

## Brazil Goes from 34th to 2nd Place in World's Organic Farming

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The Brazilian federal government will be promoting, as of this Friday, June 23, the Second Week of Organic Foods in many Brazilian states.

Up to the 30th of June there will be seminars, fairs, lectures, tasting sessions, gastronomic circuits and visits to organic farms in the states of Acre, Alagoas, Bahia, Goiás, Mato Grosso do Sul, Pará, Paraná, Pernambuco, Rio de Janeiro, Rio Grande do Sul, Santa Catarina, São Paulo and the Brazilian capital Brasília.

According to the general coordination for Sustainable Development at the Ministry of Agriculture, Rogério Dias, the aim of the campaign is to stimulate responsible consumption of foods.

According to him, this is a way of motivating also good practices in the field. Brazilian organic production takes up about 6.5 million hectares and involves approximately 20,000 producers, of which 80% are small.

Brazil possesses the second largest area of organic agricultural production in the world, surpassed only by Australia. The country was in 34th place, but it rose in the ranking through the inclusion of sustainable extractive activities in the Amazon region in the calculation.

In all, 6.5 million hectares of land are available for the production of such organic products as bananas, pineapples, coffee, honey, milk, meat, soybeans, palm hearts, sugar, chicken, vegetables, and some Amazonian products, such as Brazil nuts, açai berries, latex, and fruit.

For the head of the Ministry of Agriculture's Division of Certification and Control of Organic Production, Roberto Mattar, with such a large certified area, "we are guaranteeing producers enhanced value for their products and the generation of jobs and income for the families that live in the region, in addition to the preservation of the environment for future generations."

Mattar recalls that organic products have been gaining market space every day in Brazil and outside the country.

"The conscientious consumer knows that when she buys an organic product, paying more than for conventional products, she is not only acquiring a product free of chemical contamination and pesticides but one which also embodies respect for cultural traditions, labor laws, and the social conditions of workers," he affirms.

To give the reader some idea, Brazil signed contracts worth 31.4 million Euros at the Biofach, the international organic products fair held last month in Germany.

"At the fair in Nuremberg, the 87 exhibitors of Brazilian organic products sold twice what they did last year," Mattar informs.

According to Mattar, the creation of the Agroecology Coordination Board this year by Brazil's Ministry of Agriculture demonstrates the government's interest in developing this sector with support from the states, municipalities, and the Ministries of Agrarian Development and Environment.

"Our interest is to keep farmers farming, producing healthful foods, not poisoning themselves, and enjoying technical and economic conditions to produce. We develop activities in the area of incentives, certification, and training, and we assist all the segments involved in the organic agribusiness chain to fulfill their roles within the system," the specialist concludes.

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