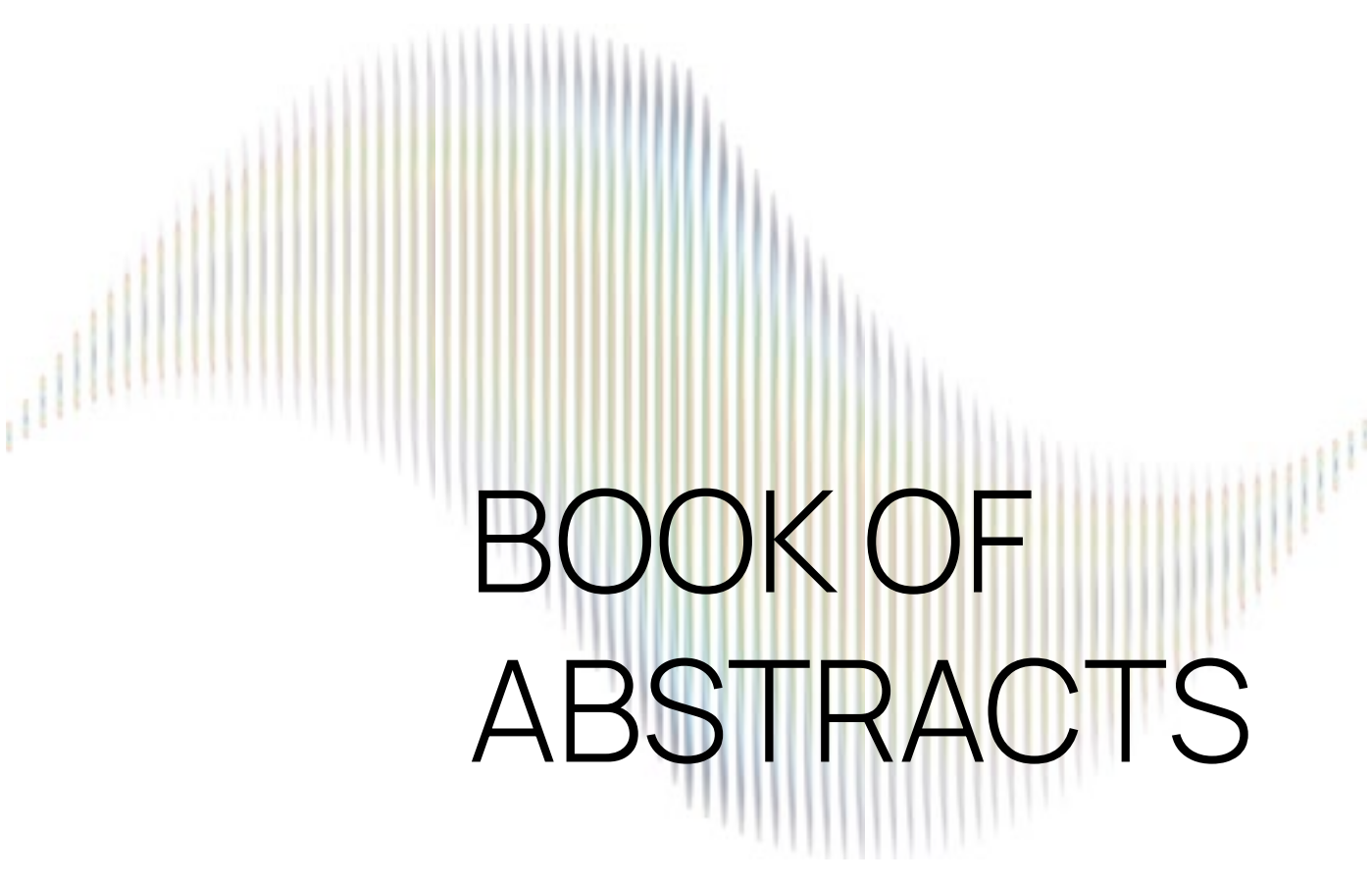


Venice
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2026

Strengthening the values of food
in times and spaces of fragility
AESOP Sustainable Food Planning - XII Conference



BOOK OF ABSTRACTS

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Strengthening the values of food in times and spaces of fragility

AESOP Sustainable Food Planning - XII Conference

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Learning through Food Practices: Responsible Consumption and Mediated Social Relations in Brazilian Alternative Food Networks

Authors: Francesco Vittori, Maria Ketully Neyane Alves
Pinto, Oscar José Rover, Dayana Lilian Rosa Miranda

In the context of the increasing instability of contemporary agrifood systems, alternative food networks, such as Células de Consumidores Responsáveis (CCRs) in Southern Brazil, connect groups of consumers directly with local agroecological farmers through collective purchasing arrangements. Developed as forms of social innovation, CCRs foster direct relations between producers and consumers and contribute to the construction of alternative food markets (Miranda et al., 2020). This paper examines how participation in CCRs shapes everyday consumption practices, focusing in particular on the prioritization of local products even when cheaper alternatives (e.g., conventional and standardized food) are available, and on how these practices are socially constructed and learned over time. The study adopts a mixed-methods approach, following an explanatory sequential design (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018), combining an online survey (N=155) with in-depth interviews (N=8) conducted with active participants from 11 CCRs in Florianópolis (Brazil).

Quantitative analysis reveals significant differences in consumption practices across time of participation (ANOVA, $p < 0.01$), suggesting that longer involvement is associated with a stronger tendency to prioritize CCR products. However, this relationship is not linear: participants do not adopt these practices uniformly. Instead, engagement develops gradually, with variations across individuals, and is strongly aligned with support for family farming. Qualitative findings, based on reflexive thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2014; 2017), show that social relations, collective organization, and everyday negotiations between economic convenience and ethical commitment shape participation. Interviews also highlight the structural role of LACAF (UFSC) as an incubator of social innovation, supporting network formation, mediating conflicts, and strengthening producer-consumer relations. Farm visits primarily strengthen relations between producers and consumers while also offering opportunities to engage with agroecological practices.

Digital platforms (e.g., WhatsApp groups) are mainly used for operationalization but occasionally enable the circulation of knowledge. These findings suggest that ethical consumption is not merely an individual choice, but the outcome of socially and institutionally mediated processes. The paper argues that CCRs function as relational and territorial spaces where practices, meanings, and values are co-produced through production-consumption relations, contributing to debates on socially embedded innovation in food system transitions.