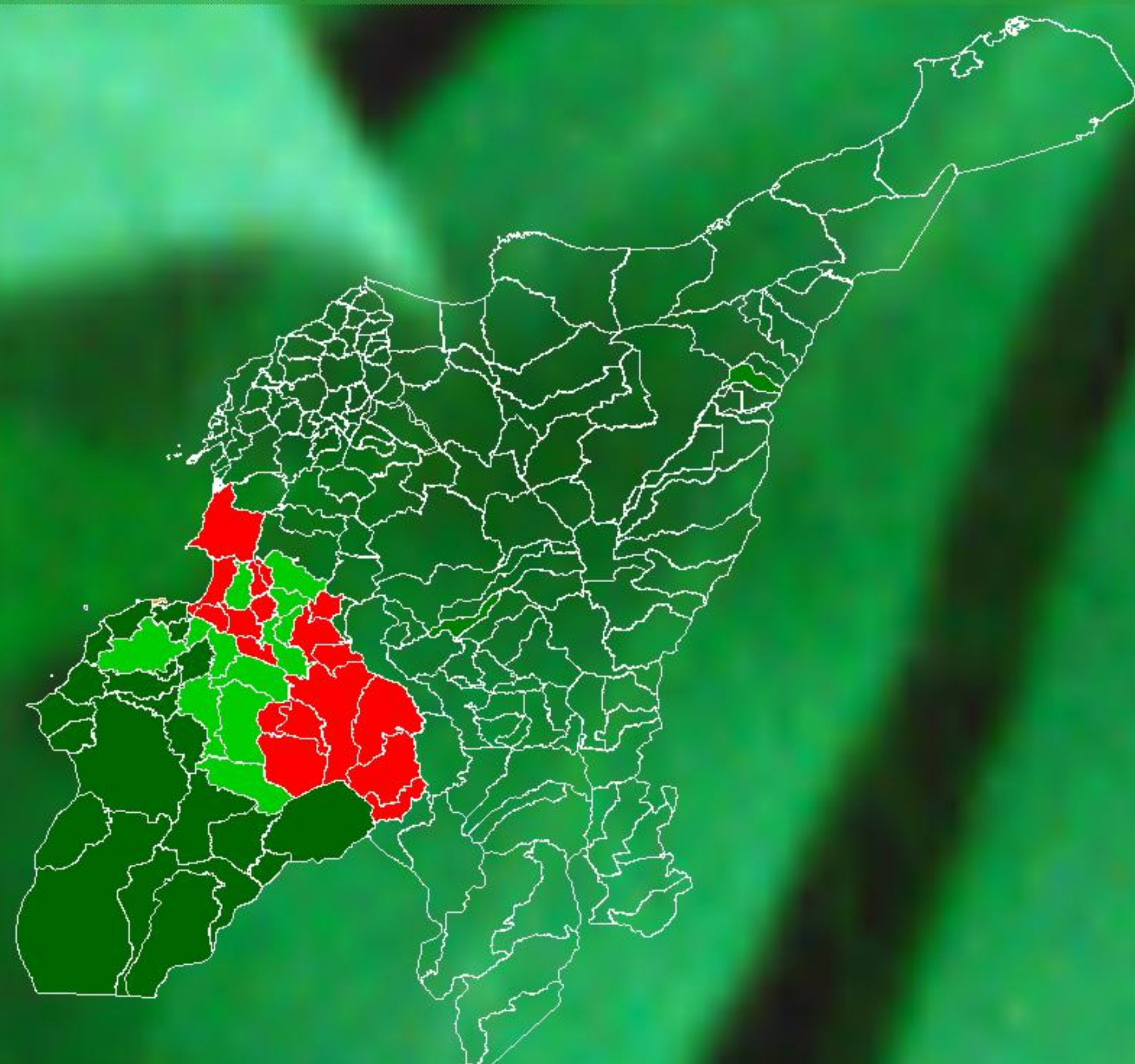


IMPROVEMENT OF THE CASSAVA PRODUCTIVE SYSTEM IN THE MICROREGION OF CORDOBA AND SUCRE PLAINS

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Geographical reference of the municipalities of Chinú, San Andrés de Sotavento, Ciénaga de Oro, Lorica, Los Palmitos, Corozal, Betulia, Tolúviejo y Ovejas



Cassava production in Chinú, Córdoba, Colombia



"Los Algarrobos", mixed-drying plant. Chinú, Córdoba



Dried Cassava chips ready for delivering

INTRODUCTION

The Córdoba and Sucre plains, in the Colombian Atlantic Coast, are traditionally Cassava production zones both in monoculture and association, with high levels of agroecological aptitude. The conformation of this alliance aims to develop a productive Cassava system that becomes a model of equitable economic participation, sustainable production and competitive development that allows improvement of the life quality of small growers under its zone of influence.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

The construction of the Alliance is driven by the need to develop, with the small Cassava producers of the micro-region, better possibilities of commercialization for their product. This Alliance will allow to integrate the structural components of the system, bringing an efficient and sustainable production. The methodology implemented included:

- Characterization of productive cassava nuclei in the region, allowing to identify homogenous groups of production, by means of criteria of differentiation, as much for primary production, transformation, distribution and consumption.
- Integration of a technological offer, driven by previous participatory research projects.
- Integration of Local Participative Groups around a productive association, located in the strategic production areas.
- Establishment of technological, productive and commercial partnerships, under the leadership of the PBA Foundation (Integrator):
 - APP: Productive Alliances for Peace
 - APROYSA: Association of Cassava Growers
 - CORPOICA
 - FENAVI

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The conformation and operation of the productive alliance show until the moment the following results:

- Conformation of an entrepreneurial association of 400 small cassava growers: APROYSA
- Establishment of eight units for the production of clean seeds (Basic, Registered and Certified).
- Phytosanitary certification of 100% of the seed production lots to *Erwinia spp* and *Xanthomona axonopodis p.v manihotis*.
- Planting of the first 100 Has of commercial lots in the municipalities of Ovejas, Chinú, Ciénaga de Oro, San Andrés de Sotavento, Lorica and Tolúviejo.
- 36 producers trained in the process handling for mixed-drying of cassava chips, (two modules).
- Qualification of 68 producers in Organization and Enterprise Management, (three modules).
- A plant for mixed drying based on adequate sun-drying paths and an artificial dehydration process.
- Increase in percentage of conversion to dry cassava chips from 30% to 40%.
- Contracts signed with CONTEGRAL (for animal balanced food industry) and Continental Foods (pre-processed products for human consumption)

CONCLUSIONS

This alliance aims to cultivate 800 Hectares, to build four (4) plants of artificial drying with sun-drying paths (mixed-drying process), to promote the entrepreneurial integration of 450 small growers, to generate 37.600 annual wages, to produce 14.000 t/year of high-quality dry cassava chips and to develop commercial contracts that recognize an added value for quality. This model, which integrates technology, participatory research, productive association of small growers and market articulation, is contributing to the sustainability of the innovation process and is starting to be reproduced in other production systems and geographical regions of the country.