

SERICULTURE STATUS AND DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES IN ARGENTINA

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ABSTRACT

Sericulture in Argentina has a considerable development until the 1940s but later, it retracted due to the prevalence of synthetic fibres. After a few decades, as a result of the deep economic crisis, sericulture production got revived again, with even the 1st National Sericulture Conference being held in 2002. The Argentine sericulture value chain is focused on the production and processing of silk on a small scale comprising of about 200 small farmers spread over the country. Mulberry plantations are mainly under tree cutting system. The cocoons are transformed by local artisans and entrepreneurs of design, but quality and sale prices vary widely. Gradually, there was an increase in the number of producers and volume of cocoons, influencing the quality of the final products as well as the development of appropriate technologies for silk processing. A novel proposal emerged was the implementation of sericulture in educative centres. Among institutional goals, it's worth to emphasize the integration of Argentina to RELASEDA, the enactment of a specific national law and the continuity in the management of the Sericulture National Conference. The revival of sericulture activities and its steady growth in Argentina as seen today promises to be tool for development.

Key words: Chain value, sericulture, small farming.