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DISPUTES IN CONTEMPORARY AGRI-FOOD ASSEMBLAGES

**RECONFIGURING THE DEVELOPMENT OF LEGUME PRODUCTION
TOWARDS A CIRCULAR BIOECONOMY**

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The concept of circular bioeconomy (CBE) emerged in the last decade through the integration of circular economy and bioeconomy features. It refers to the economic model that promotes sustainable and efficient bio-based resource management while simultaneously transforming waste into new bio-based products. Although this represents both a promise and expectation for sustainable development, the role of CBE in promoting sustainable food systems remains underexplored. In this context, we investigate how the development of legume production contributes to the development of a CBE, considering the ecological functions of legumes in the field (e.g., nitrogen fixation to the soil, cover crop, green manure) in addition to the growing demand for plant proteins and plant-based products. These aspects highlight the potential of legumes to

enhance the environmental performance of agricultural systems while advancing ecological and dietary transitions. As the introduction of legumes in this way implies a transformation of the value chain organization, we ask how market initiatives reconfigure the resource management and infrastructures to support such development. We draw on theories of reconfiguration and transition management to interpret our findings, by framing experimentation, generalization, and destabilization as subprocesses of reconfiguration. By this perspective, we examine the roles of intermediary organizations and communities in adding, redeploying, recombining, and divesting resources and business units. This framework is applied to the case study of French firms involved in the production and intermediation of lentils and chickpeas. We collected qualitative data from farmer and stakeholder groups using a mixed-methods approach, involving interviews, review of monographs, and online sources (websites and social media). Our contribution to literature on CBE, sustainable food systems, strategy, and sustainability transitions lies in our socio-lexical analysis of organizational dynamics, through which we aim to identify and highlight innovative agri-food assemblages emerging from reconfiguration processes.

Palavras-chave: circular bioeconomy; reconfiguration; legumes; firms; transitions.