion of this product in commercial circuits that go beyond the producing locality. Such changes are at the basis of the GI project for *feijão-Manteiguinha de Santarém*, perceived not only as an agricultural product, but also as a product of a social and cultural elaboration.

On the other hand, the producing community has little understanding of what is at stake in the process experienced. Except for the coordinator of Acaprucesc, all the farmers interviewed in Santa Cruz, when asked about the actions related to *feijão-Manteiguinha*, only mentioned the “Emater project”. None of them was able to give any information about the GI project. Some were embarrassed when asked about the subject and said they had never heard of the Geographical Indication. In this regard, therefore, the results of the present study endorse Oliveira and Moreira's (2018) concern about the role of producers in the GI registration processes, which, according to the authors, should be a key role.

This concern with the key role of producers and experts is essential in the coordination process for the construction of a Geographical Indication, whose object is a product derived from traditional knowledge in the context of food and agriculture, especially in the Amazon, given its plurality of traditional and local communities. It is a crucial element of an arrangement aimed not only to obtain economic benefits, but also preserving the links between the product and its origin, in order to ensure its qualitative insertion in the market and the promotion of the territorial development of the producing region. (OLIVEIRA; MOREIRA, 2018, p. 266).

Therefore, although they represent important steps for the construction of the image and reputation of the product for which registration is intended, the actions that have been carried out with the objective of obtaining the GI of Feijão-Manteiguinha de Santarém are insufficient to guarantee success that potential distinctive sign. Such actions are clearly not in line with measures equally relevant for the consolidation of an effective GI project, especially with regard to the organization and participation of producers, who should be the main stakeholders in this process.

## Conclusion

The main purpose of GIs is to distinguish the origin of the product, through the identification of the production area, promoting the territory that gives it peculiar attributes; and product awareness, by promoting qualities related to traditional production knowledge and techniques (NASCIMENTO, DALLABRIDA, 2016). Therefore, GI has been considered a legal instrument capable of offering protection and, at the same time, adding value to traditional products strongly linked to their place of origin. Given the characteristics of agriculture in Santarém, characterized in recent years by the advancement of soy monoculture, it is suggested that a GI of *feijão-manteiguinha* may contribute to the development of rural communities, adding value to products and favoring their insertion in new markets. The objective of this article was to evaluate, in a preliminary way, the potentials and limitations of the GI project of *Feijão-Manteiguinha de Santarém*.

As for the potentialities, it was clear that, according to Batista (2012, p. 35), the GI has “the ability to bring together farmers of various segments, but mostly family farmers”, who are responsible for the highest occupancy and productivity rates of the rural establishments, but, paradoxically, are those who face the greatest difficulties in maintaining their properties. Oliveira and Moreira (2018) also claim that the value adding provided by a GI can, in fact, represent an increase in producers' income, either by its impact on the prices of the products, either by expanding the volume of sales, or even by the conquest of new markets. Therefore, the strengthening of bonds between producers, the commercial and cultural valuing of the product and the promotion of family farming are some of the potentials of this GI.

On the other hand, corroborating Oliveira and Moreira (2018), it should be noted that a GI should not only consider the commercial aspect of the product, but also contribute to the intensification of community bonds with the territory, understood globally as the land and the set of existing natural resources, particularly in less favored regions, though with abundant traditional knowledge associated with these resources (OLIVEIRA; MOREIRA, 2018). In line with the aforementioned, Oliveira (2015) states that, regarding the debates on GI in the Amazon, it is necessary that they first address the strengthening and valuing traditional peoples and communities, and not the product generated. This is a limitation of the analyzed GI project.



Regarding the conception and formulation of this project, the study showed that its main actors are representatives of the Technical Forum on Geographical Indication and Collective Marks of the State of Pará and of the gastronomy sector. These agents have shown a firm desire to obtain the registration of the IG and have participated in several events for the dissemination of beans, but local producers are little informed about this process. Except for the leader of Acaprucesc, who has participated in actions with the other actors in the process, it is not known whether the producers are willing to obtain this GI.

Despite the enthusiasm of public and private sector agents involved in the *Feijão-Manteiguinha de Santarém* GI project, there have been no effective initiatives to prepare the producers to deal with the GI, nor has there been a process to clarify them about the process that affects them all. The study exposed the lack of information of farmers about the GI project of *Feijão-Manteiguinha de Santarém*, since none of them knew what the project was about, nor did they even know how to explain what a GI was and its importance for a product such as *Feijão-Manteiguinha*.

All the existing literature on intellectual property testifies that any process for registering a GI must be accompanied by the will of the producing community, but also by the awareness of the dimension of that process, with the responsibilities involved, including the control of the procedures for operating the concepts related to GI and its application to the market. In other words, the key role of the producing community is crucial to the success of a GI.

The farmers of Santa Cruz are not the main actors in the GI project for *Feijão-Manteiguinha de Santarém*. The project was born in sectors of the State and of the market, and, although it has been circulating in segments of the society of Pará, until now it has not been sufficiently discussed with the most interested segment and, in theory, the most benefited by the GI, which is the producing community. Therefore, the feasibility of the project is conditioned to the execution of immediate public actions, with the objective of better informing farmers about the different requirements - bureaucratic, administrative and even technical regarding the quality of production - that they will have to manage, if the IG project moves forward. After all, although innovative actions for the dissemination and commercialization of *Feijão-Manteiguinha de Santarém* by researchers, authorities and traders are very important, grain production remains a prerogative of the farmers.

In short, the analyzed project has gaps that need to be filled, especially to ensure that producers are properly informed about the concept of GI and its implications, including the responsibilities related to the organization and the qualification of the producing community to assist it in its relations with the market.

Although the community of Santa Cruz is formally organized at its association - Acaprucesc, through which the producers of *feijão manteiguinha* receive assistance from bodies such as Emater, the type of organization required for the viability of a GI project cannot be only formal. The community welcomes projects for the improvement of beans. So, farmers should also be informed and guided on the GI project, especially regarding the level of social and economic commitment required. Furthermore, there is an urgent need to evaluate the convenience and the opportunity of this protection - it should be stressed: from the perspective of the producers - in order to define the viability, or not, of the registration of the GI of *Feijão-Manteiguinha de Santarém*. This is about considering not only the economic aspect that the GI instrument can develop, but also its possible consequences for the preservation of the traditional values and knowledge associated with the production of the grain.

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