

2017 Annual Meeting of the Rural Sociological Society

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Pursuing Sustainable Farming and Ranching Production Methods: The case of Latino farmers and ranchers in Missouri

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Abstract

New Latino farmers in Missouri increased by 26% from the Census 2007 to the census 2012, while the total farming population of farmers decreased by 4%. Latino producers are the fastest growing community of farmers and ranchers in the country. As other minority farmers, the majority of Latino operations are small farms with limited acreage and their success depends on careful planning and decision-making so that they protect the natural resources on which their farm depends as well as reduce the need for spending on costly conventional inputs to produce. Many producers are unaware of the consequences of following conventional practices, including soil erosion and degradation, as well as negative impacts on water resources. *This study predict (Ho) that Latino farmers and ranchers are not highly biased to opt for conventional methods of production instead of sustainable methods.*

Leading question was; what factors keep Latino producers from performing sustainable production activities? Factors such as skills and knowledge to perform sustainable production methods, financial skills, social capital, resilience to farm and ranch, cultural integration and demographic variables were evaluated to document our prediction. Dada analysis collected from face to face interviews among 100 Latino producers in Missouri helped to favor the alternative hypothesis that limited skills and lack of

knowledge on sustainable production methods are challenging Latino producers to pursuit agroecological production activities.

Topics

- Rural Racial Ethnic Minorities
- Sociology of Agriculture & Food

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