Title of the Story: organic livestock

Destination Name: Canguçu- RS

Country: Brasil

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Nomination Category: (Please check the boxes that indicate the focus of your story)

☐ Localizing the destination supply chain
☐ Decarbonizing the destination supply chain
☒ Culture & Communities
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Address each aspect of your good practice story in the different sections being specific including relevant quantitative and qualitative information.

Issues faced
What was the problem/issue solved with the good practice? Click to add your text

The study *Profile of Cattle Raising in Brazil*, produced in 2018 by the Brazilian Association of Meat Exporting Industries evidences that cattle raising is responsible for 7% of the country's Gross Domestic Product (GDP). Even though its importance, the negative impacts of the activity make it economically harmful. A 2015 report made by the Business Council for Sustainable Development in partnership with the German International Cooperation Agency evidenced for every 1 million reais earned with cattle farming, a cost of 22 million reais are generated in environmental impact.

The most famous impact cattle farming directly generates is the release of methane through the animals' digestive process. However, it is not the only one. There are also more indirect impacts. While some studies calculate only these direct emissions, others add them up with other factors. Among them, burning and deforestation, which aim to create new land for crops or raising cattle; and agriculture, which is mostly produced to serve as feed for livestock, as evidenced in the report *The Long Shadow of Livestock*, produced by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) in 2006. According to the report, about 97% of soy meal and 60% of global barley and corn production goes to feed for beef animals.

Being aware of this problem Marcia Duarte, owner of the Martimar Farm, dedicated herself to agricultural production, decided to develop her production generating the least environmental impact possible, in addition to environmental compensation.

Martimar Farm, located in Coxilha dos Piegas, in the countryside of Canguçu city, works with cattle and sheep raising; there are more than 500 animals in a property of 711 hectares. A large property that works with the principles of sustainability and animal welfare.

The place has approximately 500ha of preserved native forest environmental reserve, which is a nursery for a wide variety of fauna and flora typical of the gaucho pampa biome. Besides that, excluding the planting area for the farm's contribution, all of the local pasture is native, never having gone through handling processes.

Although being neglected, the pampas have the greatest plant biodiversity per square meter among Brazilian ecosystems. Less than half of the native vegetation is preserved. The Pampa is the official Brazilian biome with the smallest percentage of land within conservation units (2.7%). Preserving the Pampa does not mean prohibiting productive activity in the biome. It is exactly the opposite. For specialists, the ideal would be to combine environmental conservation with traditional livestock farming, which is in decline in the region.

Always attentive to environmental issues, and understanding the importance of preserving the Pampa biome, Marcia inherited the property in 2013 and began working to implement organic livestock production and animal welfare, "we usually see cases of small-scale sustainable properties, I wanted to apply this to my property, regardless of its size" she reports.
Moreover, their fight is for the valorization of the product in the market. Currently, besides not having any difference in the sale value, noting that the production requires greater investment and dedication, the meat is still mixed in the market with other types of products in the distribution, not giving the consumer the possibility of choosing a product with environmental awareness.

Methods, steps and tools applied

The first step taken was to ban the use of transgenics in animal feed, which required the property to also produce the food for the animals because any product from outside did not guarantee its non-transgenic nature. In the beginning, the plantation depended on pesticides, which nowadays has been eliminated. "Today we use horse weeding, which is the recovery of an old tradition, which is more economical than spending with pesticides and also generates one more job," she describes.

Next comes the issue of animal welfare, Márcia did not agree with the conventional handling techniques, "I believe in animal freedom, on the property they have ample space, I don't believe in animal confinement, at home all animals are raised loose, this interferes even in the quality of the meat later. The animal was raised to live in freedom, on the farm they can move around according to their nature”.

In the day-to-day of the property some activities are different, the use of the dog is avoided and the employees are instructed not to yell or hit the animals, "every living being on the property must be treated with respect". The goal is that inside the property the animals live with the greatest comfort possible, even knowing that the final destination is slaughter, the animal is sold and leaves the property alive.

It was believing in this welfare and sustainability that, with the assistance of Embrapa and Emater, we began the process of transition to organic cattle production. Today, after 8 years on the property, Martimar Farm is heading towards de facto organic production, in which all chemicals are banned, keeping only vaccination. "With the right management it is possible to have the same productivity as other producers who use the conventional system with the use of agrochemicals”, guarantees the producer.

Key success factors
The success of the breeding is only possible due to the partnership with Embrapa and Emater, which were partners in the search for solutions for organic breeding and processes that presided over animal welfare. The process was totally adapted to the reality of the property, being a unique breeding process. City Hall and the local Development Program also play a fundamental role in strengthening, publicizing, and helping the product to gain recognition as it is presented to the market. In addition, another challenge that became a success factor is that the owner had to educate the farm's employees, who were used to conventional customs. Besides the vices of daily work, Marcia had to be seen as an owner and authority. Today, the farm run by a woman produces a unique, responsible, sustainable, and more financially profitable product than before the process. And her employees understand the processes and help maintain the property.

Lessons learned
The biggest lesson learned is that one must work on educating the market and the consumer so that environmentally responsible products are valued. Tourism on the property comes to add to the activities of environmental preservation and conscious consumption. The owner feels the need to share, besides the beauty of the place, the awareness that our habits need to go through transformations and that we have the power of choice in what we consume and if these products are environmentally responsible. That is why the property offers the farmhouse for families to stay and experience up close the day-to-day production. Another tourist product of the property is the Balaio Campeiro, a kind of picnic, offered in a Balaio, typical of the farms in the region, filled with country cooking, produced by local producers and neighbors of the property, thus also fostering local economic development. Inside Martimar Farm all the activities are thought of in terms of environmental and economic sustainability.

Results, achievements and recognitions
Today the property is in the final process for certification of organic cattle raising. And it is already looking for partners for direct commercialization, in order to differentiate the product in the market, allowing the consumer to get a product that is produced with the environment and with animal welfare.
Additional references
Provide links to further information. Pictures and videos should be available for download either from Youtube, Vimeo or other Cloud-based (Google/One Drive) download URL.

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