



3rd
INTERNATIONAL WORKSHOP
ADVANCES IN CLEANER PRODUCTION

“CLEANER PRODUCTION INITIATIVES AND CHALLENGES FOR A SUSTAINABLE WORLD”

Sustainability in Agricultural Activities Developed in the Western Region of Santa Catarina, Brazil, from the Viewpoint of Rural Extension Technicians

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Abstract

The perception of rural extensionists from Santa Catarina State Agricultural Research and Rural Extension Agency (EPAGRI) and from Watershed Project 2 – as regards the sustainability of agricultural activities in the Western Region of Santa Catarina, Brazil – was assessed by means of a semi-structured questionnaire used to interview 116 professionals in the areas of Chapecó, Maravilha, Palmitos, São Lourenço do Oeste and Xanxerê. Respondents believe that the degree of sustainability of regional primary production is low/medium and that nine out of ten farmers do not require that the practices adopted in their farms are sustainable or they are indifferent to this aspect. Environmental degradation, lack of knowledge and economic factors appear as the main problems concerning this issue. Results lead to the conclusion that the Western Region faces an “unsustainability syndrome of the agricultural model”. Most respondents agree with the implementation of differentiated payment for farmers who produce in a sustainable way, but a quarter of the respondents do not have a general opinion on this subject.

Keywords: *Rural extension; sustainability; sustainable agriculture; Western Region of Santa Catarina.*

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São Paulo – Brazil – May 18th-20th - 2011