Opinion

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The Generation of New Production Chains through the Use of Waste

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Description

In many regions of the world, situations of extreme poverty joined with geographical and political conditions produce that part of the population is in a state of lack of food which leads to undernourishment. Conversely, in regions with higher industrialization, the consumption of highly processed foods leads to high rates of overweight. Currently, the biggest challenge is not only to produce food, but to produce quality food that can be offered to the entire population to meet their daily needs.

Conducting research aimed at the development of new technologies is the largest of the tools we have, to achieve this goal. Nevertheless, the challenge facing the primary sector and the food sciences is even greater. Because, even when a technology is technically viable, if it does not show an economic viability, it could not be implemented. Thus, the technology and production processes must be perfected in order to present technical and economic viability, generating not only innovation and development but also seeking to offer quality food for all people.

The production process of any product goes through the consumption of resources, which can be renewable or not. These processes generate waste that is often taken to incorrect destinations, causing impacts to the environment. In the food production is no different, food waste is also a social problem because in some regions the food is wasted while in other, the population has malnutrition problems. But it also entails environmental problems, related to the potential pollution of some sources.

The use of waste originated in production processes of a foodstuff is a good alternative to increase the availability of food, whilst also can favour the emergence of new production chains and increasing the generation of development for specific region. The case of the production of tilapias in Brazil can be a good example. The tilapia industry is responsible for the production and consumption of most fish produced in this country. However, this industry is based on the supply of Tilapia fillet, which has an average yield of 33% of the raw material, i.e., 67% of the raw material is waste. In this sense, if demand increase and the market continues to pay for high fillet prices, this production chain will remain to generate wastes on a big scale. In another hand, the decrease in profit due to increase in production cost led the industry to think in alternative ways to use better the resources and they began to invest in waste recovery. Many researchers have already demonstrated the technical and economic viability of the generation of various products based on waste of the tilapia fillet industry, such as nuggets, fish burgers, meatballs, fish meal, fish oil, among others. So, if the waste is well used, it becomes an alternative production chain.

In this context, the food sciences must increasingly seek the development of technologies that aim the production of quality food in a viable way, avoiding the least possible wastes.