

# CROP PRODUCTION IN THE AMAZON BIOME

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In “Mapping Agricultural Production in the Amazon Biome,” the **Observatory for Knowledge and Innovation in Bioeconomics** at the Fundação Getulio Vargas (FGV) sought to examine key characteristics of agricultural production in the Amazon biome, based on official data released by the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE) in its Municipal Agricultural Production (PAM) survey.

The study focused on production located within the Amazon biome – which, according to the IBGE, occupies approximately 49% of the Brazilian territory, contains the largest tropical forest in the world and is home to a vast number of species of flora and fauna. In addition, the Amazon holds 20% of the world's fresh water and constitutes the largest reserve of biological diversity on the planet.

The survey shows that, in 2020, the Amazon accounted for 12.2% of the value of Brazil's agricultural production and 13.7% of the country's harvested area. Production in the region has increased in recent years, with some variation in the array of crops and a territorially concentrated distribution of production.

### **The production of commodities, especially soy**

Between 2000 and 2020, the production value of agricultural activity in the Amazon biome grew, in real terms, by 327.3%. As a result of this expansion, in 2020 the region's production reached the value of R\$ 57.3 billion (or 12.2% of Brazil's total production), spread across 11.4 million hectares of harvested land (or 13.7% of Brazil's total harvested area).

The expansion of production in the Amazon during this period was driven, above all, by soybeans, which accounted for 53.9% of the increase. Currently, the region accounts for 14.9% of the value of Brazilian soybean production. Moreover, soy represents 43.9% of the value of all agricultural production in the Amazon biome.

The state of Mato Grosso deserves special mention, as it is responsible for 58.6% of the total production value in the region and 76.4% of the expansion in the production value of soy (1,563.5% between 2000 and 2020).

### **The production of other crops**

In addition to soybeans, other crops have been gaining prominence in the region over the last twenty years. This is the case of corn (19.5% of the value of production), açai (8.3%), cassava (7.4%), cotton (4.4%), cocoa (3.1%), banana (2.3%), sugarcane (1.9%), pineapple (1.4%) and palm oil (1.4%).

Some products, although not very significant to the total value of production in the Amazon, are extremely relevant for the country. This is the case of açai and palm oil: only 9.7% of the production value of the Amazon comes from these products; however, they each correspond to more than 99% of the national production value of these goods.

Cocoa and cassava produced in the Amazon are also relevant at the national level: they correspond, respectively, to 55.0% and 39.1% of the entire Brazilian production value of these crops.

### **The concentration of production**

The production of commodities and other agricultural goods occurs in a relatively small number of municipalities, which constitute the Amazon's “production capitals.”

In the case of soy, the 15 largest producers account for 56.8% of the production value of this item. Fourteen of these producers are located in Mato Grosso, and the main producing cities are Nova Ubiratã, Diamantino and Querência.

In the case of açai, the 15 largest producers account for 82.6% of total production. The main producing cities are Igarapé-Miri (Pará), which accounted for 33.3% of all production in the region, and Cametá (Pará), which accounted for 14.0%.

The production of palm oil, in turn, is concentrated in 30 municipalities, with the cities of Tailândia (Pará) and Moju (Pará) standing out for respectively producing 38.6% and 17.4% of the total value.

**Participation, by crop, of the Amazon biome in Brazil's total production in 2020**

Products	Harvested area	Production value	Quantity produced
Açaí	99,1%	99,6%	99,5%
Palm oil	93,5%	98,8%	98,7%
Cocoa	27,4%	55,0%	55,9%
Cassava	37,2%	39,1%	35,0%
Pineapple	31,8%	34,6%	30,2%
Banana	15,5%	15,3%	12,6%
Corn	18,4%	15,1%	18,3%
Soybeans	15,9%	14,9%	16,6%
Cotton	15,1%	13,2%	14,0%
Beans	5,5%	5,9%	6,1%
Rice	12,3%	5,5%	5,7%
Coffee	4,0%	2,5%	4,2%
Sugarcane	1,7%	1,7%	1,8%
Total	13,7%	12,2%	-

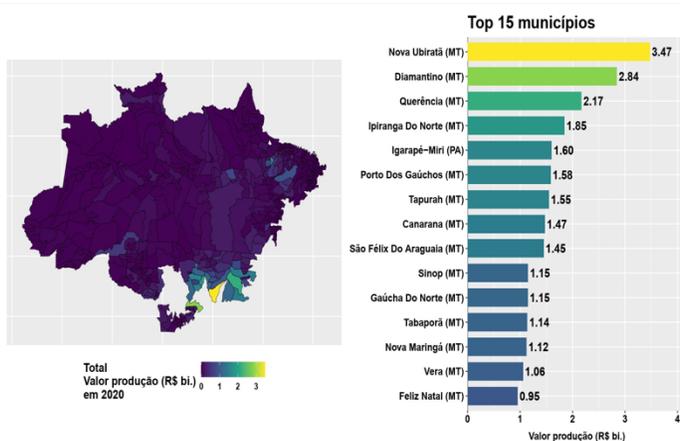
Source: IBGE. Production: Observatory for Knowledge and Innovation in Bioeconomics

**BOX: Amazon Biome versus Legal Amazon: the unit of analysis matters**

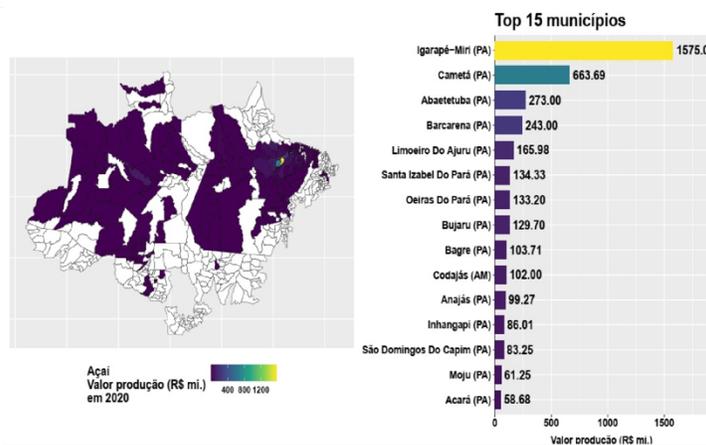
In this study, the Observatory used the Amazon biome – and not the Legal Amazon – as the unit of analysis. This distinction is relevant because the results differ greatly depending on which of these two definitions of the region is employed. While the Amazon biome is defined by geographic boundaries, which have similar geology and climate conditions, the Legal Amazon is a concept determined by the Brazilian government with the purpose of promoting the development of the region's states, which share many of the same socioeconomic challenges. In addition to the entire Amazon biome, the Legal Amazon comprises part of the Cerrado biome and the Pantanal of Mato Grosso, thus forming an area which corresponds to approximately 60% of the national territory. It should be noted that, in 2020, the Legal Amazon contained 23.4 million hectares of harvested area (or 205.3% of the Amazon biome's harvested area) and produced R\$ 117.2 billion (or 204.5% of the biome's production); figures which are, therefore, much higher than those of the Amazon biome.

[Access the complete study here.](#)

**Agricultural Production Value of the Most Productive Municipalities of the Amazon Biome, in 2020 (R\$ billion)**



**Value of Açaí Agricultural Production in the Most Productive Municipalities of the Amazon Biome, in 2020 (R\$ million)**



Source: IBGE. Preparation: Observatory for Knowledge and Innovation in Bioeconomics