

**THE IMPORTS OF FOOD AND ITS EFFECTS ON THE
INDIGENOUS AND PEASANT PRODUCTION IN BOLIVIA**

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1. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this brief research is to determine the effects of food imports on the national food system and, above all, the implications for peasant and indigenous production.

The neoliberal economic policies implemented in Bolivia until 2005 represented a failure in the socioeconomic development of the country which led to a sharp change in economic policy for the new government, which propose the recovery of productive resources, the nationalization of companies, the redistribution of income and the impulse to national production, thus favoring internal growth, among others.

Initially, the policies of the new government as from 2005 were of liberating inspiration and of food sovereignty, implemented under the tutelage of the State as the main social, political and economic protagonist through a series of legal provisions and instruments that favored the production peasant family. It highlights the creation of state food companies to supply the market, the priority to the domestic market before export markets, subsidies, programs / funds supporting domestic production, price control and other direct State interventions.

In that first moment, a series of laws and regulations¹ were promulgated that clearly favor the sector of indigenous peoples and small farmers, such as greater land registration and titling in the west of the country and the titling of TCOs.

In a second period from 2010 to date, a set of social forces emerges - agribusinesses from the east, importing food companies, capitalist peasant producers from the east - who interact with the State, significantly influencing agrifood policies, influence that translates for example in the expansion of transgenic crops prohibited by the Political Constitution of the State -PCS (the permissibility in the production of transgenic corn), promotion of the use of agrochemicals and especially new Trade Agreements with different countries to promote agricultural exports (quinoa, beef and pork, and transgenic soybeans among others) and in parallel the unrestricted opening of imports to all kinds of processed foods and direct consumption; of raw materials for the food and agrochemical inputs manufacturing industry, from all parts of the world.

This new policy of unrestricted trade opening to imports, contradicts the initial postulates of government policies on Food Sovereignty, Living Well, Caring for Mother Earth, supporting organic production and other approaches contained in the various laws and even in the new Political Constitution of the State (2009) and has a series of repercussions on indigenous and peasant family agriculture.

In a first section, food imports, imported food groups and major tendencies are examined. Subsequently, the consequences of imports on national production, consumption, industry and others are examined to finally examine imports and their impact on peasant production. The last paragraphs refer to small conclusions and public policy recommendations.

¹ For example, the "Law on community reconstruction or new agrarian reform law", the "Mother Earth Law (which establishes non-polluting production processes.... respect for the regeneration capacity of the land... conservation of the life systems of the land ... prevent risk conditions, among several others); the "Law 144 of the agricultural community productive revolution"; the "OECAS-OECOM Law for the integration of sustainable family farming and food sovereignty"; the "Law of promotion and support to the irrigation sector for agricultural and forestry production" among others.

2. THE FOOD IMPORTS IN BOLIVIA

2.1. The food imports in the general context of imports

In recent years, starting from 2010, Bolivia has greatly increased its imports in general. In that context, food imports have a growth rate higher than the total import index.

Unfortunately, the lack of updated and detailed information limits the analysis because the most up-to-date information available is general and does not contain disaggregated information on food imports. The available data is only until 2016, as presented in table 1.

Table No. 1
THE FOOD AND DRINK IMPORTS (2000-2018)(\$us)

Imports	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
1. National Total Imports	5.603.874	7.935.746	8.590.086	9.699.046	10.674.046	9.843.078	8.515.082	9.308.500	9.995.900
2. Total imports Food and beverages	391.093 (100%)	569.550 (100%)	570.647 (100%)	648.048 (100%)	741.981 (100%)	610.097 (100%)	634.159 (100%)	678.400 (100%)	675.300 (100%)
2.1. Food for population consumption	250.091 (63.94%)	354.017 (62.15%)	380.275 (66.63%)	463.961 (71.59%)	493.302 (66.48%)	453.362 (74.30%)	442.802 (69.83%)		
. Basic	17.869 (7.14%)	22.640 (6.39%)	23.521 (6.18%)	33.734 (7.27%)	33.813 (6.85%)	39.177 (8.64%)	39.815 (9.0%)		
. Elaborated / processed	232.222 (92.86%)	331.377 (93.61%)	356.754 (93.82%)	430.227 (92.73%)	459.489 (93.15%)	414.185 (91.36%)	402.987 (91.0%)		
2.2. Food (source materials) for the food industry	141.002 (36.04%)	215.533 (37.85%)	190.372 (33.37%)	184.087 (28.41%)	248.679 (33.52%)	156.735 (25.7%)	191.357 (30.17%)		
. Basic	26.179 (18.57%)	50.496 (23.42%)	55.285 (29.04%)	92.202 (50.08%)	121.498 (48.85%)	26.235 (16.73%)	48.256 (25.21%)		
. Foods Elaborated / processed	114.823 (81.43%)	165.037 (76.58%)	135.087 (70.96%)	91.885 (49.91%)	127.181 (51.15%)	130.500 (83.27%)	143.101 (74.79%)		

Source.- www.INE,gob.bo

From this table we can conclude that in 2010 food imports represented 6.97% of the total, while in 2016 they represented 7.44%; in 2017, 7.28% and 6.75% in 2018. In monetary terms, that means that in 2010, of a total of US \$ 5,603,874,000 of the total imported goods, imported food and beverages meant US \$ 391,093,000. In 2017, total imports represent US \$ 9,308,500,000 while food imports US \$ 678,400,000 (See table No. 1); that is to say that while total imports grew 1.51 times more; food imports grew 1.72 times more.

Imported food and beverages are intended both for the consumption of the population and for the food manufacturing industry (source material).

Imports for the consumption of the population represent the majority of imports with respect to source materials, an aspect that deepens as the years go by.

In 2010, imports for consumption in general represented 64% of the total (US \$ 250 million) while in 2015 they represent 74.3% (US \$ 453.3 million) and in 2016, 69.83% (US \$ 442.8 million). In contrast, food imports for the food manufacturing industry (source materials) in 2010 represented \$ 141 million while in 2016 they represent \$ 191.3 million.

Of the *total food and beverage imports for the population*, processed foods represent, in terms of value, the majority of these imports. While in 2010 they represented \$ 232.2 million, in 2016 they represented \$ 402.9 million (increased 1.84 times more). On the other hand, staple foods accounted for US \$ 17.8 million in 2010 and 2016 represented US \$ 39.8 million (ie increased 2.23 times more).

In *food and beverage imports for the national industry*, processed foods also represent more than staple foods, although with a growth rate that varies widely: representing 81% of the total in 2010 and 50% in 2013, they represent 83% in 2015 and 75% in 2016. In absolute numbers, they increase from US \$ 114.8 million in 2010, to US \$ 143, 1 million in 2016.

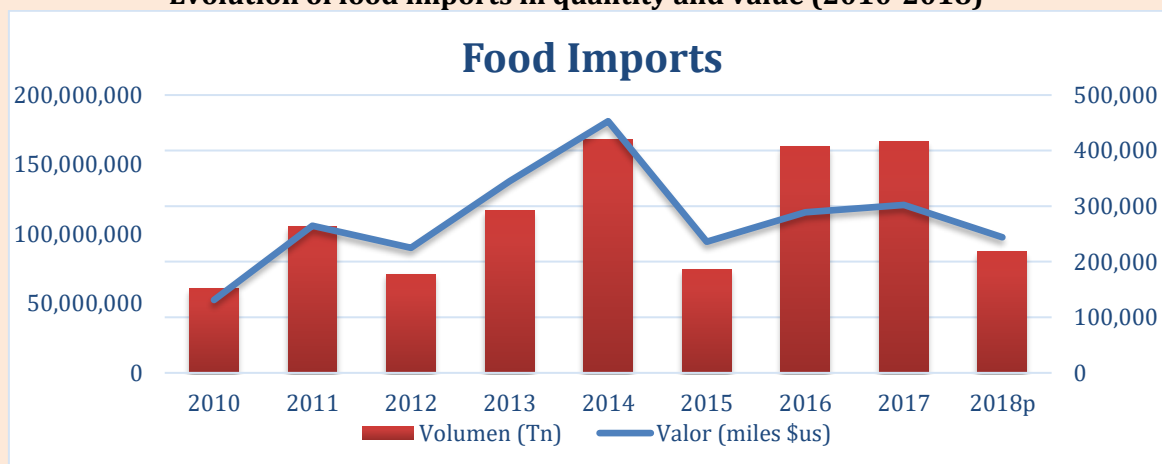
In general terms and in the period considered (2010-2018), as shown in Table No. 1, imports of basic foods represent less than imports of processed foods, however they have a very high growth rate because they go from representing 11.26% in 2010 to 14.23% in 2017 and 12% in 2018, which has a series of repercussions at the level of domestic food production, especially food from the peasant family economy, as analyze later.

2.2. The increase in food imports and main trends

Food imports show a growing trend in recent years as they go from US \$ 391 million (2010) to US \$ 678.4 million (2017) and US \$ 675.3 million (2018). That is to say that between 2010 and 2018 food imports increased 1.72 times more. In those years, the accumulated represented US \$ 5,519,275.000.

In terms of volume, imports show a general tendency to increase, although with some variations depending on the years. According to the National Institute of Statistics (NIS), the volume of food imports in 2010 was 151,973 tonnes that rose to 416,459 tonnes in 2017 and 218,993 tonnes in 2018, which means that between 2010 and 2018 food was imported by an amount of 2,532,962 Tm² in the 9 years considered (see Chart No. 1).

Graphic No 1
Evolution of food imports in quantity and value (2010-2018)



Source.- Built based on INE data

2.3. The main imported food groups

Food imports are classified into 10 food groups (see table No. 2), with a permanent increase since they have gone from a value of US \$ 412.6 million (2010) to more than US \$ 689.8 million (2016)³, that is to say that in those 6 years they increased 1.67 times more.

The majority of imports are generally concentrated in 4 food groups: cereals; food prepared as comestible; legumes and fruits; and finally the coffee/tea/species group.

² Without considering the contraband that, according to various unpublished of NIS studies, represents up to a third of legal imports.

³ An important aspect to highlight is that the statistical figures of food imports presented by the National Institute of Statistics are not the same when the value of imports by food group is analyzed in detail than the value of food imports in general, as shown in table No. 2

The group of cereals and cereal preparations represent the majority of imports, although their participation in all imports is decreasing over the years since 41.31% in 2010 went to 34.33% in 2016.

On the other hand, the group of "various prepared and divers foods" increases gradually as they go from representing 19.54% of the total in 2010 to 22.65% in 2016⁴. Only these two food groups represent 57% of the total imported.

The rest of the imported food groups have a small growth in their percentage relationship with respect to the total imported food: for example, the group of imported legumes went from representing 6.4% in 2010 to 7.2% in 2016.

The situation is different if the evolution of the total value imported in each food group is analyzed. For example, the group of dairy / eggs and the group of legumes / fruits increase almost double (1.88 times more) in the period considered as they go from US \$ 13.7 million (2010) to US \$ 25.9 million (2016) and from US \$ 26.7 million to US \$ 50 million respectively.

Table No. 2
FOOD IMPORTS ACCORDING TO PRODUCT GROUPS (2010-2018)
(thousands of \$us)

DESCRIPTION	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Total food and beverage imports	391.093	569.550	570.647	648.048	741.981	610.097	634.159	678.400	675.300
Food imports according to food groups									
Meat and meat preparations	1,687	3,873	5,895	5,988	7,696	9,507	9,547		
Dairy products and poultry eggs	13,775	18,887	23,070	26,134	28,094	27,561	25,925		
Fish (not including marine mammals), crustaceans, molluscs and aquatic invertebrates and their preparations	10,705	17,905	16,456	18,130	19,056	21,916	19,608		
Cereals and cereal preparations	170,456	217,445	210,527	246,085	335,832	195,547	236,853		
Legumes and fruits	26,748	32,914	36,844	45,409	45,885	51,496	50,106		
Sugars, sugar and honey preparations	23,500	108,828	33,918	34,497	36,616	35,817	33,142		
Coffee, tea, cocoa, spices and their preparations	29,559	38,372	44,351	43,779	49,945	47,946	49,211		
Soy cake, sunflower cake and cereals	13,571	16,509	20,803	23,431	26,944	32,883	36,367		
Miscellaneous comestible products and preparations	80,633	103,127	125,154	145,710	152,832	143,385	156,295		
Beverages and Tobacco	41,974	50,895	72,641	74,619	67,652	78,904	72,802		
TOTAL IMPORTS BY GROUPS	412.608	608.755	589.659	663.782	770.552	644.962	689.856		
Seed and oilseed imports	7,680	13,346	17,471	15,412	12,202	12,370	11,002		
Imports of brute animal and vegetable products	11,655	13,827	13,740	14,194	15,591	17,837	18,131		

Source. www.INE.gob.bo

⁴ Unfortunately, the statistics of the INE change permanently so there is no adequate continuity in them. According to a study on food imports (Prudencio J. 2018 "The agri-food system in Bolivia 2005-2015") in 2005, the main groups of imported foods were cereals (wheat, wheat flour and cereal derivatives) that represented US \$ 128.7 million (53.14% of total imports). Ten years later (2015), Prepared Foods represent the first group of imported foods with almost 162 million (25% of total imports), a trend that remains in 2018.

3. THE CONSEQUENCES OF INCREASING FOOD IMPORTS FOR THE NATIONAL FOOD SYSTEM.

The increase in food imports has a series of consequences and implications for the all national food system, as briefly analyzed below.

3.1. In the national agricultural production

The increase in food imports has generated a general problem in national, urban and rural markets, where all kinds of food from external sources are found, at all times of the year, generating unfair competition for national production, especially for the low sale prices and for the entry of food and contraband products. The producer lacks information about prices in other markets, product demand, product quality, durability, etc.

To this is added the fact that in various producing regions of the country there are not yet adequate production conditions (soils are depleted, lack of water for irrigation, lack of technical assistance) and transport / transfer of products, excessive levels commercial intermediation; and sales prices do not cover production costs, among others.

Given this situation, agricultural producers are choosing to stop growing the basic consumption food of the Bolivian population and dedicate themselves to producing export products. Some studies (Prudencio J. 2017) have already shown that in the east of the country for example, they have stopped producing vegetables, fruits, cereals and others because they produce transgenic soy⁵. In the west of the country, Oruro and part of Potosí, producers have stopped producing potatoes, barley and others for producing quinoa for export⁶.

As not all producers can produce export products, many seek to produce faster through the excessive increase of agrochemicals⁷, as is now happening in much of the La Paz highlands (Patacamaya region for example), where they have introduced more agrochemicals into Potato production, without measuring or perceiving the damage that is being caused to the earth and also in the quality of the product.

3.2. In the national manufacturing industry of processed foods

Another incidence of imports is in the national food processing / manufacturing industry⁸ that increasingly has to use more imported raw material.

⁵ Soy increased its cultivated area by more than 438,000 hectares between the years 2005-2014, while the potato, between 2005-2011, remained stationed at 6,400 hectares. In 2014/5 it increased to 9,572 hectares (that is, it increased only 3,000 Hs). Other basic crops (tomato, garlic, bean, cassava, barley grain) and even animal fodder (alfalfa, barley) decreased in their cultivated area (Prudencio J. 2014).

⁶ According to MDRyT data, the area planted with quinoa in Oruro increased 7.5 times. In the year 2000, quinoa represented 25.5% of the total area planted in that department, while in 2014/15 it represented 65.29%. Potatoes (and derivatives) in 2000/2001 represented 19.93% of the total area planted, in 2013/14 it represents 8.4% and 11.20% in 2014/2015 (Prudencio J. 2014).

⁷ According to research by the Faculty of Biochemistry of the Universidad Mayor de San Andrés (UMSA), in 2009, 28 Kgs / ha / average of agrochemicals were used nationwide, achieving a productive yield of 5.28 Kgs / ha / average. In 2017, 44Kgs / ha / average of agrochemicals are used and an average yield of 4.96 Kgs / ha is achieved. (Carvajal R.2018).

⁸ It includes the milling / bakery, sugar and confectionery, various products, beverages, fresh and processed meats, and dairy sectors. The analysis is limited only to certain years of the study period, due to lack of statistics and official information.

In that sense, two aspects stand out. First, the high imports of inputs for the national food industry that do not cease to increase despite the country's great agricultural potential. Between 2010 and 2016 they increased from US \$ 141,002,000 to US \$ 191,357.00; that is to say, they increased 1.35 times more.

Within this increase, it is worth noting that imports of basic products (that is, products of direct consumption or products produced by peasant and indigenous family agriculture) also increased almost double in the period of 2010-2016 when they went from representing 18.57% (US \$ 26,179,000) of total food imports (2010) to represent 25.21% (US \$ 48,256,000) in 2016, as shown in table No. 1.

The second aspect to highlight is the redirection of these imports. According to a detailed study of the agri-food system (Prudencio J. 2017) in 2012, the highest value of imported inputs corresponds to the beverage industry (34% of the total) followed by the diverse food products industry⁹ (25.6%), having been displaced from the first place in imports, the raw materials of the milling industry (wheat / wheat flour) that for many years or decades represented the greatest value of the imports of inputs of the national food industry.

If these two industries (drinks and diverse food products) are added imports of inputs for the sugar industry (9.6%), these 3 industries represent two thirds (69.2%) of the total value of imports. This new reconfiguration of imports of raw materials in favor of sweetened food products, sugary drinks and others that the WHO / PAHO calls ultraprocessed and that are largely cause of obesity, overweight and diabetes, is due among other factors, to the liberalization (and lack of control) of all types of food imports.

3.3. In the marketing system

At the existence higher availability of food products from abroad, due to imports and contraband¹⁰, there is a greater disposition (and sales) of products in markets and in supermarkets.

Despite the various governmental efforts, fairs and direct sales markets from producer to consumer are with difficulties to maintain themselves, and many of the fairs have disappeared in several locations or have decreased in their local supply and especially their variability (at the expense of the presence of foreign products).

In the rural sector, in the communal fairs as well as in the markets of supply of the populations there are the products of foreign origin, especially for the contraband, products of direct consumption like potato (of Peru and Argentina), onion (Peru and Chile); fruits (Chile and Argentina) and even processed products such as rice (from Argentina and Brazil), oil (Argentina) and various sweetened products (candies, cookies, etc).

On the other hand, it is necessary to highlight that the road marketing / transport system¹¹ has been reinforced (and is more fluid) from the border posts of the bordering countries

⁹ Mainly comprising preparations for soups, potages; homogenized compound food preparations, prepared baking powders, among others.

¹⁰ To which it is necessary to add the greater economic income that the population has for the different subsidies and other social benefits.

¹¹ Imports of processed products are also made by air, from various countries, not only from neighboring countries but also from countries in Africa and Asia.

with Bolivia (Desaguadero / Peru; Blanket in Pando; Bermejo in the Chaco; Villazón / La Quiaca; Iquique / Oruro and the different rivers Brazil-Bolivia among others) towards the main cities of the country (El Alto, Santa Cruz, Oruro) from where food and products are redistributed to other regions and localities of the country, debilitating the old system of intermediation / commercialization that existed from the producing areas of each department to the centers (local or surrounding) of consumption / demand.

This explains that in the main markets of the largest cities such as La Paz, Cochabamba, Santa Cruz you will find all kinds of products and all sources. This also means the strengthening of the wholesaler who has more capital.

3.4. In food consumption / availability

Another consequence of the increase in food imports is in the consumption, because there is a gradual and constant displacement of products of national origin. The general population begins to consume more foreign products, which also changes their consumption patterns, their eating habits, their diets among others.

The lack of updated information on the actual food consumption of the population¹² impede a detailed analysis of the impact of imports on the ensemble food basket, however, several investigations and case studies (Prudencio J. 2017; Espejo MG 2015) highlight that the presence of food of external origin¹³ on the table of families, the presence of processed products as well as a loss of the diversity of products and eating habits is becoming stronger.

One way of approaching the presence of foods of external origin (imported) in food consumption is through the analysis of food availability¹⁴ for the entire population.

Studies referred to in this regard (Prudencio J. 2017; Prudencio J. 2014) indicate that depending on the products, in some cases there is a high external vulnerability (case of wheat / wheat flour) and in others a low vulnerability, although this is in growth in recent years, as is the case with several basic products produced by the peasant family economy, as shown in table No. 3.

Table No. 3
The availability of the main foods
and imports in relation to other variables (2005-2015)

	Year	Meals	Wheat flour	Rice	Potatoes	Milk	Vegetables	Legumes	Sugar	Fruits	Fish/Sea food	Prepared food
Availability Kgs / pers / year	2005	29	41,65	57,89	n.d.	39,48	25,87	33,97	37,39	87,46	0.87	2,41
	2015	32,26	44,57	48,29	114,97	54,56	31,20	31,50	40,76	83,77	1,43	4,38
Production/ Consumption	2005	1,00	25,96	0.99	n.d.	0.97	1.07	0.99	1.16	1.06	n.d.	.
	2015	0.98	54.45	0.92	n.d.	1.00	1.04	0.92	0.98	1.10	n.d.	-
Imports / Consumption	2005	0,4	74.15	0,60	n.d.	3,41	1,58	1,24	2,59	3,42	100	107,18
	2015	2,23	45.54	7,88	n.d.	1,93	2,42	7,74	2,05	7,13	100	102,9
Imports (M) Production (P)	2005	0,004	286,0	0.0063	n.d.	0,035	0,014	0,012	0.022	0,032	-	22.44
	2015	0,02	83.63	0,085	n.d.	0,019	0,023	0,083	0.020	0,064	-	48.89
Exports (X) /	2005	0,004	0,012	0,0019	n.d.	0,0063	0,082	0,0027	0,16	0,090	-	0.16

¹² Both by region and by income level, by sex, by age, by sector or by activity among other variables that influence nutritional requirements.

¹³ Aspects not only attributable to imports but also to urbanization processes (distance between home and work sources, expansion of fast food places, short time to prepare meals at home, facilities to heat pre-cooked food) , the increase of income (meals in restaurants), incidence of the media (commercial propaganda for certain foods / drinks) and creation of supermarkets, among others.

¹⁴ Calculated from the total produced plus total imports less exports.

Production (P)	2015	0,012	0,00	0,0021	n.d.	0,027	0,065	4,12	4.67	0,16	-	1.40
Exports (-)	2005	+ 0,08	-284,71	- 2.33	n.d.	-10.21	17.26	-3,07	+57875	49,58	- 8.05	- 22.28
Imports	2015	-3.5	-219,75	-39.46	n.d.	+4.81	15.33	-26.28	-8047	98.44	-15.58	- 47.49
CDA=M/M+P	2005	0,4	74,15	0,63	n.d.	3,3	1,4	1,2	2,0	3,1	100	100
	2015	2,2	45,54	7,8	n.d.	1,8	2,2	7,7	2,0	6,0	100	100

Source.- Prepared by the author based on Prudencio 2017

In the case of the staple foods of consumption, while national production stagnates (case of potatoes) or decreases (case of tomatoes), imports increase quite as seen in above. The result is a stagnant (potato) or diminished (tomato) availability.

3.5. Greater food dependence

Another important consequence to mention generated by the increase in imports¹⁵, is that referred to the increase in the country's food dependence and the loss of national food sovereignty.

In general terms, the greatest food dependence is shown by examining the evolution of food imports not only in terms of quantity but also of value, which increases every year, as analyzed in the first section.

In specific terms of food products, food dependence is also increased according to certain products. Examining Table No. 3, we note that the Food Dependency Coefficient (FDC)¹⁶ between the period from 2005 to 2015 increased by several products, especially those from the peasant-Indigenous economy (rice, vegetables, legumes and fruits); situation that has not changed to the year 2018.

The products that decrease their high index in terms of the FDC are wheat / wheat flour and milk, mainly due to government policies of incentive to production and consumption (of EMAPA, the program to promote wheat production , and promote for production and especially milk consumption).

Finally, it is necessary to highlight that greater food dependence also means greater external vulnerability of the country to external factors (endangering national security); and loss of sovereignty, contrasting with the discourse and postulates of sovereignty posed by the government and several social organizations affiliated with Vía Campesina (such as the Federation of Women Farmers Bartolina Sisa).

3.6. The incidence of imports in other aspects.

There are several consequences of food imports, among which the following stand out:
. In the migration. As described above, the increase in food imports at reduced sales prices, generates less production and less cultivated area. Therefore, peasant-indigenous producers, especially from the communities of the valleys and the highlands that own small

¹⁵ That in turn generates the percentage reduction of the cultivated areas of consumer products, having a direct impact on the decline or stagnation of production (national supply) so that imports must be used to satisfy domestic demand.

¹⁶ What is the relationship between imports over imports plus national production

plots of land, are migrating to cities and abroad in search of better economic income and also performing multiple tasks and activities.

. *In the loss of traditional knowledge.* By migrating and leaving agricultural activity, cultural references are being lost, that is, traditions, ways of “doing,” of producing, and their productive logic are being lost - and in the case of producers who have replaced their crops traditional for export (especially those located in the east of the country, the so-called intercultural) - they are replacing it with a technological “package”, that is to say by mechanized technology, transgenic and more agrochemical seeds. Even your own family labor (creating family unemployment) is replaced by machinery.

. *Loss of productive rationality* (consisting of diversity and complementarity, among others), their ancestral knowledge developed and transmitted by generations, and their socio-cosmic nature (conformed by their human and non-human environment, or the nature-culture interrelation) They are also losing the capacity they have as individuals and communities to resist, absorb, (re) adapt and recover from the different disturbances in their environment. That their resilience is important in the face of climate change.

. *Loss of traditional seeds and their diversity.* Another incidence of the increase in imported food and its flooding in national markets is the loss of seeds of traditional products (as well as their diversity), rich in nutrients. As there is a change in basic crops for export crops, transgenic seeds are used that must be acquired permanently, leaving aside traditional seeds. This means that part of the harvest is no longer reserved for the seeds of the next planting and can no longer complement their crops with others as they did in their places of origin or their ancestors. They can no longer do integrated pest management because they have to fumigate with increasingly powerful agrochemicals.

4. FOOD IMPORTS AND THEIR INCIDENCE IN CAMPESINA AND INDIGENOUS PRODUCTION

In the statistics described on food imports, it highlights that there are more and more - in quantity and diversity - the products that are imported and that the country has the capacity to produce.

If the general food imports are analyzed in detail (see table No. 4), all the groups of imported¹⁷ products include food that the peasant and indigenous family economy produces in the country.

The peasant and indigenous producers located mainly in the regions of the valleys and the highlands and that have small plots of land (between 0-2 hectares), produce a variety of food products for self-consumption and the domestic market. They are the ones that supply the domestic market the most, although in percentages that are decreasing more and more¹⁸.

¹⁷ In Annex 1, the detail of extensive food imports, not only by food groups.

¹⁸ According to various studies (see Dandler, Blanes et al 1987; Prudencio J 1985; Prudencio J. 1991), the self-supply of food from peasant agriculture exceeded 78% of the national total in the 1980s.

Table No. 4
Food imports produced by the
Peasant family economy according to product groups (2000-2018) (Tm)

Product group	2000	2005	2010	2015	2016	2017	2018
1.Cereals	273.108,30	211.852,90	80.104,60	12.055,00	222.101,40	249.472,60	105.134,80
2. Fruits	17.849,10	19.006,10	28.840,60	37.523,90	41.653,10	39.629,70	37.652,90
3. Vegetables	3.897,50	511,8	463,8	19.404,60	18.939,80	21.307,20	4.335,30
4. Tubers and roots	1.282,50	2.809,00	17.518,10	25.530,20	51.866,30	33.782,70	4.706,70
5. Peanuts	118,3	0,5	1.322,80	1.086,10	487,9	3.110,90	488,3
6. Oregano	81,3	31,4	9,5	19,4	38,5	31,4	48,4
7. Sheep meat	0,1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	296.337,10	234.211,70	128.259,40	95.619,20	335.087,00	347.334,50	152.366,40

Source.- Built by the author based on the INE database.

The products produced are diverse such as tubers or roots (potato, papaliza, oca, sweet potato, yucca); vegetables (onion, corn, peas, locoto, garlic, lettuce, carrots, tomatoes, beans, chili peppers), cereals (wheat, grain barley, fodder), fruits (citrus, bananas, custard apple, tumbo and several others) as well as peanuts, beans (produced by indigenous producers, usually in the east of the country) among others.

Wheat and rice are also produced in the east of the country, but in smaller quantities than those produced by medium-sized producers and agro-industrialists in the eastern region of Santa Cruz.

In the cereal group, for example, rice imports, which is a product produced by medium, large and small farmers, in the period between 2000 and 2017 has an upward tendency, although this situation depends more on climatic factors and also of the exchange rate. of the currency of the border countries where imports come from (Brazil, Argentina). Therefore, in some years rice imports are very high (2006, 2008, 2013) and in others not (2010, 2011; 2012, 2016, 2017).

In the case of wheat, produced largely by peasant producers in the western communities of the country¹⁹ and also by the agro-industries of the east²⁰, imports continue significant²¹, although to a lesser proportion than in past decades.

In the case of corn, there is also a growing tendency, especially in recent years in which various marketing companies have begun to legally and illegally import corn (transgenic especially) as food for livestock, pork and poultry . If 2000 Tm was imported in 2000, in 2016 more than 106,000 Tm were imported as shown in Table No.1 of the Annex.

These imports directly affect the production of peasant producers that not only compete with their production in local and city markets, but also in the poultry industry, which is buying less corn of national origin for chicken feed. It also affects the rich diversity of corn

¹⁹ For your own consumption and your local markets

²⁰ That alternate winter cultivation with soybeans

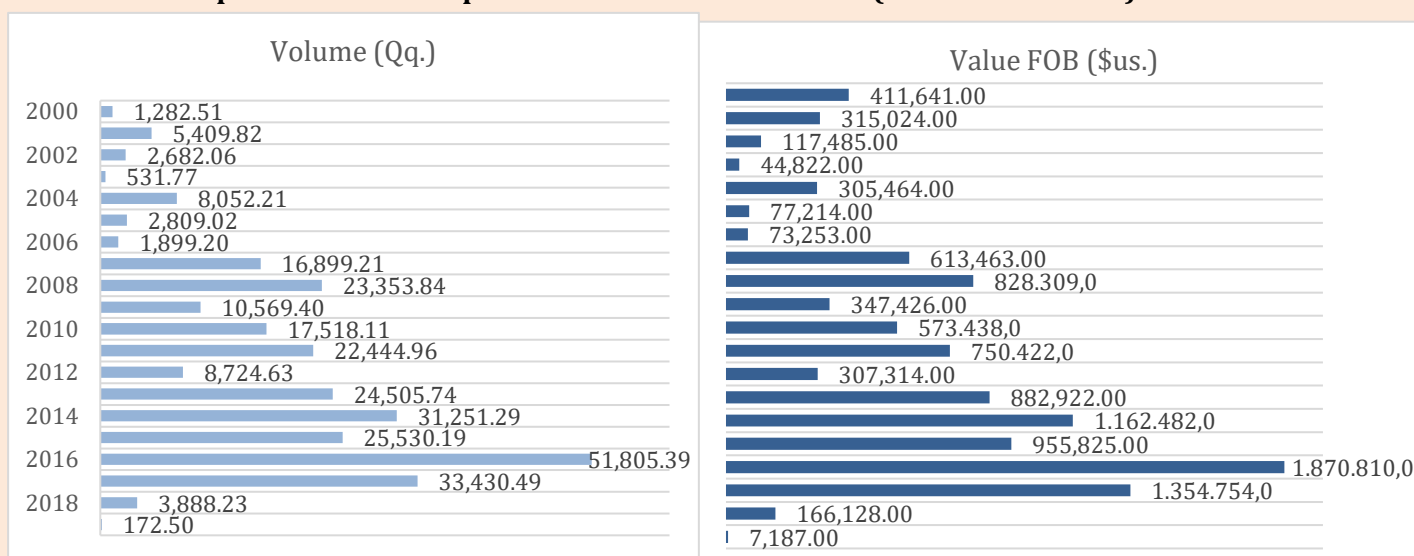
²¹ And despite the series of government programs (EMAPA for example) to encourage this crop through subsidies (unfortunately marketing subsidies, not to production).

seeds that the country has. Therefore, peasant and indigenous family producers are losing diversification and productivity due to import competition.

The rest of the food imports are basic food products, which the country has always produced but which in recent years, due to the promotion of export products, has stopped producing and resorting to imports. This is the case of vegetables, tomatoes, fruits, tubers and others, causing the country to lose its food sovereignty and fall more and more into food dependence.

An example of the permanent increase in imports of consumer food products is potatoes (see Chart 2), one of the main products of the peasant family economy²². According to INE data (04/26/2019 El Diario) in 2018, 28,750 kg of fresh potatoes were imported; 3.8 million kg of frozen potatoes and 818,459 kg of chuño and tunta; In other words, potato imports represent for US \$ 100 million.

Graph No. 2 Potato imports between 2000 and 2018 (Volume and value)



“.....It is not possible to compete in costs with the potato (that enters) from Peru or with the tomatoes from Chile that enter via imports or contraband to the Bolivian market, therefore..... it is no longer business... it is no longer profitable to produce potatoes and tomatoes”

“....It is not possible that the box of 12 kilos of tomato that should be paid to the producer to Bs 80, lower its price to Bs 40 ... and sometimes reach Bs 20 ... due to the oversupply of Chilean tomato”.

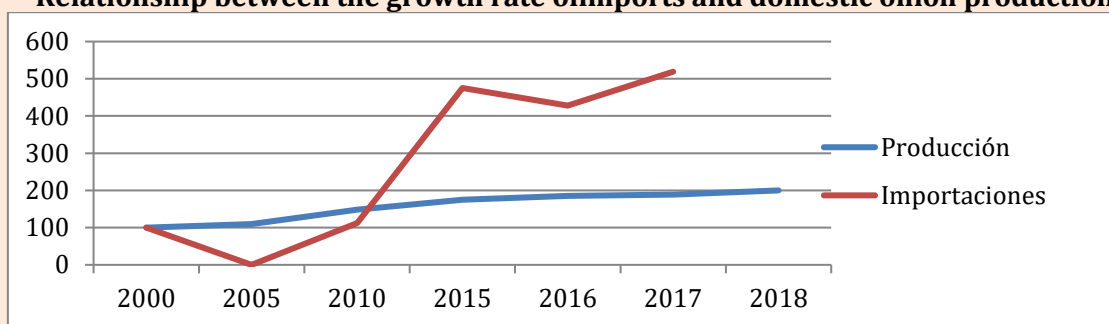
(Peasant producers in the valleys of Samaipata and Mairana of Santa Cruz)
(El Deber 12-04-19)

²² In addition, basic food of the population, whose origin is the country itself through the Andean peasant communities.

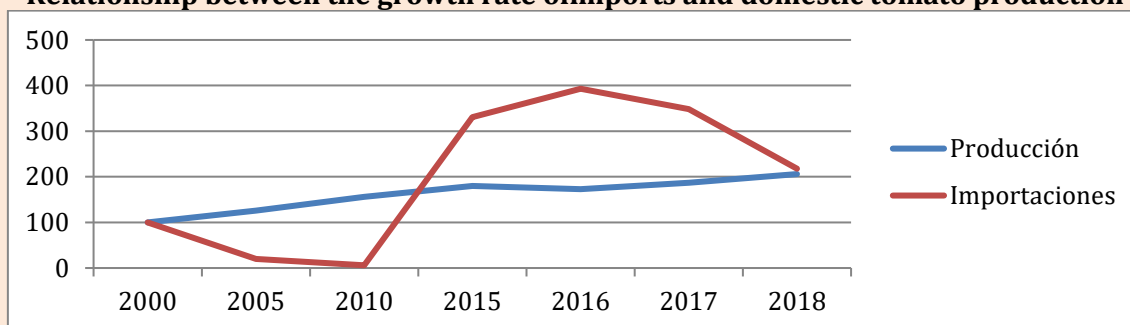
The case of vegetables - another of the basic products produced by farmers in the communities of the valleys and the highlands - is another example that calls for reflection. If 3,897 Tm were imported in 2000, 21,307 Tm are imported in 2017, that is 5.4 times more. Inside this food group, stand out that tomato imports increase 3 times more and those of onions 52 times more.

This excessive increase in imports also suppose that the growth rate of imports is much higher than the growth rate of domestic food production, as reflected in the following graphs referring to onion, tomato and potatoes, the main products of the peasant family economy of the country.

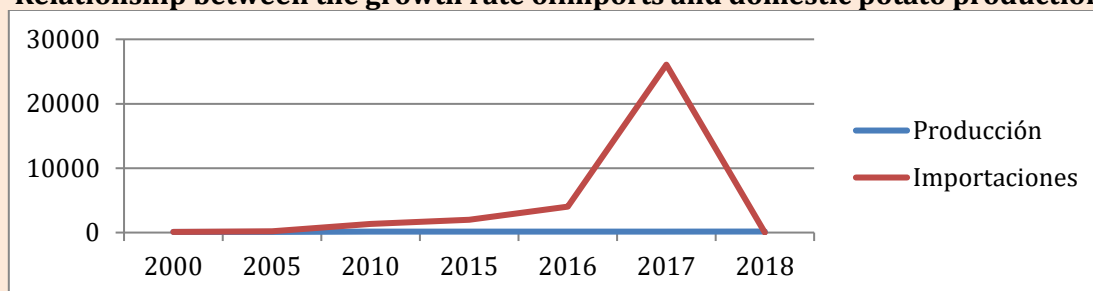
Graph No. 3
Relationship between the growth rate of imports and domestic onion production



Relationship between the growth rate of imports and domestic tomato production



Relationship between the growth rate of imports and domestic potato production



The consequences for the peasant family economy due to the increase and diversity of imports were already mentioned in the previous chapter, highlighting the weakening of the productive capacity of the peasant family economy, the migration of the peasant labor force, and the displacement of crops basic for other export crops that generate more income.

5. IN BRIEF CONCLUSIONS

. The situation of food imports is an aspect that shows us the productive reality that the national food system and the peasant family economy through agglutinated small farmers and indigenous farmers in rural communities.

. The complete liberalization of food imports that the country is experiencing is disastrous for the peasant family economy and benefits only food importing companies, intermediary merchants and agro-industrialists who use imported raw materials.

The permanent increase in food imports that takes place year after year, shows us that the country's internal policies are not appropriate to the reality of the peasant family economy that is unprotected in face of an irregular and distorted international market, which operates with subsidies and through transnational corporations and trade agreements.

. One of the consequences of the increase in food imports, in addition to the destruction of the national productive apparatus as well as the economy of peasant family agriculture is the decrease in the availability of food produced internally, healthy and nutritiously rich, by others of external origin, mostly prepared / processed and sweetened, not healthy or adequate to human health, with serious consequences on food / nutrition (poor diet that generates overweight and obesity).

. The growing food imports indiscriminately entering the country in recent years, generates the loss of national productive diversity, decrease in monetary income and employment of small farmers, loss of biodiversity, migration of labor peasant, increased external dependence on food and greater food insecurity among others.

. The government policy of food prices is a very serious debility in the country, not only because it permit external products in domestic markets at low prices, but because food prices do not cover the production costs of the produced basic food by peasant producers and Indigenous. This unjust internal price system - intentionally maintained - is not adequate and is used by the government to subsidize the national economy and also as a basis for social stability.

6. SOME POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

General recommendations

1. Modify / stop the policy of liberalization of food imports through the prohibition of imports of basic food that the country produces, as in other countries such as Argentina or Chile where no type of food can be introduced (basic or processed).

2. Need for another agroeconomic model that transforms the agricultural and livestock system active in several regions of the country, for another model that prioritizes the supply of basic food for internal consumption and stop promoting export merchandise products.

3. Protection of the productive structure of the peasant and indigenous family economy. Promote the agroforestry system that implements the original peasant and indigenous family economy through the recovery of soil / land, harvesting and proper water management, the rescue and conservation of seeds, integrated pest management and phytosanitary protection, cover crops, productive diversity and crop rotation, technical training, the creation of food

reserves and conservation techniques among others, as they pose through various instances and moments²³.

Specific recommendations

On the subject of imports

- Absolutely prohibit the entry of products for direct consumption (agricultural) that the country is in a position to produce and that is produced through indigenous-peasant agriculture.
- Dramatically improve customs control, sanitary control (SENASAG) and application of high tariffs, para-tariff measures to prevent imports of processed foods.
- Control the internment (at borders) for smuggling of foreign food and agricultural products, which compete without paying taxes and, above all, discourage the small Bolivian producer. Also, control in the wholesale markets of distribution of these products.
- Increase economic, technological and human resources for adequate control of food income.
- Permanently update the lists of processed and ultraprocessed products sensitive to the health of consumers.

On the issue of support for internal production and marketing

- Support for the recovery of exhausted agricultural land located in the peasant and indigenous family economy (through enclosures, natural fertilizers, natural pastureland and others), improve them and make more efficient use through the integrated management of soils, water, biological resources and other inputs, implementing in synthesis, the conservation agriculture.
- Support for the recovery of traditional seeds, food base and food sovereignty, through the support and creation of regional seed banks, exchange of seeds between regions and producers; support to the semilleristas; agronomic research and others. It is necessary to create a new system in INIAF that strengthens the national wealth of native seeds and does not continue with its commercial seed approach only.
- Support the agroforestry production system by combining diversified agricultural production with small non-extensive livestock and forest and non-forest plants.
- Not to the extensive system or the use of agrochemicals that pollute land, water and biodiversity.
- Support to the peasant producer to produce healthy and nutritious food, through training (free agricultural extension service, for example in training for the use of drip water, and / or in the management of water systems among others).
- Support for agronomic research of basic consumer products produced by the peasant family economy in the valleys and highlands (variety rescue, among others).
- Subsidies to production (not to commercialization as EMAPA does) to achieve an increase in productive yields, which means monitoring the producer and incentives to improve their productivity.

Fair prices that cover production and collection costs.

²³ In this regard, see the “Declaration of CIOEC and the Peasant Organizations and Indigenous Peoples for the World Peoples’ Conference on Climate Change in Cochabamba and COP 21 in Paris”. (CIOEC= Coordinadora de Integración de Organizaciones Económicas Campesinas Indígenas y Originarias de Bolivia), 15 / X / 2015. Also see Prudencio J. 2017

- Implementation of water systems for irrigation based on the capture of water in the mountain ranges, transfer and proper management of these water sources / pools for later distribution at the level of the peasant family economy.
- Technical and financial support to implement basic food processing / processing plants (achieve added value).
- Support to farmers' organizations so that they can offer their improved products and access state purchases (school meals, food for hospitals and barracks among others), which constitutes a huge market and should only be used for peasant production regional and not to others merchant or large companies (PIL for example) as it is today.
- Support for direct producer-consumer marketing through the creation of local markets, price information systems, municipal support for the transfer of products, support for commercial agreements (producers-hotels / restaurants for example) in order to rescue the domestic market to the national peasant production.
- Support so that the peasant-indigenous producer can comfortably perform his role such as nourishing the population (with the necessary amount of healthy and quality food, ensuring food security with food sovereignty), allowing the land to regenerate without contaminating the environment (in balance with ecosystems and biodiversity among others) and ensure the well-being of its own actors (in terms of decent jobs and sufficient economic income).

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ANNEXES

Table No. 1
Food imports produced by the indigenous peasant family economy according to product groups (2000-2018)TM

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019p
1.Total Cereals	273.108,3	243.100,4	284.928,5	309.019,2	261.696,0	211.852,9	134.176,7	125.168,1	106.132,0	48.259,9	80.104,6	166.794,1	100.251,8	151.016,5	229.174,0	12.055,0	222.101,4	249.472,6	105.134,8	17.196,3
rice (all rice)	1.477,5	1.416,0	166,4	15,1	115,3	41,1	1.282,0	668,4	1.568,5	136,0	65,3	36,7	10,4	2.225,4	3.567,7	553,9	44,1	12,4	656,4	3,8
Barley	1,0	0,0	4,4	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,1	55,6	28,1	223,9	392,0	504,5	559,2	503,7	424,9	0,0	0,0	0,0
Corn (all corn)	2.025,8	3.046,3	4.339,2	21.003,7	1.642,9	2.628,1	2.064,6	14.310,1	15.683,7	2.170,9	40.360,1	86.158,5	4.082,9	3.043,6	4.880,8	4.752,7	106.340,6	79.749,3	28.875,8	1.321,3
Wheat	269.604,0	238.638,2	280.418,5	288.000,4	259.937,8	209.183,6	130.830,2	110.189,5	88.879,7	45.897,4	39.651,1	80.375,0	95.766,5	145.243,0	220.166,4	6.244,7	115.291,7	169.710,9	75.602,6	15.871,2
2. Fruits (Total)	17.849,1	24.071,7	21.592,8	16.469,3	18.975,0	19.006,1	19.224,5	19.446,4	20.113,8	26.680,0	28.840,6	28.984,9	30.807,1	35.452,0	32.698,5	37.523,9	41.653,1	39.629,7	37.652,9	6.050,9
Apple	10.998,8	19.820,4	16.658,3	12.592,0	15.663,3	16.100,4	15.518,5	15.833,6	16.561,3	22.958,7	25.453,2	24.339,7	25.608,7	31.034,0	28.443,5	32.382,5	35.535,7	35.537,7	35.051,9	5.809,7
Grapes	5.536,8	2.983,9	3.754,9	2.605,1	1.738,9	1.336,4	1.911,0	2.059,8	1.958,8	2.882,0	2.756,4	3.684,2	4.262,1	3.482,1	3.220,5	4.029,4	5.014,1	3.531,0	2.487,8	49,0
Peaches	1.313,4	1.267,4	1.179,6	1.272,3	1.572,8	1.569,3	1.795,0	1.553,1	1.593,7	839,3	631,0	961,0	936,3	935,8	1.034,6	1.111,9	1.103,3	561,0	113,2	192,3
3. Vegetables (Total)	3.897,5	5.205,1	1.347,9	424,6	528,4	511,8	1.733,5	1.037,4	565,7	1.083,2	463,8	3.237,7	1.957,8	7.745,4	11.435,7	19.404,6	18.939,8	21.307,2	4.335,3	1.308,0
Tomatos	1.766,1	2.530,3	711,1	144,2	270,3	353,8	467,4	536,6	304,3	368,3	114,4	873,1	708,0	2.424,0	3.387,6	5.842,2	6.943,4	6.153,2	3.843,1	1.307,7
Onion	276,3	1.085,9	108,9	116,3	0,0	0,0	227,8	21,4	0,0	569,3	310,5	1.747,3	1.174,5	5.321,1	7.758,3	13.127,6	11.812,9	14.328,5	5,2	0,1
Carrot and turnips	1.855,1	1.588,9	527,8	164,1	258,1	158,0	1.038,4	479,4	261,4	145,6	39,0	617,3	75,4	0,3	289,7	434,9	183,4	825,5	487,0	0,2
4. Tuberle and roots (Total)	1.282,5	5.409,8	2.682,1	531,8	8.052,2	2.809,0	1.899,2	16.899,2	23.353,8	10.569,4	17.518,1	22.445,0	8.727,1	24.510,3	31.251,3	25.530,2	51.866,3	33.782,7	4.706,7	328,6
Potatos	1.282,5	5.409,8	2.682,1	531,8	8.052,2	2.809,0	1.899,2	16.899,2	23.353,8	10.569,4	17.518,1	22.445,0	8.724,6	24.505,7	31.251,3	25.530,2	51.805,4	33.430,5	3.888,2	172,5
Chuño	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	2,5	4,6	0,0	0,0	60,9	352,3	818,5	156,1
5. Peanuts	118,3	3,4	425,8	15,4	0,2	0,5	0,0	334,4	1.933,7	1.361,1	1.322,8	2.258,8	1.417,5	1.844,9	2.716,5	1.086,1	487,9	3.110,9	488,3	108,5
6. Organo	81,3	151,5	64,7	55,9	13,8	31,4	22,0	32,1	12,9	13,9	9,5	0,5	12,2	8,8	61,3	19,4	38,5	31,4	48,4	8,8
7. Sheep meat	0,1	0,2	0,1	0,3	0,1	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,2	0,0	0,0	0,0	2,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0	0,0

Source.- Built by the author based on data from the INE