

# Agroecologia e agricoltura convenzionale a confronto. Un'analisi di sostenibilità socio-economica e ambientale nella produzione familiare di caffè in Brasile\*

Comparing agroecology and conventional agriculture. A socio-economic and environmental sustainability analysis in coffee smallholding production in Brazil.

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## ABSTRACT

This paper aims at comparing agroecological and conventional practices for small coffee producers in Leste Region of Minas Gerais state (Brazil). Six production units have been deeply analyzed and compared in: income generation with price volatility, productivity, working conditions, product diversification, agrobiodiversity, cost composition, environmental impacts and forest conservation. The results show that agroecology practices help local small farmers in stabilizing and diversifying incomes, reducing production risks and improve working conditions. Furthermore agroecological practices both reduce the use of chemical inputs and improve forest conservation. According with the results of this study agroecology is a cost-effective and sustainable alternative of conventional monoculture agriculture for smallholder farmers of the examined region.

## KEYWORDS

Agroecology, Smallholder agriculture, Sustainability appraisal, Cost Benefit Analysis, Coffee, Minas Gerais, Brazil, socio-economic comparison.

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