

# Report on Livestock Development in Paraguay

by Inés Franceschelli and Miguel Lovera



Case study commissioned by  
Global Forest Coalition as part of:

## What's at steak?

— the real cost of meat —



This report was made possible with the support of Misereor. The opinions expressed in this report are not necessarily those of our donors.

**MISEREOR**  
IHR HILFSWERK

# Report on Livestock Development in Paraguay

Inés Franceschelli and Miguel Lovera

## Scope and Context

*Landscape and Economy.* Paraguay has 406,752 km<sup>2</sup>, and is divided into two regions by the Paraguay River. Most of the 6.5 million inhabitants live in the eastern region and it is where most economic and political activities have historically been focused. The western region is known as the Chaco and covers some 247,000 km<sup>2</sup>. This region has a very low population density (less than 0.5 inhabitants /km<sup>2</sup> - DGEEC, 2013),<sup>1</sup> even though it is home to half of the Indigenous Peoples of the country.

Eastern Paraguay, is comprised of 39 percent of the country's area, was originally covered by savanna, woodlands, meadows, and dense, moist subtropical forests. At present, the majority of original vegetation has been altered and replaced as a result of extensive agricultural production. The Chaco represents 61 percent of Paraguayan territory. It has an average altitude of 130 meters above the sea level and reaches 400 meters in some places in the north of the country (SEAM; MaB, 2005).<sup>2</sup> It, therefore, constitutes an alluvial plain formed as a result of the erosion of the Andean foothills. The Chaco region is covered by an area of damp vegetation as a consequence of the Paraguay and Parana river's influence and the confluence of the Pilcomayo river, until about 100 to 200 kilometers to the west of the shaft Paraguay - Parana. Further to the west, it presents a transition zone which gives way to the xerophitic vegetation of the northwest.

The economy of Paraguay is based on export-oriented agricultural production. Soybean and livestock are the main articles produced, reaching 70 percent of the export earnings of the country (CADEP, 2013)<sup>3</sup>. The production of transgenic soybean and maize, as well as other items for export, are cropped in monoculture and large quantities of chemicals are used in their production. Around 94 percent of the area used for the development of these crops are sown with toxic agricultural products.

. Since its independence in 1811, Paraguay based its development in the primary production sectors. After the War of the Triple Alliance (1865-1870), and on the ruins of a country that had lost the greater part of its population, the victors imposed "the adoption of the Constitution of 1870, which installed the doctrine and the political forms and economic characteristics of liberalism, among them the unquestionable centrality of private property, in particular, of the land. (...) the

1 Permanent Survey of Households. Department of Statistics, Surveys and Census. Asuncion. 2012

2 Document Chaco-Paraguay Biosphere Reserve. SEAM; MaB. Asuncion. 2005

3 <http://www.cadep.org.py/2013/12/paraguay-experimentara-record-de-exportaciones-para-el-2013/>

laws and decrees driven in 1883 and 1885 by the then president Bernardino Caballero, later on founder of the Red Party, facilitated the alienation of the greater part of the wealth of the country in favor of foreign capital and their local partners. About 30 million hectares were delivered in that process, in which peasant farmers and indigenous peoples could not participate, being relegated to minor smallholdings or sentenced to be "landless", between the enormous agroforestry estates that were formed. (...) at the beginning of the XXth century, only 32 companies of foreign capital seized 40 per cent of Paraguayan territory, which is equivalent to 16 million hectares" (Rojas, 2014).<sup>4</sup>

The cessation of the nation's control of the territory continued and strengthened under the dictatorship of Alfredo Stroessner, who gave up, or sold at bargain prices, more than 8 million hectares<sup>5</sup> of Paraguay to friends and partners. This action violated all the rules that define the potential beneficiaries of public lands, a pattern which continued under the successive governments of the Red Party.

Today the foreign ownership of the land is an accelerated phenomenon, and the growth of the large business estates seems to be ceaseless. As well, in the past 25 years, the population went from being predominantly rural (66.5% rural / 33.5% urban), to be mainly urban (same figures, but reversed). The productivity of the land has not changed. In fact,, having completely razed the forests of the eastern region to cover them with transgenic soybean and maize, rice, and some plots of eucalyptus, it is increasing. Livestock production is also moving to the Chaco, where in 2014 and 2015 there was an average deforestation of 800 hectares/day,<sup>6</sup> and in the last ten years, almost four times the deforestation has occurred than over the previous 78 years.<sup>7</sup>

Despite the expansion of agro-export business, which has led to significant economic gains in the country on a large scale, nearly 40% of Paraguay's population is classified as impoverished, and an additional 20% is considered extremely poor. In essence, 1.6 million people cannot afford to meet their daily food needs.

### **Cattle, chickens and pigs: The expansion of the breeding and the destination of the production.**

The livestock industry in Paraguay is centered in the breeding of cattle. The country recently it initiated a process of expansion of pig breeding and poultry intended for domestic consumption and export, although with very low incidence. The figures<sup>8</sup>

<sup>4</sup> Rojas Villagra, Luis. La metamorfosis del Paraguay. Base IS, 2014, Pages 43 & 44.

<sup>5</sup> Truth and Justice Commission Report, Volume IV "Tierras Mal habidas" 2003

<sup>6</sup> <http://guyra.org.py/informe-deforestacion/>

<sup>7</sup> Los Ayoreo aislados en el Norte del Chaco Paraguayo – Informe 2014 – 2015. Amotocodie Initiative. Asunción, 2015.

<sup>8</sup> <http://www.senacsa.gov.py/index.php/servicios/estadisticas/estadistica-pecuaria-2015>

provided by the National Service of Quality and Animal Health (SENACSA), provide extensive evidence of this.

**Table 1. Bovine population and cattle vaccinated against foot and mouth disease by Department, 2015. General Treasury**

Department	Number of Holders	Bovine Population	Average Number of Animals by Holder
Concepción	14,521	1,226,050	84.43
San Pedro	27,670	1,419,332	51.29
Cordillera	4,507	284,472	63.12
Guaira	5,274	163,178	30.94
Caaguazu	12,727	568,849	44.70
Caazapa	9,807	363,343	37.05
Itapua	13,810	493,296	35.72
Misiones	8,768	551,112	62.85
Paraguari	10,442	505,421	48.40
Alto Paraná	3,069	221,991	72.33
Central	1,779	71,880	40.40
Ñeembucu	13,141	653,115	49.70
Amambay	2,504	1,018,214	406.63
Canindeyu	8,503	764,019	89.85
<b>Oriental Region Total</b>	<b>136,522</b>	<b>8,304,272</b>	<b>60.83</b>
Pte. Hayes	8,360	2,602,131	311.26
Alto Paraguay	2,348	1,538,961	655.43
Boquerón	3,854	1,770,892	459.49
<b>Chaco Region Total</b>	<b>14,562</b>	<b>5,911,984</b>	<b>405.99</b>
<b>Overall Total</b>	<b>151,084</b>	<b>14,216,256</b>	<b>94.10</b>

(From records of Animal Health Committees and Zonal Units)

Source: Prepared by the authors based on "Estadística pecuaria 2015", SENACSA.

**Table 2. Records of medium-sized establishments dedicated to the industrial exploitation of pigs by department, 2015.**

Department	Registered Establishments	Number of Pigs
Concepción	2	505
San Pedro	15	6,454
Cordillera	15	1,808
Guaira	11	1,862
Caaguazu	24	7,270
Caazapa	1	78
Itapua	122	111,575
Misiones	11	1,084
Paraguari	7	679
Alto Paraná	75	49,941
Central	57	5,293
Ñeembucu	0	0
Amambay	2	583

Canindeyu	2	2,059
<b>Oriental Region Total</b>	<b>344</b>	<b>189,191</b>
Pte. Hayes	27	4,472
Alto Paraguay	2	283
Boquerón	23	3,070
<b>Chaco Region Total</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>7,825</b>
<b>Overall Total</b>	<b>396</b>	<b>197,016</b>

Source: Prepared by the authors based on "Estadística pecuaria 2015", SENACSA.

**Table 3. Records of medium-sized establishments dedicated to the industrial exploitation of poultry by department, 2015.**

Department	Registered Establishments	Number of Birds
Concepción	0	0
San Pedro	2	10,960
Cordillera	69	4,753,100
Guaira	28	365,000
Caaguazu	32	1,049,400
Caazapa	0	0
Itapua	16	225,172
Misiones	3	48,200
Paraguari	18	2,258,370
Alto Paraná	3	960,500
Central	58	6,151,260
Ñeembucu	1	22,500
Amambay	0	0
Canindeyu	0	0
<b>Oriental Region Total</b>	<b>230</b>	<b>15,844,462</b>
Pte. Hayes	8	757,000
Alto Paraguay	0	0
Boquerón	0	0
<b>Chaco Region Total</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>757,000</b>
<b>Overall Total</b>	<b>238</b>	<b>16,601,462</b>

Source: Prepared by the authors based on "Estadística pecuaria 2015", SENACSA.

It is interesting to note the concentration of large holders of cattle in the Chaco region, taking into account that in the Chaco, farmers are mainly composed of three large cooperatives: Chortitzer, Neuland, and Fernheim. The partners in these companies belong to the religious sect of the Mennonites, who arrived in the country in the 1920s and soon began a process of hoarding land and of "ethnic cleansing" in the territories over which they were given reign<sup>9</sup>.

Paraguay is the 9<sup>th</sup> greatest exporter of meat in the world. According to the Central Bank of Paraguay, in 2015, the country exported a total of 338,55 million kilos of

<sup>9</sup> <http://otramerica.com/especiales/el-blog-de-la-ruta/paraguay-menonita-la-productividad-por-encima-de-todo/1930>

meat products by an FOB value of US\$1,242.4. The volume is 3.3% lower than that of the year 2014, and the total amount is 14.4% lower.

### **Historical and recent impacts: land grabs, deforestation, and environmental pollution.**

Paraguay is a country with more land on paper than in reality. This country suffers from social tensions because close to 8 million hectares of land are in the hands of illegal squatters, while there are close to three hundred thousand families without a title to land. Paraguay's National Constitution declares that the agrarian reform is a primary mandate, however, this reform never started.

The National Institute of Rural Development and Land, known in Spanish as INDERT, is the national authority of land management. Until 2004, it was called the Rural Welfare Institute, or IBR by its Spanish acronym. These two political departments have played an important role in compounding the social and political problems that surround Paraguay's land issues. For example, the Stroquist dictatorship was initially responsible for the distribution of federal lands to friends of the regime. When Horacio Cartes took the presidency in 2013, his administration tasked INDERT to focus on developing a new instrument with which to update the Agrarian Registry, known as the Information System of Earth resources (SIRT in Spanish). The SIRT is a sort of census of peasant colonies that seeks to elucidate the real owners of the millions of disputed hectares, many of which have double, triple, and even quadruple ownership titles. However, the agrarian registry upgrade process initiated by the Cartes administration, which includes the full understanding of the possession and use of land and the sanitation of maps and plans, used INDERT's and SIRT's tools to complicate the land distribution issues even more..

Federico Franco's administration was the immediate predecessor of the Cartes Administration. During this time, the INDERT hired ADEPO (Paraguayan Association of Population Studies) to, among other things, geographically reference 223,225 lots in 1,140 colonies. In five months between when the project was initiated and when it was suspended, the intended work was undertaken only in 1,600 lots in about 40 colonies. Later, an audit highlighted the finding of unreported documentation of a little more than 700 million guaraníes. The project had a total budget of 18,000 million guaraníes,<sup>10</sup> and was canceled in the middle of its work due to accusations between INDERT and ADEPO. In April 2015, the prosecutor, Victoria Acuña, requested that the Criminal Judge of Guarantees dismiss the complaint made against ADEPO by the former President of INDERT, Juan Carlos Ramírez Montalbetti.<sup>11</sup>

<sup>10</sup> <http://www.abc.com.py/edicion-impresa/economia/indert-no-rinde-cuentas-sobre-el-fallido-censo-pero-ya-anuncia-un-plan-similar-1264917.html>

<sup>11</sup> Source: Adepo

After Horacio Cartes took the presidency of the republic, and Justo Cárdenas, the president of INDERT, the process of trying to untangle Paraguay's land disputes started again. At this point, Zulma Sosa<sup>12</sup> is chosen to manage the process, and Hugo Giménez de Recalde is brought on as chief technical adviser. In 2013, under the initiative of the representatives of the Unión de Gremios de la Producción (UGP) and Asociación Rural de Paraguay (ARP),<sup>13</sup> an agreement was signed to boost the work, with INDERT, Paraguay Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock (MAG), Secretaria Técnica de Planificación (STP) and Organización Nacional Campesina: National Farmers Organization (ONAC) and National League of Carperos acting as representatives of the peasants. The urgency to start this work was related to the 1988 Agreement 84 of the Direction of Public Records. This agreement had no effect until 2013, which was when the Supreme Court began to require that the provisions of 84 be upheld. As per this provision, in order to register a land title, 84 requires that INDERT provides: 1) patrimonial titles, geographically referenced and digitized, with a background study; 2) area maps digitized and geographically referenced; 3) an expert report for every lot; and, 4) a report of lots and surface remnant of the colony. INDERT was, of course, unable to deliver titles due to the shortfalls in documentation,

As a result, in June of 2014, Zulma Sosa is assigned to manage the process. She is a woman with vast experience, having been in charge of the General Directorate of Statistics, Surveys and Censuses for nine years. In July of 2014 the project was again declared to the citizenship as a modern and efficient undertaking "for the regularization of tenure of the land."<sup>14</sup>.

The project was a political decision with broad support. The idea of implementing this program was originally conceived by UGPs, Hugo Giménez and Héctor Cristaldo. President Carter himself has said that the SIRT will be one of the legacies of his government and assured support for the work. Hugo Giménez, the INDERTs/SIRT Chief Technical Adviser acted as an advisor to Luis Castiglioni when he was vice president, and also to Justo Cárdenas who was the Secretary General of the Vice-President. Hugo Giménez's work in the SIRT was engaged by UNDP and since it is not official, he had no restriction to keep two posts, retaining his adviser post for the UGP.

The first stage of the work was a pilot plan "with the aim of testing the data collection in all territories. This is why we have taken different scenarios, for example, we include colonies with field crops, others with small farmers, others in

<sup>12</sup> Zulma Sosa is currently Managing Director of SIRT and was interviewed for this article on February 8 2016.

<sup>13</sup> <http://www.abc.com.py/edicion-imprensa/economia/ugp-y-arp-apoyan-el-proyecto-sirt-1266941.html>

<sup>14</sup> <http://www.abc.com.py/edicion-imprensa/economia/lanzan-hoy-en-la-expo-el-nuevo-censo-de-colonias-1266527.html>

transition to mechanization. We took some colonies with herringbone pattern and others, in order to see how the urban nucleus developed. Very old and new colonies were chosen because the former have titles without further clarifications. The first thing we did was to bring a copy of the equity titles to the view. Only 60% of the lands of INDERT had a property title. The remaining 40% simply had "public land" written in the dossier. A researcher specialized on studies about the relationship between titles within a twenty year period lapse was brought in; he created what is called the "tractogram", i.e. the description of what has happened with each meter of land. This allowed the officials to choose colonies which had patrimonial titles and for which a tractogram was created, in order to track the land with precision. Thus, 27 colonies were chosen at the beginning, with the final result of 25.

"Since the beginning of the pilot plan we already had surprises," expressed Zulma Sosa. One of the first surprises was to find that the soya colonies obtained their titles faster. "The conditions of the release of the titles were a festival of irregularities. There are titles, for example, whose sole antecedent is a private contract between a beneficiary of INDERT and a non-subject of agrarian reform. And the same contract clarifies that, to the formalities before our institution, the beneficiary who sells his lot will serve as a front man for the new owner. And with that people were making titles".

Today, SIRT is managed within INDERT, which absorbed the former management of rural engineering (cadaster, topography and planning). The resources with which the project operates come from public money, are transferred at the start of the year, and are administered by UNDP. The field team includes 54 individuals that charge, in addition to their normal salary, a transportation allowance of 280,000 Guaraníes per day, which is refunded following presentation of the detailed reports and spreadsheets. "This way we ensure that they have a good income. While the salary is not very high, the per diem they receive makes all the difference, they are left with good money," explains Sosa, who also clarifies changes in the organization had to be made: from the start. "We changed the approach of working with surveyors. In the pilot plan we worked with local surveyors - it's cheaper, you do not have to pay travel allowances- but being locals, they had private "interests" and distorted the data. That is why we set a team of surveyors in confidence, who work[ed] on a very detailed procedures manual. For example, they cannot even accept an orange from the respondents, or any person of the area."

For obvious reasons, work in the territory was been rejected by the people who were previously involved in the illegal granting of land. The regional offices of INDERT do not always work together, and in fact, some officials would campaign against it in alliance with landlords and irregular occupants. In order to prevent the entry of officials, they went so far as to put trucks, tractors, and armed people at the access roads to the colonies. In general, those leading the fight against

evaluation of the land titles are operating soy producers, politicians and authorities of the area, and farmers who lease. The strategy sustained by the SIRT is to avoid confrontation and find a way to overcome this resistance by other means. "In such cases we analyze who is who, and we convey a strategic approach with the support of the INDERT presidency, the presidency of the Republic, with various strategies. It must be understood that in each colony there are 'owners', and operations must be conducted above them."<sup>15</sup>

Another difficulty is that organized peasant leaders have also rejected this process. "[Peasant] leaders come and tell us that 'we are not going to enter.' They accuse us of coming from the United States because they confuse CIRD with SIRT. They also accuse us of being agents of Cartes. They distrust us. They ask for guarantees for their tenure. They fear their land will be snatched from them. They say that they will not accept anything that comes from this government."<sup>16</sup>

### **What is to be done with the results of the work?**

Once the pilot plan is completed, INDERT's priority is to cleanse the Departments, the largest and most densely populated. The intention is to advance in Itapúa, San Pedro, and Alto Parana during 2016.

Once the data collection is completed, the lots will be classified with four different colors: 1) green represents lots that have finalized titles and are registered in the General Register of Property; 2) pale blue represent those those with title forms that were already registered by Cadaster, but that do not have a title; 3) yellow will represent lots whose occupants, who may or may not be able to provide any proof of direct use and occupation of the lot; and, 4) red will represent the lots whose owners/occupants do not reside on or work the plot.

This characterization will be the central data of the report submitted to the president, and it<sup>17</sup> will show if the lots need massive titration with accelerated procedures, or if they have an "injunction to recover possession," a procedure that is done in the local courts, and that would be the basis for the "recovery" of the land. At this time, a new resistance will be generated, since the majority of the alleged owners present legal remedies against such proceedings.

As to the lots classified under the green category (i.e. those who have registered titles), the SIRT makes no distinction between the lots which have legal records and the lots that do not have those records. "We found entire soy colonies, among others, already entitled with irregular background. The Senators presented an

<sup>15</sup> <http://redrural.org.py/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/Bajo-el-manto-de-la-modernidad-.pdf>

<sup>16</sup> <http://redrural.org.py/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/Bajo-el-manto-de-la-modernidad-.pdf>

<sup>17</sup> The document "PROTOCOL FOR SIRT WORK" comprises a prominent legend that says "Note: The reports prepared by SIRT, supplied only to the presidency of the INDERT, are strictly of technical content, not binding to political and legal decisions".

initiative to request the cancellation or expropriation of these titles, but at the moment it is not more than a political initiative," says Sosa. In this regard, it should be noted that last January 9<sup>th</sup>, Hugo Gimenez said "the lots that already have definitive title, even those achieved with false reports, will not be changed. If the beneficiary has already canceled the debt with INDERT, the title has already been finalized with a lot number from the Property Register, there is nothing left to do. There are people who have five lots, contrary to what is said in the Statute. It is unfair. But if you intend to recover them, the lawsuit can take up to 50 years"<sup>18</sup>

According to the Sosa, "a synthesis of what we found is a legal chaos of decades, everything, offenses and irregularities committed in four teams: the owners, the officials, the notaries, and the lawyers, and with this work we begin to state a sense of order. This is a great merit."

It is without doubt a great merit to provide certainty and precision to the information. However, SIRT covers abuses and historical traps with these certainties. It is being used to give legitimacy to the illegitimate, to launder the dispossession conducted on behalf of the agrarian reform. This could be a major step toward the truth, but the truth is that the story of those who got land in a fraudulent manner and for purposes that do not contribute to the coexistence between agro-farmers and the peasant population, demands the fulfilment of the mandate of the Constitution in regard to land tenure and land reform. The instruments that the world uses to get out of the maze, are used in Paraguay to put into a modern perspective new turns of the institutional labyrinth where land is disputed, benefiting those who have impunity, assured in various ways, to preserve a most unjust distribution of land.

### **Environmental pollution in the urban and rural environment**

Around 90% of Paraguay's meat and egg production is marketed fresh, due to consumer preference. "Hi-tech" pig production, a term used euphemistically for "industrial," mainly takes place after the wake that grain processing leaves behind and is primarily located in the east and south of the country. Poultry production, however,, is situated around Gran Asunción and in the Central Department. It should be noted that due to health issues, the export of bird meat has not yet been formally and legally executed.

The poultry production process in Paraguay is intense. Poultry breeding facilities are home to thousands of birds and the living conditions of the animals are deplorable, with significant overcrowding, frequent epidemic outbreaks, abuse, and even cannibalism.

<sup>18</sup> <http://www.abc.com.py/edicion-impresa/economia/afirman-que-ya-no-pueden-anular-titulos-de-tierras-obtenidos-con-informes-falsos-1324886.html>

The waste from this model of production is also harmful to the human beings who live around the poultry factories. The constant emissions of liquid effluents, solid and gas (in the form of smoke emitted by the incinerator chimneys) harm the health of the factory's most vulnerable neighbors, particularly children and the elderly. Many of the productive facilities and poultry slaughterhouses are located in the basin of Lake Ypacarai, where the deficit of effluent treatment plants in the Mediterranean basin, and indeed in the entire country, are obvious. The areas surrounding these facilities are thick with factory waste, that puddles on roads and sidewalks, emitting a foul smell and posing a threat to the health of those living nearby. This is the case in the neighborhoods surrounding the Pechugón facility in the city of Capiata.

### **Impacts on community conservation**

Following the end of the genocidal war against the Paraguayan people in 1870, the indigenous and peasant communities in Paraguay were not left with remotely enough land. The process of agrarian reform that has taken place since the mid 1950s did not envisage the need to provide communities with areas for conservation. Any conservation was carried out autonomously by the communities themselves, and was historically made in shared communal areas as a natural adaptive mechanism..

On the basis of the report of the Commission of Truth and Justice on the land situation in Paraguay, it can be inferred that the indigenous and peasant communities live on about 2.5 million hectares of the country. In the context of the traditional management of the territories, this is not sufficient area to sustain the food and fiber needs of the indigenous and peasant populations. This is mainly due to the fact that traditional management is based on crop rotation practices that require the majority of the land to lie fallow at any given time. This allows fallow areas to undergo a natural process of soil regeneration. Increased population density where communities must survive in conditions of confinement along with with the increasingly oppressive land grabbing by major agribusiness ventures, further inhibits indigenous and peasant populations from being able to use traditional, sustainable farming practices. These communities now suffer from significant pressures as a result of corporate interest in the production of goods to meet the demand for export products, such as meat, soybean and grains products.

### **Food and poverty**

According to a 2015 publication by the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock's (MAG) "Agro-ecological zoning of farming in Paraguay, harvest 2013/2014," between the 2012/2013 growing season and that of 2013/2014, the production of non-export food crops in Paraguay was reduced by 80,000 hectares , from 430,499 to 352.901 hectares.

Essentially, Paraguay allocated only six percent of its cultivated land to grow food during the last agricultural season. Out of a total of 5,637,300 hectares of cultivated land in Paraguay, 5,284,401 were covered by soya, corn, wheat, sunflower, canola, spurge, and other industrial crops destined for export. Only 352,901 hectares were covered by crops such as cassava, vegetables, peanuts, beans, and sesame - the foods that the majority of people in Paraguay rely on to survive<sup>19</sup>.

According to the Statistical Yearbook of the National Service for Plant and Seed Quality and Health (SENAVE), between January and December of 2015, the country imported a total of 19,066 tons of seeds, including crop supply. The main imported seeds were agro-export crops or commodities, such as soy, pastures, canola, sunflowers, wheat, maize and rice. However, the list also contains seeds of crops such as chard, celery, oats, pumpkins, onion, little onion, cilantro, spinach, lettuce, tomato, locote, potato, cucumber, parsley, radish, beet, cabbage, arugula, watermelon, and carrot, common to the Paraguayan diet.

In regard to the availability of the main animal protein produced in the country, the herd of cattle of Paraguay consists of about 12,305,822 heads, which reaches about two cows per inhabitant. The production for export in recent years reached approximately 1.03 million heads while only 240,000 are required for supplying the internal consumption (ARP, 2015).<sup>20</sup> These figures demonstrate once again that the production policy prevailing in the country is at the service of the external demand, and is not oriented to domestic consumption. As a result of this, the prices of meat in the domestic market are based on international prices, which elevates food costs to extremely high price levels for the majority of the Paraguayans.

Most of the food eaten in Paraguay is imported, and now people are beginning to realize that the small amounts that are produced for internal consumption are also dependent upon international markets. This is a consequence of the absolute absence of policies aimed at food security and autonomy.<sup>21</sup>

## **Conclusions and Recommendations**

The population of Paraguay has been placed into a situation of extreme vulnerability in its food situation as a result of damaging political activities, unfair land distribution, since its and a strong focus on developing crops for export. Beef is one of those goods that mostly occur with exclusive interest in international markets. Production of other types of meat is also in the sight of agricultural exporter's interests. The State itself has begin promoting the production of "small

19 <http://www.baseis.org.py/paraguay-destino-solo-el-6-de-sus-tierras-cultivadas-a-sembrar-alimentos-en-la-zafra-20132014/>

20 Rural association of Paraguay website, 2015 – <http://www.arp.org.py>

21 <http://www.baseis.org.py/el-poco-alimento-que-producimos-en-paraguay-depende-de-semillas-importadas-advierten/>

livestock" for export purposes, thus eating away at the marginal domestic markets and food resources.

There is no meaningful distinction between the production of food for the export market and domestic demand for food in Paraguay. The means of production, starting with the land, capital goods, and the necessary technical attention to adapt to environmental changes, particularly climate change, are exclusively in the service of the monoculture production for export and livestock. For this reason, it is impossible to undertake a productive process that seeks to satisfy both sides of the demand. Thus, it is necessary to consider a separation between the model of exploitation of soils and productive resources in the country. The separation necessarily must involve the recovery of the land and of the patterns of traditional management, or the implementation of sustainable models that focus on providing for the needs of the national population. This productive process, given the agricultural capacity of the majority of the soils of the country, can easily produce exportable surplus of any item. The key to making this production a tool for the wellbeing of the population - especially peasants - is the fair distribution of productive resources.