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SOLIDARITY KITCHENS AND PUBLIC FOOD POLICIES: THE CASE OF THE PAA AND THE MESA BRASIL PROGRAM IN SANTANA DO LIVRAMENTO, RIO GRANDE DO SUL

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Ensuring food and nutritional security (FNS) is one of the main social challenges of our time, especially in contexts of high socioeconomic vulnerability. In this scenario, solidarity initiatives and public food supply policies play a strategic role in realizing the human right to adequate food. Solidarity Kitchens have gained relevance by operating at the forefront of the food system, establishing themselves as spaces for social resistance, promoting citizenship, and coordinating actions to combat hunger. In this sense, the study aims to analyze the contribution of the Food Acquisition Program (PAA), in the Simultaneous Donation modality, and the Mesa Brasil Program to the practices developed by Solidarity Kitchens in the municipality of Santana do Livramento/RS. Located in the southern half of Rio Grande do Sul, on the border between Brazil and Uruguay, the municipality has significant socioeconomic inequalities, reflected in

disparities in income, employment, and access to basic services. Methodologically, the research is classified as qualitative, based on a literature review, document analysis, and semi-structured interviews. Eight interviews were conducted with leaders of Solidarity Kitchens, family farmers, the president of the Municipal Council for Food and Nutritional Security (COMSEA), and a representative of a cooperative. The data were analyzed using content analysis techniques. The results show that Solidarity Kitchens act as multifunctional social facilities, developing cultural, educational, welfare, and health promotion activities. However, among the 18 Solidarity Kitchens identified in the municipality, only ten have access to institutional food donation programs. Therefore, strengthening the role of these initiatives in promoting food and nutrition security requires improving access to programs, greater interinstitutional coordination, adequate logistical support, and management adjustments. This is in order to increase participation, strengthen local governance, and ensure the continuity and effectiveness of public policies that promote healthy eating and family farming

Palavras-chave: social action; food security; right to food.