

EXTENDED ABSTRACT

The food sovereignty discourse has gained considerable traction in the Argentinian region in the last few years, summoning supporters in both rural and urban areas. On the other hand, increasing digitalization and datafication in all spheres of human life signal the urgency to address issues of digital technology's adoption, especially in times where a global pandemic has coerced massive transition into digitalized forms of sociality. This process represents current as well as potential advantages and threats for the food sovereignty movement in the region, mainly due to issues of accessibility and inequality. The aim of this research is to discover the way in which digitalization disrupts the organization of food systems and activism under the food sovereignty paradigm, and in which ways digitalization could be beneficial to the movement in the region, and to its vindication and demands. Utilizing a qualitative approach, the research critically reviews literature on the topics of food sovereignty and digitalization, and analyzes the perspectives of a group of food sovereignty activists coming from different backgrounds. The data retrieved from interviews is thus triangulated with that from literature and, supported by critical discourse analysis (CDA) methodology, the different discursive elements are interpreted to help answer the research questions. The investigation determines there is still large potential in interdisciplinary approaches to studying the digital disruption of food systems, and discusses the hazards of digitalization in the aforementioned context, namely the contradictory nature of digital engagement with a food sovereignty discourse of reconnection to Nature and people, and the historical inequality of the region which hinders equal accessibility to resources. As a result of the interviews, it was discovered that the issue of surveillance and data safety does not emerge as a topic of great concern. Additionally, because the COVID-19 pandemic scenario has greatly influenced the role of both digitalization and food sovereignty, a joint development of these is proven to be possible and even desirable in such circumstances. Finally, although there is a strong support of a strategic alliance with the State in order to channel resources and acquire legitimacy, the investigation reinforces alternatives of networking and cooperation for a positive transition into a digital food sovereignty.