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Environmental Alternatives to Sanitation and Food Sovereignty

The present paper is the follow up of an integrated program related To Primary Health Care, based on the ecosystem approach to environmental sanitation, in a context of highly marginalized rural Mexico, located on the Pacific Coast of the state of Oaxaca; in three different ethnic groups (Chatinos, Afromexicans and Mestizos). The ecology principle of sanitation is therefore the most suitable alternative to solve health problems such as malnutrition and diarrhoeal diseases derived from environmental pollution.

The paper has to do with the frequency of diarrhoeal episodes and parasites presence among the beneficiary families that have been used the Ecosan toilets for the last years in three different communities comparing with non beneficiary families from the same community. From the point of view of nutritional status we tried to emphasizes the differences as well between these two groups of families, among their preschool children.

The results showed a tendency to less diarrhoeal episodes and number of parasites among the beneficiary families. Nevertheless, the preliminary results do not showed significant differences of the nutritional status in these two groups of children.

We also try to showed the differences among the three ethnic groups according to their perception of management and reuse of human excreta.

The conclusion is that the EcoSan toilet construction, should be a very important part to be included in Primary Health Care Programs in this rural marginalized and multicultural setting.