

COOMAP NEWS

Are you used to drinking TAP WATER at home? You would probably answer this question with an "Of course". However, regarding farms in Brazil things are very different! We are going to tell you why we have this situation around here and what COOMAP has done in order to change this situation to its members.

POTABLE WATER PROJECT

People who live in farms are really used to living close to nature. And as anyone who's got a good condition, they take it for granted. This is the point regarding water consumed by our members. Almost all of them do not have access to treated water and its main source are water springs, in general located inside farm areas. In fact, many farms have several water springs. Thus since this natural resource is abundant and in general it's considered pure, growers hardly ever think about it. However, COOMAP didn't see it as a matter of minor importance. That's why in 2014, the same year that COOMAP got Fairtrade Certified, the co-op decided to wake up the whole rural community to this important subject. The first action was paying one water quality test to each of our members.

Laboratório Gold		Código: FR 021			
CRF-MG 34.648 CNPJ 19.827.288/0001-99 R. Prof. Marcos Maciel Dias, 62 - Centro / Paraguaçu-MG CEP 37120-000 Fone: (35)3267-1134		Versão: 1.0			
LAUDO DE ANÁLISE DE ÁGUA		Página: 1 de 1			
LAUDO DE ANÁLISE NÚMERO: 000046-2015		DATA DE EMISSÃO: 03/07/2015			
DADOS DO CLIENTE					
SOLICITANTE: JOÃO BOSCO ARAUJO					
TELEFONE: SEM INFORMAÇÃO					
DADOS DA AMOSTRA					
ORIGEM DA ÁGUA: MINA		COLETOR: HENRIQUE			
BAIRRO: GRAMA-SIT VARGEM PRETA		CIDADE/ESTADO: PARAGUAÇU/MG			
LOCAL DA COLETA: PIA DA COZINHA					
DATA DA COLETA: 01/07/2015		HORA DA COLETA: 10:25H			
RESULTADOS DA ANÁLISE					
INICIO DA ANÁLISE: 01/07/2015 16:30H		TÉRMINO DA ANÁLISE: 02/07/2015 17:00H			
PARÂMETRO	UNIDADE	LQ*	RESULTADOS	LIMITE PORT. 2914 (VMP**)	MÉTODO
COLIFORMES TOTAIS	NMP/100 ML	AUSENTE	PRESENTE	AUSENTE	IT 010 (1)
ESCHERICHIA COLI	NMP/100 ML	AUSENTE	PRESENTE	AUSENTE	IT 010 (1)
* LQ: limite de quantificação					
** VMP: valores máximos permitidos estabelecidos pela legislação vigente					
(1) Método validado em comparação ao descrito no Standard Methods for the Examination of Water and Wastewater, 20th ed.					
Nota: Os resultados referem-se apenas a amostra analisada.					
CONCLUSÃO: A AMOSTRA ANALISADA NÃO ATENDE AOS LIMITES MICROBIOLÓGICOS ESTABELECIDOS PELA PORTARIA Nº 2914 DE 12 DE DEZEMBRO DE 2011 PARA ÁGUA POTÁVEL NAS DETERMINAÇÕES REALIZADAS, SENDO IMPRÓPRIA PARA CONSUMO HUMANO.					

(Quality test with negative result)

Results were shocking! 80%... that's right 80% of our members had water of not drinking quality! Analysis showed that main contamination was by fecal coliforms bacteria. As you might know, these bacteria might cause diseases like ear infections, dysentery, typhoid fever, viral and bacterial gastroenteritis, hepatitis and so on.

Consequently, **something had to be done.**

After doing lots of research about the best way to get rid of this problem, COOMAP decided to have a biological filter and a chlorinator installed at each member's farm. As you can see in the image beside, this filter consists in a plastic barrel, that was used for importing olives into Brazil, which is partly filled with construction rocks and construction sand.



Just this filter itself is able to purify about 98% of water impurities. After this process, water goes through the **chlorinator**, nice scientific name, no? Well, this is nothing but a set of pipes and junctions in which we put chlorine pills. After water gets in touch with chlorine it's gets 100% pure and can be safely stored in the water tank, normally located in the house roof.



In order to guarantee proper installation, COOMAP hired two professionals full time for this project.



You might be thinking how much members have to pay for all of it.

Since this is a Fairtrade project, members have everything for **FREE**. That's right... 100% **FREE**! Right now more than 80% of members have already had the water purifying system installed and this is a project that won't end so soon, after all we'll always have new members who'll need it.

Does this mean that everything turned out just fine and that the project is perfect?

Of course not and with a bit of empathy you might understand why. Put yourself in our member's shoes: your family has been living in the same farm for 3 or 4 generations and one day someone from the co-op shows up at your farm and tells you that the water you've always thought to be the purest one in the world is, in fact, contaminated. That's wouldn't be an idea easy to be accepted, would it? And to make things even worse, from now on you'd have to drink water with a chemical product (chlorine). Do you see the awareness problem? That's the reason why many growers, about 20% of them, either didn't want to have the filter installed at their farms or had it installed but didn't put chlorine pills inside the chlorinator. We do understand that this is not the perfect situation, but if after lots of talking we're still not able to convince a few of our members about the project importance, we've got to respect their decision.



Anyway, this project was very successful because not only many growers said that after having the system installed their families got much less sick, but the whole community decided to pay attention to water quality and the lab responsible for analysis got full of people, non-members, who wanted to have their water tested.

Well, looking back on the four years necessary to execute this project up to its current status, COOMAP feels that, regarding potable water, it's fulfilled its mission to improve its member's quality of life and help the whole community. But you might be thinking: "You've treated water, but shouldn't you try to discover the source of contamination and get rid of it?". And you are absolutely right! In fact, COOMAP has already done it, but this is a subject for another edition of our COOMAP news.

GROWER OF THE MONTH:

Think about such a shy couple that we almost couldn't take a picture of them! These are Mr. José Ramos and Mrs. Rosária Ramos, a beautiful couple with a heart-rending beginning but with a cheering outcome...

Mr. Ramos is a 66-year-old grower who has worked since he was very young, at the age of 7! He was the oldest son a 12-child-family and because of it he had to work hard to help his dad make a living. Consequently, he didn't go to school and didn't learn how to read or write. When he was engaged with Mrs. Ramos he wanted to marry her but his father didn't allow him to do it for some time, because he was still important for the family budget. Only eight months before his wedding, he was allowed to save the money he got from extra working hours so that he could get ready for marriage. At this time both Mr. Ramos and his father didn't have their own land and used to work for neighborhood growers. This situation kept the same until 2000, that is, after working for 25 years as an employee, when he was finally able to buy a small farm.

But what about the money needed to plant coffee trees?

Well, one year later he bought the land, he managed to plant 5000 trees. All of it done after his working hours and on weekends, since he still couldn't make any money from the farm. On the next two years he planted 3000 trees per year. **What about his family?** Differently from his father, José and Rosária had only a daughter, Roseli, who's 33 years old and lives at his parents' farm with her 12-year-old son and her husband, who, just like Mr. Ramos, works for his neighbors at their farms.

When we asked José about his wife, he said that she has always helped him working at farms and she keeps doing it until today. He said: **"She's a very good worker!"**



Nowadays the couple only works at their farm and their daughter also helps them. They do all of the work by themselves and their son-in-law helps them when he gets home from work.

You might have realized that this family in never afraid of working, haven't you?

Since we are talking about family, José has already got plans for his succession. He said that he has already started teaching his daughter how to manage the farm and in the near future he'll transfer the farm to her so that she takes care of everything.

Another important improvement in his farm was the installation of the **filter and chlorinator**, mentioned on the above section. Mr. José is a real enthusiast regarding it. He said that before it, it was common to have dirty water coming out of the kitchen sink and after he received the purifying system this problem vanished. He also said: *"I used to be a bit suspicious about water at our farm because it wasn't rare for us to have diarrhea and after the filter we don't have it anymore. I always recommend it to my neighbors and brothers. My daughter didn't like the chlorine taste but I said to her that if she wanted to drink dirty water she could, but I wouldn't stop using the system with the chlorine pills. But some time later she got used to the taste and we are really satisfied with the water we have now"*. In fact, they were so glad with the system that they've requested a second set for his daughter's house.

Mr. Ramos is a great example as a member since he always attends the courses offered by the co-op, even being illiterate, and puts into practice technical recommendations. Looking back on the hard times, he said, while taking of his hat, as a sign of respect to god: *"I never like to say that I starved when I was a kid because we always had what to eat, even though it was little"*.

Nowadays life's gotten better.

They have a nice house, a car and a tractor, the same as their daughter, who's also got a motorcycle. Since he's got some back problems he said he's planning on quitting farm work within the next years and that's why he's started succession.

Here are some pictures of this beautiful family that features our family growers and their efforts to make a living!



See you next month!