



Part 1: Oral presentations

Crop Community Genebanks: the missing link between ex situ and in situ conservation? The Case of Wheat and Maize in France

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This communication is about a recent initiative led by the Réseau Semences Paysannes, a French farmers' movement involved in the defense of farmers' reappropriation of seeds, to set up regional community genebanks.

Since 2003 this movement has kept on struggling to get recognized the existence and relevance of on-farm crop conservation in the context of French industrialized agriculture. It has built its arguments on the complementarities between ex-situ conservation carried out by public genebanks, and in-situ conservation now revived by farmers. These community genebanks could be understood at first sight as redundant with public genebanks. But they are thought up to fulfill specific objectives, such as making medium quantities of landrace seeds directly available for farmers. They can thus be seen as filling a gap between on-farm conservation and genebanks conservation.

Gathering tradition, sowing the future! Some examples linking formal and informal seed systems from the North of Portugal

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Abstract: Based on different experiences and informal networks, we describe and explore the relationships between formal and informal seed systems in the North of Portugal, and discuss how such an interaction may be of interest to create new farmers opportunities, to improve conservation strategies and to promote local knowledge and cultural diversity.

The Portuguese Gene Bank (BPGV), located in Braga (North-western Portugal), conserves 42203 accessions of traditional varieties in ex-situ conditions, that are the result of multiple activities undertaken all over the country with farmers' participation and commitment.

BPGV together with the association "ARDAL" promoted on farm conservation of some crops, like maize, rye and beans, and two of these produces are in the Arch of Taste of SLOW FOOD Foundation.

"Joaquim Dantas", a farmer from the Portuguese north-western mountains, is an example of farmers' fundamental role in conserving and use agricultural biodiversity. He partnered in a project led by the BPGV to promote on-farm conservation and use of crop diversity. Then he reintroduced maize landraces into cultivation and led different initiatives to bake particular maize bread highly demanded.

"Colher para semear" is another association seeking to establish a Portuguese network of landraces. They are community seed savers and their project focus on gathering seeds and registering knowledge and practices aiming to reintroduce them into cultivation while sharing resources, promoting biodiversity and ecological production, cultural heritage, generational transmission and food supplies.

The research project "Cultibos, Yervas i saberes" carried out in Miranda do Douro, North-eastern Portugal, reports and documents local knowledge on traditional crops, homegardens and wild gathering. Using ethnobotanical methodologies, several former crops, whose seeds are still kept by some old farmers, were identified. The project promotes seed exchange and cultivation, providing valuable insights into old crops and more seeds to share between neighbours.