

IRSA - CONGRESSO MUNDIAL DE SOCIOLOGIA RURAL (01/10/2025 A 20/01/2026) - IRSA 24 - HOW ARE GLOBAL FOOD SYSTEMS GOVERNED?

**MARKET DIVERSITY WITHOUT GAINS? WINNERS AND LOSERS IN
BRAZIL'S GLOBAL MEAT SUPPLY CHAIN**

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Considering that global agribusiness chains tend to concentrate economic benefits at social and territorial scales distant from production sites, and that the Global South acts as a major supplier of agricultural commodities to wealthier economies, this study sought to address the following question: to what extent do higher-income countries purchase meat more intensively from Brazilian municipalities that bear higher social and environmental costs, thereby perpetuating historical socio-environmental inequalities mediated by global food systems? Using official and publicly available data from 2023, we developed a municipal typology for 352 meat-exporting municipalities, analytically classifying them as environmental and social winners or losers based on social deficit and animal water consumption as a proxy for environmental pressure. The diversity of buyer-country portfolios, stratified by income level, was measured using the

Shannon Index (H'), and comparisons between typologies and municipalities were made using the non-parametric Kruskal-Wallis test. Across the four typologies (Winner-Winner, Loser-Loser, Winner-Loser, and Loser-Winner), social deficits and environmental costs differed significantly ($p < 0.001$). In addition, a structural polarization emerged in export patterns and socio-environmental costs: the Winner-Winner and Loser-Loser groups directed approximately 90% of exports to high- and upper-middle-income countries, with the Winner-Winner typology exhibiting the highest buyer-country diversity by income level ($H' = 1.32$). However, at the municipal level, Loser-Loser municipalities registered greater diversity of export destinations ($p < 0.01$), positioning them as strategic actors in global food security. Greater diversity in international buyer portfolios among municipalities may not necessarily constitute a competitive advantage under the neoliberal logic of the global food system, but rather reflect a strategy of integration into international markets that is not enough for social and environmental gains, instead perpetuating injustices.

Palavras-chave: agribusiness; environmental justice; food systems; global south; meat trade.