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INTER -  
NATIONAL  
SYMPOSIUM

HISTORICAL AND THEORETICAL  
APPROACHES OF INNOVATION  
AND TECHNOLOGICAL CHANGE  
FOR AGROECOLOGY

## HISTORY & INNOVATION FOR AGROECOLOGY



SEPTEMBER 27TH, 2024  
CISPAC / EDIFICIO FONTÁN  
CIDADE DA CULTURA DE GALICIA  
SANTIAGO DE COMPOSTELA



The aim of this international symposium is to present, analyse and discuss new historical and theoretical approaches to innovation and technological change for the necessary environmental transition we are facing, and agroecology as an instrument for carrying it out. We are aware of the relative consensus on the exhaustion of the industrialisation model, but we are also aware of the extent –and confusion– of the existing debate on possible alternatives with the various programmes and models of sustainable development and the Green Deal. We therefore want to define a theory based on agroecology, understood as a hybrid discipline in its forms of knowledge, scientific practice, productive practice and collective action, in order to rethink innovation and technological change in agriculture. In this way, we hope to contribute to providing agroecology with a theory of technological change that outdated industrial agriculture had and still has.

The theories of innovation and technological change in agriculture, especially in Europe after the Second World War, were built with the purpose of increasing productive intensification and with the horizon of industrialisation. In the 1980s and 1990s, the energy limits, the pollution and the strong social inequalities of the industrialisation project became evident. Today, intensification and the obsession with productivity continue to guide agricultural and livestock production throughout Europe, while new paths of innovation and technological change are being discussed, based on criteria such as the reduction of pollution, the circular economy or the use of renewable energy sources.

However, these attempts are usually approached from a techno-scientific point of view with a weak or non-existent socio-historical basis. In this ambivalence, the European agricultural sector has been in deep crisis for more than a decade, manifested in waves of discontent or growing dissatisfaction among farmers, caught between low production prices, constant demands for market intensification, new consumption patterns and the new green framework of the CAP regulation. Moreover, these demands are hardly accompanied by implementation and support in the field, on farms and in production methods.

We want to recover knowledge and know-how, theoretical assumptions, scientific experiences, ecosystems of dialogue between scientists and farmers, models of innovation and concrete agro-ecological and resilient practices that predate the hegemony of modernisation and industrialisation and the dominant paradigm of the Green Revolution. From the perspective of a rejection of the intensification model, we ask ourselves What social aspects underpinned innovative and technological practices within an agroecological theoretical framework? How did the political dimension of sustainability influence it? What conflicts or social movements supported it? Which productive practices? Which technologies? Which innovative practices? What systems of innovation supported agricultural intensification in a purely ecological framework before 1945?

In summary, we want to discuss in historical perspective alternatives and levels of social and economic viability of different ways of understanding innovation and technological change for agroecology. We hope to contribute to thinking about the proposal of an ecological transition from transdisciplinary historical knowledge for agroecology.  
**Keywords:** Agrarian History, Innovation, Technological Change, Agroecology

## SCHEDULE

### 9:00-9:30 / Welcome and presentation

Lourenzo Fernández-Prieto  
Histagra-CISPAC, Universidade de Santiago de Compostela

### 9:30-11:00 / Panel 1

#### *La agricultura y ganadería familiar en el centro de la construcción de Sistemas Agroalimentarios Locales de base Agroecológica. ¿Cómo hacer?*

Gloria I. Guzmán-Casado, Alimentta, Universidad Pablo de Olavide  
Commentator: David Soto-Fernández, Histagra-CISPAC, Univ. de Santiago de Compostela

#### *Exploring farm life histories and their role in agro-ecological (re)transitions*

Mark Riley, University of Liverpool  
Commentator: Stefania Barca, Histagra-CISPAC, Universidade de Santiago de Compostela

### 11:00-11:30 / Coffee break

### 11:30-13:00 / Panel 2

#### *The use of Google Books as a source of historical traditional ecological/agricultural knowledge*

Rob Burton, Ruralis – Institute for Rural and Regional Research  
Commentator: Miguel Cabo Villaverde, Histagra-CISPAC, Univ. de Santiago de Compostela

#### *Innovating towards an unknown sustainability: new back-casting and scenario planning models used in participatory action research to help advance agroecology transitions*

Enric Tello Aragay, Universitat de Barcelona  
Commentator: Xulia Guntín Araujo, ECOAGRASOC, Universidade de Santiago de Compostela

### 13:00-13:30 / Closing conclusions

Bruno Esperante Paramos  
Histagra-CISPAC, Universidade de Santiago de Compostela  
Roque Sanfiz Arias  
Histagra-CISPAC, Universidade de Santiago de Compostela

### 13:30 / Lunch

### Scientific committee

Lourenzo Fernández Prieto, David Soto-Fernández,  
Stefania Barca, Xulia Guntín Araujo,  
Eduardo Rico Boquete, Ramón Villares Paz,  
Bruno Esperante, Xavier Simón, Eduardo Corbelle.

