

Coping With Too Much Or Too Little Rain in Brazil

Contributed by Danielle Gurgel
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More than 48,000 Brazilian family farmers and their families affected by the 2003/2004 drought in the states of Rio Grande do Sul, Santa Catarina, Paraná, and Mato Grosso do Sul have already received assistance from the Drought Subsidy.

The benefits paid exceed US\$ 6.4 million (17 million reais). According to the technical expert of the Secretariat of Family Farming of the Ministry of Agrarian Development, Jacksonvilian Nagore, nearly 59 thousand of the families that signed up meet the prerequisites for receiving this subsidy.

To register for the program, producers need to have lost at least 50% of their crop of soybeans, corn, beans, cotton, rice, manioc, or bananas.

Whereas some states had to deal with drought this year, others, such as Minas Gerais, find themselves in a very different situation. Some municipalities in Minas declared a situation of emergency due to the rains.

The director of social communications of the Civil Defense Agency of Minas Gerais, Captain Edilan, informed that the Civil Defense Agency still lacks the numbers of people who were left without homes and shelter, but he says that the state is ready to deal with the consequences.

"We are providing help to all the municipalities in the state, in order for them to carry out a preventive campaign, and there is field work going on now in the places where rain is falling."

He said that the state government is providing basic food baskets to the cities in which the need is greatest. The food baskets are collected through a campaign called Solidary Minas.

Translation: David Silberstein
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