Chinese university representatives visit UnB to learn about agricultural development technologies

By Valmir Araújo

Source: Brasil de Fato

This article from Brasil de Fato reports on the visit of a delegation of professors from the China Agricultural University (CAU) to the University of Brasilia (UnB), in Brazil. An important step in the path of cooperation between the two parties, coordinated by the International Association for Popular Cooperation, Baobab. The cooperation aims to promote the exchange of knowledge and technologies for family agriculture, improve the production and living conditions of farmers, increase productivity, and move towards more sustainable forms of production. A similar cooperation agreement is being established between institutions, technicians, and farmers from China and Argentina, through the memorandum signed between the CAU and the Ministry of Agrarian Development of the province of Buenos Aires (Argentina), about which ROOTS has published an article you can find here. Taking the example of the path promoted by Mao in China, which focused on the mechanisation of family farming to improve its production and supply food to the entire population, Baobab understands that this type of exchange between countries is the way to achieve food sovereignty for the people.

Cooperation between universities and MST seeks to strengthen family farming, reduce inequalities, and improve the lives of the working class in the cities - Photo: Marla Galdino

The exchange of techniques and technologies for the development of family agriculture was the central theme of the visit made on Monday, February 29, by professors and researchers from the China Agricultural University (CAU) to Fazenda Água Limpa, an agricultural area of the University of Brasilia (UnB), located 28 km from the Darcy Ribeiro University Campus.

Founded in 1905, CAU is the oldest agricultural institute in China and is considered, according to international rankings, one of the best universities in the area of agriculture.

According to the dean of CAU, Zhenghe Song, this visit to UnB aims to strengthen the partnership between the two institutions and improve techniques and technologies for agricultural development. "I hope we can increasingly improve our agriculture through this exchange," he emphasised.

In September last year, UnB and CAU signed a document formalising a partnership for the construction of the Brazil-China Centre for Research, Development, and Technology Promotion in Mechanisation of Family Agriculture. The activity is part of a broader agreement between the countries,

for technical cooperation and industrial development, articulated by the International Association for Popular Cooperation, Baobab.

"The Centre's areas of work are: mechanisation of family agriculture, production of bio-inputs, development from our peasant bases, and also the improvement of the lives of the working class in the cities," explained Luiz Zarref, coordinator of Baobab Latin America.

Chinese delegation learns about UnB's field production / Photo: Marla Galdino

The Centre's actions will be developed at Fazenda Água Limpa (FAL). The president of CAU's "Belt and Road" International Agricultural Equipment Industry and Intelligent Agriculture Science and Technology Innovation Institute, Yang Minli, congratulated the Brazilian university and highlighted the importance of cooperation for the development of family farming. "We need to deepen the partnership between us, and I believe it will be even more fruitful," she stressed.

Yang Mili learns about UnB's machinery. China is a reference in the production of bio inputs / Photo: Marla Galdino

Enrique Huelva, Vice Rector of the UnB, emphasised that attention to small-scale producers will be fundamental. "The use of new technologies is a central point for family farming and food security in both countries," he stressed.

"Our countries celebrate 50 years of diplomatic relations in 2024 and we intend, in this context, to inaugurate our Brazil-China Centre for Research, Development and Promotion of Science and Technology for Family Farming," stressed the dean of UnB, Márcia Abrahão Moura, attesting that one of the pillars of this partnership is the fight against hunger and the production of healthy and sustainable food.

Strengthening family farming

The partnership also aims to reduce inequality in agricultural production conditions in the country. "We need to make a leap in family farming, through mechanisation and new knowledge, to produce more food and overcome hunger in Brazil," said Milton José Fornazieri, secretary of Supply,

Cooperativism and Food Sovereignty of the Ministry of Agrarian Development and Family Agriculture (MDA).

"This cooperation comes to reinforce a historic mission, which is the mission of family farming and consequently of the MST, which is to ensure that healthy food reaches the city every day. This is only possible if we also guarantee access, democratisation, and popularisation of technologies aimed at producing healthy food based on agroecology, from bio-inputs and adapted agricultural machinery, which are key to increasing family farming productivity," stressed Bárbara Loureiro, from the MST's Production Sector.

Bárbara Loureiro, from the production sector of the MST, during the meeting with the Chinese delegation / Photo: Marla Galdino

Delivery of machines

The Chinese delegation will participate on Friday, February 2, in the political launching of the Experimental Field of Chinese Machines, in Apodi (RN). The event formalises the arrival of 29 Chinese agricultural machines in the country. Of these, 11 will be sent to the MST in Rio Grande do Norte, Paraíba, Maranhão, and Ceará.

The machinery, which includes micro-tractors, brush cutters, and seeders, has already been assembled and will undergo an evaluation of the adaptations that will be necessary for its use on Brazilian soil. The event is organised by the Northeast Consortium, the Rio Grande do Norte state government, and the Landless Rural Workers Movement (MST).

Republished from Brasil de Fato. Original language: Portuguese. Translated into English by ROOTS.

https://www.brasildefato.com.br/2024/01/30/representantes-de-universidade-chinesa-visitam-unb-para-conhecer-tecnologias-de-desenvolvimento-agricola