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**PUBLIC POLICIES AND THE DIVERSIFICATION OF FAMILY FARMING: THE
ROLE OF THE BIODIESEL PROGRAM IN THE PERFORMATIVITY OF
FAMILY FARMING STYLES**

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This study analyzes the factors that would contribute to the retention of family farmers in the National Program for the Production and Use of Biodiesel (PNPB), and argues that a particular style of family farming (Ploeg, 1990) aligns with the guidelines adopted in the implementation of the biodiesel public policy (Muller; Surel, 2002; Grisa, 2017; McConnell, 2010). The research adopted a quantitative approach (Cano, 2012; Ramos, 2014, 2016), applying a questionnaire to 263 family farmers in the states of Bahia, Piauí, and Rio Grande do Sul. Descriptive analyses, logistic regression, and two-step non-hierarchical cluster analysis were conducted using SPSS software, complemented by qualitative data from field diaries and interviews with actors involved in the implementation of the PNPB. The results revealed three farming styles: 1) vulnerable family farming, characterized by poor productive infrastructure,

holdings smaller than five hectares, and reliance on cash transfer programs, whose participation was marked by 100% dropout among those who joined the program, highlighting the PNPB's inability to promote their socio-productive inclusion; 2) intermediate, economically vulnerable family farming which, despite better infrastructure and income, showed 76% retention in the program; its participation proved fragile and dependent on the commodities market; and 3) more capitalized family farming with strong ties to the commodities market, with 100% retention, standing out for larger production scale, investments in modern infrastructure, and strong market linkages. It is concluded that the PNPB produced asymmetrical outcomes, favoring the retention of more capitalized family farmers and reinforcing existing inequalities within the most vulnerable segment. The performativity of the biodiesel program was oriented by agribusiness logic, deviating from the goal of the productive inclusion of family farming in the North and Northeast regions, thereby enacting the non-recognition of the intrinsic heterogeneity of Brazilian family farming.

Palavras-chave: inequality; heterogeneity; regional inequality; smallholder heterogeneity rural poor.