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'FAMILY FARMING' A CONTRADICTIONS CONSTRUCTED BY PUBLIC POLICY

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The contraction of family farming —with a sustained trend of losing production units—demonstrates a marginal role in the mainstream of national and global agrarian transformations. What seems to be a state policy regarding the importance of a sector has, on the flip side, a persistent vulnerability both in public policy tools and in the actual impacts on production conditions and the survival of the family farming subsector.

However, a detailed analysis of this shrinking subsector reveals a heterogeneity, even multi-class, as a result of a pragmatic definition focused on the targeting of public policies. Public policy and its targeting strategy construct a subject within a framework of heterogeneity around key axes of the agrarian issue, such as the relationship with capital and the production model (Florit, 2014).

In this context, the subject of current family farming in Uruguay encompasses both families that primarily survive on their external labor and have access to

production and land—semi-wage-earning units; units primarily devoted to reproducing living conditions, simply selling their production; and units that exploit labor and carry out an expanded reproduction of their capital. This internal polyclass composition of the definition necessarily implies a divergent position within social production relations and, consequently, different roles in the processes of exploitation, subsumption, and reproduction of capital.

This article unveils the heterogeneities surrounding the subject of 'family farming' as constructed by public policy, taking as focal points for the analysis of this heterogeneity the differing positions regarding core aspects of the agrarian question (Azcuy, 2024). Based on mapping of these divergent positions, it analyzes the design of four national public policies for family farming, highlighting how the different stances of a heterogeneous subject, yet homogenized by the State, generate contradictions and even opposing interests and effects

Palavras-chave: family farming; agrarian question; public policy; contradictions.