

MOTIVATIONS OF SMALL-SCALE PRODUCERS TOWARDS TOMATO LANDRACE UTILIZATION

Adrienn Tihanyi¹, László Csambalik¹

¹ Department of Agroecology and Organic Farming, Institute for Rural Development and Sustainable Production, Hungarian University of Agriculture and Life Sciences, H-1118 Budapest, Villányi út 29-43, Hungary;

Old varieties and landraces of cultivated crops has gradually been excluded from commercial production as new varieties and hybrids overperformed them in yield quantity and in resistance to pests and diseases. However, these old genetic materials can act as a genetic pool for advantageous traits, therefore their maintenance is reasonable from a breeding point of view. The landraces are the elements of the extensive production systems as these do not require the use of synthetic fertilizers and pesticides. Their production can contribute to agrobiodiversity in species- and variety level as well. Ex-situ conservation of these genetic materials is done by centralized gene banks. In-situ maintenance, however is less organized, as it is based on the choice of farmers. In our study, we investigated the motivations of Hungarian small-scale farmers and amateur gardeners to adopt tomato landraces in their production. The evaluation of the questionnaire revealed the strong interconnection of producers to their chosen genetic materials. This emotional-based link seems to be a good foundation to the small-scale maintenance, utilization, and survival of this agricultural heritage.