

Asociación de Cañicultores Orgánicos de la Zona Central (ASOCACE)



SYRAMENA® Organic raw cane sugar from Paraguay

General information

In 2002, the farmer organisation Asociación de Cañicultores Orgánicos de la Zona Central (ASOCACE) was established with the support of PRONATEC. Today ASOCACE represents the interests of about 200 farmers and 500 harvesters.

Goals

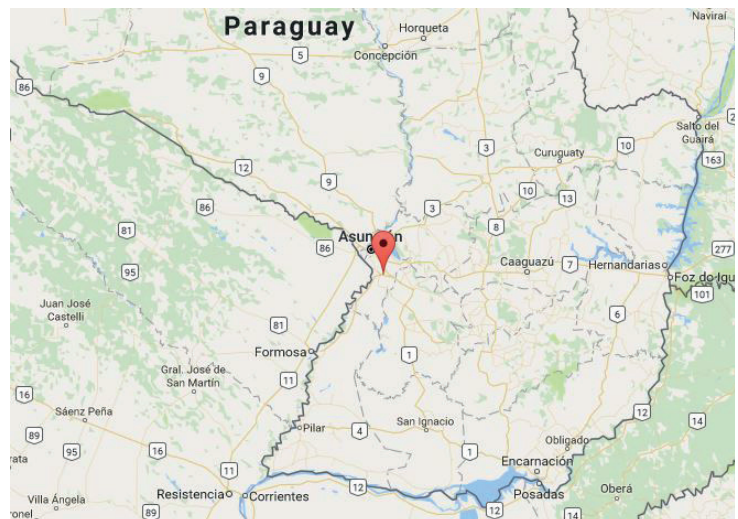
- To secure income for smallholders
- Projects to support the poorest farmers
- Development of own agricultural department

Product

The Departamento Central, Paraguay has ideal conditions for growing sugar cane. It rains often, so no artificial irrigation is necessary.

Sugar cane (*saccharum officinarum*) belongs to the botanical family of grasses. It is a perennial plant and is usually harvested five times within a period of 5 years before the yields decline. After a year of recovery for the field, the plant is replaced (newly planted). It takes about 12 months after the harvest to reach full maturity.

Sugar cane is generally harvested from May to November. The stalks are filled with a soft, fibrous, sugar-storing pulp. The juice pressed from the sugar cane forms the basis for a series of natural products.



Certificates

Bio Suisse, EU-Bio, NOP (USA), Demeter (biodynamic), Naturland, FLO Fairtrade, Fair for life (FFL), Biopartenaire





Our commitment

PRONATEC has actively supported the foundation of an organisation that protects the interests of all sugar cane farmers.

Before the farmers in the region of Central Department in Paraguay were not organised and delivered their sugar cane individually at disadvantageous prices to the sugar mills in the region.

Goals and philosophy

- Production of top quality organic sugar to generate safe income to members
- Maintain organic and Fairtrade certifications
- Long-term business relationships for mutual benefit
- Promote fair and respectful behaviour towards the environment, business partners and society
- Set up sustainable projects in different areas

Since 2005, these farmers have been Fairtrade certified. Meanwhile, the organisation has received more than USD 3 Mio in Fairtrade premiums directly from PRONATEC.



In the last years the Fairtrade premium has continuously been invested into the following community projects:

- Project for own organic certification, including a full time job (agronomist), implementation of Internal Control System, extension, certification and audit fees
- Help program to all farmers: each farmer can apply for 1 ha of tractor works for free (ploughing, harrowing)
- Financial support for the members of the cooperative to expand their cultivated areas

Investments with Fairtrade premiums in the last couple of years:

- Purchase of three new tractors for the members
- New administration building for meetings
- Purchase of school material for the schools in the area
- Opening of a small medical and dental center for villagers
- Loans or donations to members in difficulties
- Direct payments to the farmers

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