

IRSA - CONGRESSO MUNDIAL DE SOCIOLOGIA RURAL (01/10/2025 A
20/01/2026) - IRSA 08 - VALUE-BASED ALTERNATIVE FOOD SYSTEMS:
QUALITY ASSURANCE AND SUSTAINABLE PRACTICES BEYOND
CERTIFICATION

**INCONSPICUOUS REPRODUCTION OF AGROECOLOGICAL IDEOLOGIES
AT LOCAL-TERRITORIAL MARKETS: VALUATION PRACTICES AND
TRANSITION DIRECTIONS**

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Agroecology continues to be interpreted as a science, practice and social movement. Recently, the market nature of agroecology is gaining attention as empirical studies have noted its potential to contribute to food systems transformations by being the loci of multiple and diverse socio-technical innovations. In this vein, this paper questions and examines how agroecology is valued by citizens in local markets. Drawing on qualitative data from 11 market initiatives in Argentina, it explores a range of discourses that expose a diversity of agroecological values representing scientific, policy or civic orientations. In line with previous research, we find that agroecology is not entirely valued by its product qualities, but rather through the cultural and farming practices, and the knowledge and socio-cultural meanings behind them. This is achieved through diverse mechanisms of product validation and exchange, consisting of simplified

and reciprocal approaches immersed in social relations and knowledge sharing, that are potentially effective through direct producer-consumer interactions and open horizontal quality assessments. Characterizing these initiatives according to the 'territorial market' ideotype of a local-regional market, we observe a diversity in the geographic scale of their market relations (i.e., inter-regional and nationwide). We discuss the hypothesis that these markets are reproducing ideologies that converge into 'directioning' a transition towards a (more) sovereign, inclusive and autonomous food systems. This study therefore contributes to the literature on agroecology, sustainability transitions and valuation studies by demonstrating new and alternative ways of organising individual food markets that are set to incentivise a collective social transition.

Palavras-chave: agroecology; agroecological markets; values; ideology; transitions.