

# A Farmer Monitoring Network as the basis for the establishment of Farmer Research Networks

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In order to generate appropriate technological alternatives to support the sustainable production of organic quinoa by small scale famers, a monitoring system was implemented. This system collects information about' productive practices and the problems faced in the field, including varieties, seeds, pests and diseases, etc.

This information is essential to understand farmers' technological needs and productive patterns. The system was designed to collect information from a representative sample of communities, municipalities and local traditional organizations selected randomly from within the geographic area of quinoa production in Bolivia.

Information produced by the monitoring system will be used by farmers' themselves and is also important for public and private sector actors. This information is highly useful to establish research priorities in terms of breeding and pest control.

## The objective of the monitoring network is to:

Understand farmers' perspectives, conditions and needs in order to set research priorities and develop appropriate technological alternatives for organic quinoa productio.

## Project Objective:

Help develop sustainable, resilient and competitive systems through technological innovation and the development of linkages between public and private actors, and actors from the quinoa value chain

Farmers evaluate improved varieties with early maturity and resistance to mildew, in different production contexts,

Improve IPM strategies for quinoa production and promote their dissemination through collective action

Develop technologies for soil fertility management

Technologies for managing production systems in the southern highlands

## Methods and tools: ODK and Cellphone

**Informant selection**  
**ODK Capacity building**  
**Provision of Materials**

1

Characterization of farmers and production (Varieties, equipment, number of plots, size, management)  
Characterization of the community (cellphones, radio, video, etc.)

**Phone Calls**  
**Service agreements (internet)**

2

Occurrence of biotic events (rain, hale, drought, wind)  
Occurrence of abiotic events (Pests, diseases)

**Demands generate the development of a new APP that provides information to farmers**

3

(Technologies and practices for organic pest control and abiotic risk reduction)

## How are farmers involved currently

300 producers from 15 municipalities from the Southern and Central Highlands of Bolivia participate providing and receiving information about quinoa varieties, seeds, production problems, and yield trends. At the same time they receive information about prices, varieties requested, technology, etc.

## Results and evolution

After the first year of monitoring, we have acquired a better understanding of farmers' needs by region. This is helping us shape research priorities.

- Farmers from the south and center are more concerned about pest control and winds as the worst production problems. In this area research will focus on alternatives for organic pest control and soil management practices.
- Farmers from the north are more concerned about mildew and are open to the evaluation of varieties for resistance.
- Farmers want fast solutions. They want to test what is available now and not wait for long research processes. This is why the Quinoa APP was developed to inform about existing alternatives.

Motivated farmers are being identified to start local research processes.

