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SOCIOECONOMIC PROFILE OF CASSAVA SMALLHOLDER FARMERS IN BRAGANÇA, EASTERN AMAZON

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In many tropical and subtropical countries, cassava is mainly cultivated by smallholder farmers, and it plays a recognized role in the agro-industrial economy and food security of these regions. Brazil ranks as the 5th largest producer globally, according to the FAO, with the state of Pará being the primary producer, as reported by the IBGE (Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics). In this context, Bragança, located in northeastern Pará, recently obtained the Geographical Indication for cassava flour. This study aimed to characterize the socioeconomic profile of family cassava farmers in this

municipality of Pará. Data analyzed were collected through a questionnaire administered to a sample of 319 rural producers in Bragança. The analysis employed both descriptive statistics and multivariate exploratory methods. Results showed that 90% of respondents are from the municipality itself, indicating a long-standing presence in the area and a chain of traditional knowledge passed down through generations. This knowledge is linked not only to cultural identity but also to food security, agrobiodiversity, and local sustainability. The activity is predominantly performed by men (80%), who generally have low levels of education and are aged between 40 and 60 years. Agriculture is the main income source, complemented by social benefits, especially Bolsa Família (45.8%) and pensions (25.7%). It is concluded that cassava cultivation in Bragança is rooted in a strong sociocultural and territorial foundation, essential for the subsistence and socioeconomic organization of local family farms. It plays a vital role in income generation, food security, the social reproduction of family farming, and contributes to local development and the appreciation of traditional knowledge in the region. In this context, the Geographical Indication for the flour offers an opportunity to boost the income of cassava producers in the region, provided access to certification is made easier for family farmers.

Palavras-chave: smallholder farmers; traditional knowledge; food security; social sustainability; geographical indication.