

**The contributions of the *Canastas Comunitárias* to the strengthening of agroecology
and Food Sovereignty, a case study of Ecuador.**

The central aim of this article is to analyze how the Collaborative Purchasing Systems have contributed to the strengthening of agroecology and food sovereignty, both for rural and urban areas. We will focus in the case study of the *Canasta Comunitária Utopía* at Riobamba, a group first set up in 1987 in the Central Highland city of Riobamba, inspired in the precepts of Liberation Theology and as a way to built up solidarity among seven families from a poor neighborhoods by collective and wholesale purchasing of food. This initiative lasted for 10 years, but after the country economic crisis in 1999, this experience gave birth to a new organization: the *Canasta Comunitaria Utopía*. Within the years the movement experience spread quickly reaching around 300 basket bi-weekly and inspiring new initiatives around the country, consolidating a National Network. The paper will describe how this initiative have strongly contributed to the development of a context of food sovereign for families household that were able to improve their diets with fresh and agroecological food provided directly from peasants. On the peasant's side, beyond the qualification of their own food sovereignty, the families have been striving in a process of agroecological transition, even doe in precarian situations of basic resources, especially water.

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