

City	
Country	Costa Rica
Population	57,378
Title of policy or practice	Estrategia de Lo Convencional a lo Sostenible (Strategy from Conventional to Sustainable Agriculture)
Subtitle (optional)	Production of sustainable food with a dual approach producer-consumer.
URL video	
Category	Food Production
SDGs	SDGs: 3, 5, 6, 7, 11, 12, 13, 15, 17.
Brief description	<p>The community of Santa Ana, San José Costa Rica, is a Municipality based on agriculture, located in a great metropolitan area. Nevertheless, the excessive urban development of the area has marginalized agriculture; in addition, it is important to mention that, before the implementation of the practice, there were neither organic nor sustainable producers – no one who had carried out sustainable agricultural practices.</p> <p>Currently, the work undertaken has allowed to increase the production of the canton and to raise awareness among the consumers. This has led to a change from conventional to sustainable agriculture, facilitating the coordination between private and public sectors and the creation of new trading areas. This project has also reached the new generations of producers and has led to the sustainable production of healthier food, in harmony with the environment. Ultimately, it has created an association of sustainable producers of the region.</p>
Date of start and state (ongoing/completed)	09/2015 Ongoing
Actors and stakeholders involvement	<p>The project is coordinated by the Municipality from the Department of Food and Nutritional Security (<i>Departamento de Seguridad Alimentaria Nutricional</i>). The actors that take part in the project are the following:</p> <p>Private enterprise, Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock (<i>Ministerio de agricultura y ganadería</i>), Academy, Ministry of Health, Sports and Recreation Committee (<i>Comité de Deportes y Recreación</i>), educational centres.</p> <p>The economic support comes from the local government.</p>
Approach	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Reach out to the producers of the community. 2. Mapping of needs from the producers' perspective. 3. Approach to consumers. 4. Producer-consumer dialogue. 5. Implementation of new actions. 6. Trainings, "field days" and dialogue between producers and consumers. 7. Educational centres for work with children, youth, adults and assistance centres. 8. Creation of an Association of sustainable producers (<i>Asociación de productores sostenibles</i>).
Innovation	<p>One of the main problems identified among the small producers is the existing lack of aggregation: they are small-sized and they are used to work on their own without support networks. Therefore, working with a dual producer-consumer approach strengthened the existing relationship between them and helped to raise awareness on food production, in spite of the urban development and the current socio-demographic changes.</p>

	<p>Achieving a change in 5-generation producers has been successful because it was a two-way strategy: Producer – Consumer. This has led to the rescue of cultural patterns, care for the environment and has ensured the producer that his work would be valued by his target audience: the consumer.</p> <p>The project is innovative because it is the first initiative in Costa Rica to be developed in this form from a local government, generating successful impact and representing a model to be replicated in other municipalities. Raising awareness among consumers has been possible thanks to small training groups: firstly, in community vegetable gardens, located in health clinics and empty urban spaces, where producers and consumers gather; secondly, in food schools that taught the benefits of food, so that producers would give value to their products and consumers would incorporate them into their diet; finally, in educational and social assistance centres.</p>
<p>Impact</p>	<p>During the development of the practice, around 5000 people have been trained by the strategies described, achieving also an environmental impact”:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Picking up more than 4 tons per year of agricultural residues from farms that used to be thrown in rivers or burned by farms. • 8 farms are awarded with environmentally-friendly distinctions such as the Blue Flag award. • 15 producing families in transition from conventional to sustainable agriculture. • Public-private alliances to support the local production. • System with educational centres (18 schools) and social assistance centres to raise awareness among the members of the community. • Creation of an association of sustainable producers of the region. • Opening of a diverse market of sustainable products with producers of the area.
<p>Inclusion</p>	<p>In the development of the described Practice, the following work has been done:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Within the local government, coordinated with: Environmental Management, Gender Office, Local Economic Development, Culture. • Outside the Local Government: Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock (<i>Ministerio de Agricultura y Ganadería</i>), Ministry of Health, Sports and Recreation Committees (<i>Comités de Deportes y Recreación</i>), Social Insurance (<i>Seguro social</i>), Agricultural Center of the Canton (<i>Centro Agrícola Cantonal</i>), private enterprise, development partnerships, community leaders. • At a territorial level: the project coordinates with nearby Municipalities in the region and involves producers and consumers in the area.
<p>Adversity coefficient</p>	<p>With regard to the adversity coefficient, the low awareness existing at the beginning of the program in terms of sustainable production and nutrition and food security can be highlighted as a major difficulty. Being a municipality with a high capital gain, there was no belief in the rural potential of the city or in its agricultural production. To date, it has been possible to demonstrate the opposite and to obtain political support, as well as to make this other side of the municipality visible.</p> <p>Other major constraints were: the lack of support for sustainable food production; the lack of knowledge about sustainable production; cultural patterns; the low support of the institutions for the issue; the lack of integration of small producers; the lack of personnel to address the issue (two people for the region); the political changes every four years, which require starting a new awareness process.</p>