FOOD AT THE INTERSECTION OF SOVEREIGNTIES: TRACING THE LOSS OF FOOD SOVEREIGNTY FOR TURKISH STATE AND FARMERS

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ABSTRACT

FOOD AT THE INTERSECTION OF SOVEREIGNTIES: TRACING THE LOSS OF FOOD SOVEREIGNTY FOR TURKISH STATE AND FARMERS

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Global food sovereignty movement claims a certain state of autonomous existence for small farmers, farming communities, and states within the food systems. Turkish state and society have passed through a neoliberal transformation since early 1980s with a significant acceleration in the last twenty years. Isolation of economic policies from politics, and adoption of neoliberal agricultural policies have been going hand in hand with restructuring of the state through legal-institutional regulations conditioned and promoted by global neoliberal governance. This process has resulted in transfer of sovereignty from state and citizens to global corporate capital. In the course of this transformation, small agricultural producers and peasants were dispossessed and lost control over their means of production, mainly the land, labour and seeds. Problematizing the boundaries of sovereignty within food sovereignty theory and suggesting a multi-scalar conception of sovereignty, this dissertation aims to answer following two research questions: i) What are the disciplinary processes of "new constitutionalism" restructuring the state and driving neoliberal transformation of agriculture to the detriment of food sovereignty in Turkey? and ii) What are the manifestations of food sovereignty in daily farming practices and perceptions of small agricultural producers? In this respect, certain factors of dependency, commodification, and dispossession were identified in farmers' lives in relation to retreat of the state from agriculture. After all, capacity of food sovereignty theory to serve extension of global

opposition front in diverse geographies including Turkey against corporate food regime was elaborated in this dissertation.

Keywords: Food sovereignty, new constitutionalism, agriculture, food regimes, neoliberalism

ÖZ

EGEMENLİKLERİN KESİŞİMİNDEKİ GIDA: TÜRK DEVLETİ VE ÇİFTÇİSİ İÇİN GIDA EGEMENLİĞİNİN KAYBEDİLİŞİNİN İZLERİNİ SÜRMEK

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Küresel gıda egemenliği hareketi, küçük çiftçiler, çiftçi toplulukları ve devletler için gıda sistemleri içinde bağımsız bir varoluş hali talep etmektedir. Türkiye devleti ve toplumu, 1980'lerden bu yana, son yirmi yılda da artan bir hızla neoliberal bir dönüşümden geçmiştir. Ekonomi politikalarının siyasetten yalıtılması ve neoliberal tarım politikalarının benimsenmesi süreci, küresel neoliberal yönetişimin şart koyduğu ve desteklediği yasal-kurumsal düzenlemeler aracılığıyla devletin yeniden yapılandırılmasıyla birlikte gerçekleşmiştir. Bu süreç, devlet ve vatandaştan küresel şirket sermayesine doğru bir egemenlik devrine sebep olmuştur. Bu dönüşüm esnasında küçük tarımsal üreticiler ve köylüler mülksüzleşmiş; başta toprak, emek ve tohum olmak üzere üretim araçlarının kontrolünü kaybetmişlerdir. Gıda egemenliği teorisi içindeki egemenliğin sınırlarını sorgulayarak ve bu bağlamda çok ölçekli bir egemenlik kavramsallaştırması önererek, bu tez şu iki araştırma sorusunu cevaplamayı amaçlamaktadır. i) Devleti yeniden yapılandıran ve gıda egemenliğine zarar verecek şekilde tarımın neoliberal dönüşümüne yön veren "yeni anayasalcılığın" disiplin süreçleri nelerdir? ve ii) Küçük tarımsal üreticinin gündelik pratikleri ve tutumlarında gıda egemenliği tezahürleri nelerdir? Bu bağlamda, devletin tarımdan çekilmesiyle alakalı olarak çiftçilerin hayatında yer alan belirli bağımlılık, metalaşma ve mülksüzleşme etkenleri tespit edilmiştir. Sonuç olarak, bu tezde gıda egemenliği

teorisinin Türkiye dahil çeşitli coğrafyalarda şirket gıda rejimine karşı bir muhalif cephenin yaygınlaştırılmasına hizmet etme kapasitesi ele alınmıştır.

Anahtar kelimeler: Gıda egemenliği, yeni anayasalcılık, tarım, gıda rejimleri, neoliberalizm

To my mom and dad who earned a living out of soil and lightened my path from peasantry to academy.

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This dissertation was written during the unprecedented COVID-19 pandemic, when the humanity faced a historical threat to its existence and had a chance to slow down and think over if the current systems of production, consumption, distribution, and management so much determined by market exchange relations were the root causes of the threats against humanity. Despite all the discouraging and disturbing factors before individual motivation and willingness to study on any social problem in this catastrophic period, I could luckily manage to complete this work by close and sincere guidance of Assoc. Prof. Dr. Aylin Topal, and critical contributions of Assoc. Prof. Dr. Pınar Bedirhanoğlu, Assist Prof. Dr. Ömür Birler, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Cenk Saraçoğlu, and Assist. Prof. Dr. Derya Nizam Bilgiç in the final revisions. I had started my PhD journey believing in the power of knowledge and happiness of being on the learner path. It took quite a long time for me to complete this work while I had a professional career outside academia. However, I always felt that involvement in academia let me think outside the box and broaden my critical vision towards social phenomena. I am so thankful to METU PADM and all contributing scholars that helped me build this critical mindset. I should not miss appreciating my Güven's affectionate support and Tortor's fluffy accompaniment throughout all the study desk shifts and field trips for this dissertation. I have been a lucky peasant child whose parent appreciated knowledge and wisdom and raised their children with this vision. Great thanks to my great family and colleagues who always supported me to allocate time for this "luxurious pursuit" in a country where one needs to work very hard to earn a living.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ADC:	Agricultural Development Cooperative
AoA:	Agreement on Agriculture
ARIP:	The Agricultural Reform Implementation Project
CAP:	Common Agricultural Policy
Çiftçi-Sen:	Farmers' Union
CİMER:	Central Information and Complaint Centre of the Presidency of Turkish Republic
ÇKS:	Farmer Registry System
DIS:	Direct Income Support
DUS:	Distinctiveness, Uniformity and Stability
EBA:	Enabling the Business of Agriculture
EEC:	European Economic Community
EPO:	European Patent Office
ERL:	Economic Reform Loan
EU:	European Union
FAO:	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FDNI:	First Nations Development Institute
GATT:	General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade
GMO:	Genetically Modified Organism
IBRD:	International Bank for Reconstruction and Development
IFIs:	International Financial Institutions
IMF:	International Monetary Fund
KKB:	Credit Registration Bureau
LVC:	La Via Campesina
MNC:	Multinational Companies
MTP:	National Agriculture Project
NGO:	Non-Governmental Organisation
OECD:	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OHCHR:	UN Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner Research and Development: R&D
SPS:	Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures

TAR-GEL:	Development of Agricultural Extension Services Project
TARSİM:	Agricultural Insurances Pool
TBT:	Technical Barriers to Trade
TGNA:	Turkish Grand National Assembly
TİGEM:	Turkish General Directorate of Agricultural Enterprises
TMBP:	National Unity in Agriculture Project
TNCs:	Transnational Corporations
TRIPS:	Trade Related Intellectual Property Rights Agreement of WTO
TÜMKÖYSEN:	The Syndicate of All Producer Peasants
TurkStat:	Turkish Statistical Institute
TÜRK-TED:	Turkish Seed Industry Association
TÜRKTOB:	Union of Turkish Seed Producers
UN:	United Nations
UPOV:	Union for the Protection of New Varieties of Plants
WB:	World Bank
WTO:	World Trade Organization

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Food is essential for continuation of life. Food is laboured for, garnished, served up, be thankful for, fought for, distributed, wasted up, and so on and so forth. Food is here, there and anywhere crosscutting countless acts of humankind. Value of food has various determinants and reflections in biological, cultural, economic, political, and sociological terms. Focusing on food just as a commodity to be produced, exchanged, and consumed should be the result of a lame perception on this multivalent concept. However, exchange value of commodities is the driving force for capitalism and this value is determined in the market. Neoliberalism which can be referred as the latest theoretical and practical manifestation of capitalism glorifies the free global market where commodities are produced on the basis of comparative advantages, exchanged across the borders, and value is determined as a result of this process. From shoes to music, a vast universe of concrete and abstract things is considered as commodities as long as they are produced for exchange in neoliberal market society. Food is not outside of this universe. Food is predominantly treated as a commodity in the market which is subject to the law of demand and supply. This perspective takes food from the realm of rights, social justice, and politics to the realm of exchange value, profit making and neoliberal economics.

Small agricultural producers in Turkey have been subject to a growing pressure by global agri-food capital against their autonomy over the production decisions by means of legal, economic and trade policy frameworks throughout the liberalization of the national economy in the last forty years. By means of legal and institutional regulations conditioned and/or promoted by global neoliberal governance, rights of producers and citizens are transferred to agricultural corporate capital dispossessing small agricultural producers and peasants. Right to food and food sovereignty, in this context, stands out as a useful framework to understand a broad set of rights associated with production and consumption of food under threat by various liberalization steps.

Initially declared to world public opinion in the World Food Summit in 1996 by *La Via Campesina* (LVC), food sovereignty is defined by the global movement of peasants and small farmers, LVC (2007), as "the right of peoples to healthy and culturally appropriate food produced through ecologically sound and sustainable methods, and their right to define their own food and agriculture systems" and owned by a growing network of local grassroots movements as an alternative discourse against "food security" which is indifferent to where, how and by whom the food is produced. The concept of food sovereignty is fairly new and passing through a legitimation process against the food security concept that has long been dominating the global development agenda. Pioneered by LVC as the umbrella organization speaking for, food sovereignty is evolving as a theory and practice all over the world.

It is crucial to start discussing food sovereignty by explaining the question of seed sovereignty first. Food is a product of a long agricultural journey, which mostly starts with planting of seeds into land. Seed is the chest where all the genetic assets of plants are stored and transferred to next generations. Having autonomy and independence over saving, using, breeding, bartering and/or exchanging seeds is one of the initial prerequisites for a broader experience of food sovereignty. Ownership over seeds is one of the central topics within food sovereignty as a theory and practice. Turkish producers and consumers have been faced with a growing challenge against their food sovereignty by the gradually institutionalized and extended applications of plant variety protection regimes and certified seed use in the last 16 years since the Seed Law No. 5553 entered into force in 2006. National laws regulating agriculture and food production have been serving extension of commodification starting from seeds, and rights of private capital in the expense of dissolution of peasantry and small producers in the country.

Considering food sovereignty as a certain state of autonomous existence in a food system for farmers, communities, and states, "new constitutionalism" has the potential to provide us with a useful analytical framework to understand the processes behind the pro-market transformation of agriculture in Turkey and consequent disruption of food sovereignty for the mentioned subjects. Pro-market transformation of agriculture and food production has not been limited with commodification of seeds but included a broad range of liberalisation reforms that have been either conditioned or promoted by means of private and public international law imposed on Turkish farmers and citizens

mainly by World Trade Organization (WTO), World Bank (WB), International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the European Union (EU).

There is a growing literature on the relationship between neoliberal global capitalism and food sovereignty in terms of the conflicts between the rights of citizens, producers and consumers, and the corporate capital across the world. The issue is closely followed by rural sociologists, agricultural economists, and political scientists. Seminal works of Philip Mc Michael (2009), Henry Bernstein (2014), Jan Douwe van der Ploeg (2014, 2015, 2017), Hannah Wittman (2011), Raj Patel (2009), Amy Trauger (2015), Eric-Hold Gimenez (2009, 2019), Mark Edelman (2015), and Kim Burnett and Sophia Murphy (2014) put the building blocks for food sovereignty as a theory in itself. On the other hand, new constitutionalism debate mainly taking place in neo-Gramscian international political economy literature has the potential to provide comprehensive explanations to the global processes in detriment of food sovereignty for millions of producers, by contributions mainly of Gill (1998, 2000, 2007, 2014), Cutler (2014), Brenner, Peck & Theodore (2014), Schneiderman (2014), and Elver (2014).

New constitutionalism is conceptualized by Stephan Gill (1998) as the umbrella concept, referring to three main processes through which neo-liberal reforms and private property rights are embedded in the national laws, rules, regulations, procedures and institutions.

Gill argues (1998) that these three main processes have been serving the restructuring of state as a facilitator of market, extension of the market for fictitious commodities, and legitimisation of the neoliberal rule of law and containment of the opposition forces against neoliberal restructuring. Gill (2000, 11-15; 2014, 29-44) coins these three processes as also “three dimensions of new constitutionalism” and lists them as follows: measures to reconfigure state apparatuses, which means separation of the economic and the political through various mechanisms so as to eliminate democratic political control over economic policies; measures to construct and extend capitalist markets which means legal and institutional guarantees for capital accumulation; and measures for dealing with dislocations and contradictions which means legitimation of neoliberal globalisation and co-optation of the political opposition.

There are also several studies that serve to contextualize these theoretical discussions in the Turkish case, by mainly analysing the relationship between global capitalism and national agriculture and peasantry. Putting aside the historical debate on structure of agricultural producers in Turkey between Boratav and Erdost (1969), Murat Öztürk (2012), Çağlar Keyder and Zafer Yenal (2013) and Zülküf Aydın (2010,2017) provide up-to-date sociological perspectives to the relationship between capitalism and agricultural producers in Turkey. On the other hand, there are two case studies by Gürel (2018) and Kara (2020) analysing food sovereignty impact of local civil initiatives in Turkey. Hence, despite the valuable contributions of these important works, there is still a need for further research on the practical implications of food sovereignty in Turkey.

Built on these existing studies, this dissertation dwells on seeds and small agricultural producers in Turkey tracing three processes of new constitutionalism. The study intends to provide a broader analysis of the impact of a locked in neoliberal rule of law on right-to-food and food sovereignty in Turkey.

Aiming to question the main disciplinary processes of neoliberalism over the state and small agricultural producers in Turkey along with resulting outcomes with respect to food sovereignty, this study presents both a macro-level analysis on neoliberal restructuring of state to the detriment of food sovereignty and a micro-level analysis on changing aspects in lives of small agricultural producers. Adopting a multi-scalar conception of sovereignty, neoliberal transformation of agriculture and resulting food sovereignty outcomes are laid out in this dissertation by resorting to factual evidence at institutional identity of state as well as the subjective experiences and perceptions of sovereignty at individual identity of small producers in Turkey.

Acknowledging that the state can never be totally excluded from relations of capital accumulation and absolute state sovereignty from the capital is beyond the realm of possibility, this dissertation considers sovereignty as something shared by states and other agents at various scales in the context of an interdependent and complex global agri-food system, and argues that Turkish state and farmers have been losing sovereignty against global agri-food capital by the help of legal-institutional reform processes introduced upon the country's neo-liberal integration to global market and

respective governance mechanisms in the last twenty years, and this resulted in a deepened loss of food sovereignty for both the state and the farmers

1.1. Research Questions

Agriculture and food are considered as subjects of politics, economics, and human rights in this work. Concerning the theoretical and conceptual compass that guided this research study, new constitutionalism is used as the analytical framework to unfold the legal-institutional reform processes operated to restructure the state for the interest of global corporate capital, whereas manifestations of food sovereignty in daily farming practices and perceptions of small agricultural producers in Turkey are assessed through a customized farmer survey based on six dimensions of food sovereignty. Following two research questions are scrutinised within this context:

i) What are the disciplinary processes of new constitutionalism restructuring the state and driving neoliberal transformation of agriculture to the detriment of food sovereignty in Turkey?
ii) What are the manifestations of food sovereignty in daily farming practices and perceptions of small agricultural producers?

1.2. Design of the Field Study

Neoliberal transformation of agriculture and resulting disruptions in food sovereignty in Turkey are assessed by analytically bridging two separate theoretical frameworks in this dissertation: new constitutionalism, and food sovereignty. Gill's three processes of new constitutionalism is used as the analytical framework for macro-level legal-institutional analysis of state restructuring in the context of food sovereignty in Turkey and a customized Farmer Survey for Food Sovereignty Assessment that includes semi-structured, in-depth interviews is used to analyse micro-level individual experiences and perceptions of food sovereignty at farmers' level with regard to small agricultural producers of tomato in Ayaş and wheat in Polatlı.

1.2.1. Identification of the Unit of Analysis for a Food Sovereignty Assessment in Turkey

This study acknowledges the limits of post-developmentalist focus on politics of knowledge and political economic focus on modernist development discourse, as it is clearly presented in Büke's (2018) work. In this respect, this dissertation refrains either from post-developmentalist binary positioning of "peasant versus corporation" and romantic glorification of a frozen peasantry or from tacit envy of political economy to capitalist development, association of peasantry and small commodity production with backwardness, and taking of the nation state as the prime unit of analysis. A multi-scalar conception of sovereignty is adopted in this study and selected case studies are not location-based but product-based in order to shed light on a rich group of agricultural producers in the country.

Farming constitutes the initial phase before food production. That is why, identifying the characteristics of farmers in a food system carries utmost importance to reveal the source and level of sovereignty in a food system. Downscaling sovereignty analysis from state-centric ontological and methodological foundations to the farmer-level will grant us a broader vision of sovereignty in a relational context.

Farms and farmers are classified on the basis of multiple criteria by several scholars. Douglas J. and McConnell John L. Dillon (1997) propose six different types of farms in their paper published by FAO

- Type 1. Small subsistence-oriented family farms.
- Type 2. Small semi-subsistence or part-commercial family farms, usually of one half to two hectares
- Type 3. Small independent specialized family farms.
- Type 4. Small dependent specialized family farms, often with the family as tenants.
- Type 5. Large commercial family farms usually specialized and operated along modified estate lines.

- Type 6. Commercial estates, usually mono-crop and with hired management and absentee ownership.

The purpose of farm, the degree of independence (system boundaries, debt and market relations, etc.), and the size are taken as three main criteria for this typology. A more simplified typology is utilized by Van der Ploeg (2008) where he distinguishes family farming from corporate farming while proposing another division between entrepreneurial family farming versus peasant farming inside the broader group of family farming.

Agrarian question since the beginning of the industrial revolution and throughout the gradual influx of capitalism into agriculture have been occupied by discussions about the subject of agricultural production. Aydın (2017, pp.15-18) presents a useful account of this discussion taking side with Kautsky and his successors and prefers using the term "small agricultural producers" instead of "peasants" in traditional sense to refer the contemporary agricultural producers outside corporate food industry.

Distribution of land and structure of agricultural production within commodification processes of capitalist economic consolidation have long been a matter of discussion in Turkish academia. While Boratav (1969) argued that the predominant form of production in Turkish agriculture is simple commodity production and those small producers producing for auto-consumption and market are losing their "surplus product not to feudal elements but to merchant and usurer capital", Erdost (1969) asserted that dominant form of production in Turkish agriculture is feudal and semi-feudal. (cited in Seddon and Margulies 1984, p.2) This dichotomy is still being discussed in Turkish academia despite declining interest. Today, Keyder and Yenal (2013) and Keyder (1988) side with Boratav, arguing that Turkish agriculture is primarily performed by petty commodity producers who own small amounts of land and use their own labour. Land distribution legislation throughout the Republican era has managed to prevent widespread feudal production relations with an exception on Southeastern and Eastern Turkey where feudal relations have survived and paved the way towards proletarianisation and outmigration in these regions. (Keyder& Yenal 2013, pp.163-168)

Peasant farming has been at the centre of political agency in the original food sovereignty claims by *La Via Campesina*, which literally refers to "peasant way" for a food sovereign world. Taking all these data and historical discussion on structure of agricultural producers in Turkey, it is plausible to say that small family farming is the defining typology of agricultural producers in Turkey. However, this group includes peasants as well as entrepreneurial family farmers which has been becoming more prevalent as part of commodification process of agriculture in the country. Considering the initial purpose of this study to downscale the subject of sovereignty, unit of analysis for the farmer survey is identified as the small agricultural producers which include both peasant and entrepreneurial family farmers in the country. However, adopting a multi-scalar food sovereignty analysis, legal-institutional identity of state is also taken as the other unit of analysis to be examined for the upper-level sovereignty analysis. The transfer of sovereignty of the state and farmer-citizens to the investors and agri-food companies through processes of new constitutionalism is traced both in legal-institutional identity of the state and individual identity of farmers. Farmer survey, in this respect, goes beyond tracking the reflections of neoliberal state re-structuring in farmers' lives and provides a broader assessment of food sovereignty perceptions and experiences of farmers, positioning farmers as independent political agents who are not only passive receivers of neo-liberal state policies but also active agents reproducing or resisting these policies.

1.2.2. Sampling and Data Collection Method

There have been several challenges in defining the population, designing sampling frame and sampling for a food sovereignty research in Turkey. Weiss (1995) recommends that below criteria should be considered in determining the sampling method:

1. Nature and quality of frame
2. Availability of auxiliary information about units or the frame
3. Accuracy requirements and the need to measure accuracy
4. Whether detailed analysis of the sample expected
5. Costs and operational concerns

Given the restrictions of COVID-19 pandemic and difficulty of organizing extensive face-to-face field activities, there have been serious difficulties in determining the sample and access to informants.

Tomato producers in Ayaş and wheat producers in Polatlı districts of Ankara constituted strong alternatives to include into the research sample based on the level of satisfaction of Weiss' criteria. Tomato and wheat producers are included in the Farmer Survey sample in order to cover both a staple food that is critical for nutrition of the citizens and a significant vegetable product subject to international trade and critical for incomes of small producers. Both products have a significant place in global seed market which make them substantial in food sovereignty discussion. Wheat, maize, and tomatoes are the top three seed varieties that seed variety registration and certification applications are received by Seed Registration and Certification Centre (*Tohumluk Tescil ve Sertifikasyon Merkezi*), which is the authorized public office in Turkey to run Distinctness, Uniformity and Stability (DUS) Testing for seed varieties within the administration of Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry.

Predicating on Turkish Statistical Institute's (TurkStat 2016) data on distribution of land by farm size and the existing national threshold for small family farming support scheme (5 decares and below) as well as the relatively larger sizes of agricultural holdings with entrepreneurial family farming features in wheat production, four different size of producers had been planned to be included in the farmer interviews depending on the availability of interviewees for each group:

1. Producers holding 5 decares and less of land
2. Producers holding 6-50 decares of land
3. Producers holding 51-500 decares of land
4. Producers holding more than 500 decares of land

The first three groups cover majority of small agricultural producers in the country whereas agricultural holdings with 500 decares and bigger land size constitute less than 5% of the producers in the country. (TurkStat 2016) Average farm size is indicated as 6 hectares in the Investment Office of the Presidency of Turkish Republic and more than 60% of producers are holding lands below this average.

Two different crops, tomatoes and wheat are identified to determine composition of small agricultural producers that are included in the sample However, after starting the initial farmer interviews, it turned to be difficult to comply with this initial sampling plan as majority of tomato producers in Ayaş were observed to be farming 10 decares or less land, whereas an average of 500 decares were prevalent among wheat producers in Polatlı, and agricultural holdings with 1000-1500 decares of land were also sharing similar characteristics with smaller farmers in terms of their problems with regard to cost of inputs, financial burdens, uneasy relation with international trade, and impact of climate change and environmental degradation.

Henceforth, the following interviewees are included in the interview plan throughout a purposive and snowball sampling process used in a mixed method. Farmers from different age groups (18-35, 36-50, 51+), different education backgrounds, and different relations with the market representing experiences of both men and women were purposefully identified for this study. A few of stakeholders from seed industry and farmer organizations were also interviewed simultaneously with the farmer interviews throughout the field study. Below is the distribution of sample by age groups and educational attainments. Further details are presented in the Chapter 6.

Table 1: *Distribution of Sample by Age Groups*

	Ayaş, tomato farmers	**Polatlı, wheat farmers**	**Interviewees with Stakeholders**	**Total**
18-35 age group	1	3	0	4
36-50 age group	3	3	2	8
51+ age group	4	2	2	8
TOTAL	**8**	**8**	**4**	**20**

Table 2: *Distribution of Sample by Educational Attainment*

	Ayaş, tomato farmers	**Polatlı, wheat farmers**	**Interviewees with Stakeholders**	**Total**
Primary Education	3	2	0	5
Secondary Education	4	3	1	8
Higher Education	1	3	3	7
TOTAL	**8**	**8**	**4**	**20**

The fieldwork design stage was informed by several expert interviews. The crops to be included in the sample were identified under guidance of the insights received from these interviews with a professor of field crops from the Ankara University, Faculty of Agricultural Engineering, a young agricultural engineer/researcher working for the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, and an extension officer/agricultural engineer working for a multinational agri-food company operating in Turkey, and Ankara. Sample frame and question form for farmer survey were finalized based on the insights out of discussions and consultations with these experts following a desk review. In this regard, two different crops, tomatoes and wheat are identified to determine composition of small agricultural producers that are included in the sample.

Purposive non-probability sampling and snowball sampling methods are used in line with the qualitative elements of the research and as a response to the challenge of an undefined population. As Marshall (1996) recommends, non-probability sampling is preferred in this qualitative research due to the absence of the full knowledge on population, inevitability of sampling error and biases in small samples, and varying degrees of observation, understanding and interpretation capacity of informants. Gender dimension has been a crosscutting matter of concern in selection of the sample. Both in Ayaş and Polatlı, a purposive selection among available interviewees was adopted to include women in the study as much as possible. Despite all the efforts, only three women could respond to the interview in full extent, whereas wives and daughters of the male interviewees which were mostly farmers as well expressed their perceptions on an ad-hoc manner during the interviews with the main interviewee. Distinctions between their perceptions were specially noted in the transcriptions.

Tomato producers are involved in the sample for following reasons:

- Low rates of national self-sufficiency in tomato seed production,
- High concentration of capital in global tomato seed market,
- Comparatively expensive price of tomato seeds in global seed market,
- High rates of raw and processed tomato products exports of the county,
- Geographical proximity to one of the biggest tomato-producing districts of Ankara (Ayaş) which is known for its heirloom tomato seed variety,

- Tomatoes like most of the vegetables require irrigation and higher need for water poses additional challenges by climate change and drought on tomato producers,
- Tomato is a labour-intensive crop that may offer more insights to identify the position of Turkey in the third food regime, respective producer profile in the country.

On the other hand, wheat producers are involved in the sample for following reasons:

- Turkey is the gene centre of wheat,
- Wheat is a staple food with high importance in national diet,
- The country is officially reported to be self-sufficient in terms of seed production,
- The country is the seventh biggest wheat importer in the world, using a significant amount of wheat for food processing for exports,
- Wheat production is highly mechanized; requiring too few agricultural labour, and this has implications for producer's profile and respective food sovereignty perceptions.

1.2.3. Data Analysis

Data is collected through participant observations, field diaries, and semi-structured, in-depth interviews with selected informants. By virtue of these multiple tools, a broader insight about the context of the data collected in interviews is reached.

Considering the vast amount of qualitative data received after each interview and field visit, data analysis is spread over time from the start of interviews and questions are updated and expanded upon the initial insights from the first interviews. Qualitative data are coded and categorized under dimensions of food sovereignty and major themes and patterns are identified based on the interview notes and transcripts. Manifestations of the six dimensions of food sovereignty with specific reference to importance of seeds in daily farming practices of the tomato and wheat farmers are laid out based on the findings from the interviews.

1.3. Structure of the Dissertation

This study is organized under seven chapters. The first chapter introduces the research questions, structure of the dissertation, and design of the field study. The section on design of the field study has a special focus on methodology applied in the field research explaining how the unit of analysis is identified for the Farmer Survey, defining the sampling and data collection method, and laying out how data was analysed.

The second chapter puts forth a theoretical and conceptual framework that is helpful in understanding neoliberal transformation of agriculture and food, and the rise of global food sovereignty movement as a theory and practice. For that purpose, evolution of global food sovereignty movement in the context of third food regime is presented first. Then, an important discussion on boundaries of sovereignty in the context of global food sovereignty movement is laid out. Sovereignty concept is carried beyond its original state-centric juridical and territorial meaning and expanded in a way to interlink autonomy and independence in legal-institutional identity of the state with individual identity of the farmer. Importance of seed sovereignty in the context of food sovereignty is assessed in detail in this chapter. After making the anti-capitalist positioning of the food sovereignty movement clear, new constitutionalism is elaborated in an attempt to link the discussion to state restructuring and neoliberal transformation.

After this theoretical and conceptual analysis, the third chapter lays out the state of agricultural production, consumption, producers' profile, available statistical indicators of food security, and commodification trajectory of seed market in Turkey since 1980s by resorting to factual data.

The fourth chapter addresses operationalizing Gill's three processes of new constitutionalism to analyse the case of Turkish state restructuring and transformation of agriculture in the country. Certain dimensions and indicators are suggested and applied in Turkish case for each of these processes. Increasing the power of executive for an enabling state, instilling the sublime rights of global investors to the national law, and legitimation and extension of consent for the neoliberal food and agricultural policy are elaborated through customized indicators developed to review legislative and institutional reforms that took place in Turkey in the last twenty years.

The fifth chapter presents how the concept of food sovereignty is interpreted by Turkish civil society and academia, identifies gaps in the literature and potential contributions of this study to the literature, and explains how six principles of food sovereignty is operationalized in the Farmer Survey applied in Ayaş and Polatlı districts. Following points of inquiry are applied to tomato and wheat producers to get a general picture of state of food sovereignty perceived and experienced by farmers:

- Is food produced for feeding the people first, or trade is the main determinant in agricultural policies and farmers' choices?
- Are farmers aware of the importance of resource autonomy in terms of seed inputs and what is their experience with formal and informal seed market?
- Is agriculture providing secure livelihoods for small agricultural producers, what are the main threats?
- Is there a live local agricultural market? How does distance between producers and consumers affect local food systems?
- Who has the control over food? Do farmers participate in food policies?
- How is the authentic knowledge of farmers positioned visa vis corporate-scientific knowledge?
- Do farmers have awareness on preserving the nature? How do they see the changes in relationship between their farming practices and environment?

The sixth chapter lays out the findings from the Farmer Survey in an attempt to identify subjective experiences and perceptions of farmers of two critical products with regard to six dimensions of food sovereignty and reveal the relationship between the expansion of commodification in agriculture and fading food sovereignty in the country. While tomato farmers are more severely affected by expansion of global hybrid seed market as they are more dependent to hybrid seed varieties, they are on the other hand less affected by international trade of tomatoes as they have shorter distance to their consumers, they produce mainly for local markets, and imports is not used as a disciplinary power by state over tomato producers. On the other hand, wheat producers are found to benefit from informal seed market, but they are badly hit by excessive wheat imports allowed by the state to decline local prices. With regard to food sovereignty outcomes, both of

the producer groups are affected by international trade at different ends of production. While tomato producers are more affected in terms of their resource autonomy due to expanding global hybrid seed market, wheat producers suffer more from free trade agreements and imports decisions of the state and consequent declines in price of their product. After laying out multiple indicators of dispossession of peasants, peasant farming in Turkey is found to face a significant extinction problem, giving more space for entrepreneurial and corporate farming typologies. This brings about new discussions on future of food sovereignty in the county.

Finally, the seventh and the concluding chapter interlinks legal-institutional transformations of state and daily experiences of small agricultural producers and identifies knots between these transformations taking place at different scales. Penetration of capitalist disciplinary rule of law in national law throughout pro-market reforms in legislation regulating agriculture and trade, increased power of executive visa vis legislative and judicial powers of state granting excessive power to the President that is excluded from check and balance mechanisms, and legitimation of pro-market reforms via granting of limited political participation and financial support for small agricultural producers along with adoption of a "national and domestic" policy discourse are identified as the processes limiting sovereignty of state and sovereignty of individual farmers visa vis global capital. Neither the state nor small agricultural farmers are found to be autonomous subjects taking their own decisions on agricultural production independent from global corporate capital. Transfer of sovereignty from state and citizen/producers to global capital is identified in the macro level neoliberal transformation of state and micro-level changes in farmers' individual experiences. This concluding chapter also suggests further fields of inquiry to be focused by future research on food sovereignty in Turkey, such as changes in agricultural labour processes and rise of seasonal agricultural work, withdrawal of state from extension services (agricultural training and consultation), rising interest of urban middle class on rural settlements, problem of rural leadership and lack of farmers' political organisation, and generational gaps in perceptions on agriculture among young and old farmers.

CHAPTER 2

CONCEPTUAL AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Presenting the conceptual and theoretical framework that food sovereignty movement is built on carries importance for understanding historical facts and ideological perspectives behind the food sovereignty movement as a resistance movement against neoliberal transformation of food from being a subject of rights and democratic politics into a subject of exchange and market economics. In this respect, this chapter elaborates concepts and theories on food regimes, sovereignty, seed sovereignty, food sovereignty, and new constitutionalism with reference to major academic literature. Relations between disciplinary tools of global capitalism, commodification of agriculture, and different scales of sovereignty are analysed in this chapter, which ends up with identification of the missing points of enquiry in the relevant literature and explanation of how this dissertation will contribute to existing knowledge base in the field.

2.1. Food Regimes, Third Food Regime and Food Sovereignty Under Threat

Analysing food from political economy lenses is definitely not a new thing. Very much inspired by world systems theory, "food regimes" has been the theoretical backbone which food sovereignty is built on. Food regimes were initially conceptualised by Harriet Friedman in 1987 as a theoretical tool to analyse political economy of food within historical evolution of capitalism and was improved by significant contributions of Philip McMichael since then. McMichael (2009, p.139) states that "food regime analysis emerged to explain the strategic role of agriculture and food in the construction of the world capitalist economy." In order to understand the historical development of capitalist food production and consumption, and food sovereignty as a countermovement, it is crucial to lay out the fundamentals of food regimes first.

Food regimes is an analytical framework that historicizes and politicizes food in the course of capitalism. Initially adopting a methodological nationalism to lay out the flows of food, capital and power among nations and consequent dependency relations

reproduced, food regimes has evolved into analysing relative powers of a diverse set of social forces that include state, corporations, social movements, and citizens as individuals. Friedman and McMichael (1989) categorised two historical food regimes in their seminal essay titled as "Agriculture and the State System: The Rise and Decline of National Agricultures, 1870 to Present". The first food regime refers to the era of British hegemony in which cheap agricultural products from the colonies were manufactured in Europe in the late 19th century. As McMichael (2009) puts it neatly in his elaborate analysis on genealogy of food regimes, tropical and exotic crops of the colonies such as sugar, tea, coffee, bananas, palm oil and peanuts, and grains and meat like staple food produced by the settler colonies (US, Australia, Canada, Uruguay, Argentina and South Africa) flew into Europe and Britain via free trade imperialism, and those cheap foods were bringing about accumulation of capital in Britain and Europe during this first food regime. In this era, the rhetoric of "free trade" was strategically used by the Great Britain to foster its Colonial Project (Friedman 2005).

Second food regime, on the other hand, refers to the era of the US hegemony between 1945-1973 in which food surpluses out of intensive agriculture in the US were utilised to build the Development Project in the Third World to contain communist expansion and foster the US hegemony (McMichael 2009, p.141). Green Revolution and food aids, in this regard, was introduced to post-colonial world to "expand staple food supplies and de-politicise the countryside" (McMichael 2009, p.145). US utilised the discourse of *development* strategically to build its hegemony in the so-called Third World. This era is marked by the promotion of national development policies of this geo-political part of the world by extensive aid programmes of the US. Second food regime is attributed particular importance in terms of its impact on building an import dependency relation between the North and the South despite the explicit discourse of "national development" promoted in this context.

Based on these historical and theoretical premises, McMichael introduces the "third food regime" as the latest phase of food economics, also referred as corporate food regime. McMichael (2009, p.148) argues that the third food regime is:

> ...organised around a politically constructed division of agricultural labour between Northern staple grains traded for Southern high-value products (meats, fruits and vegetables.) The free trade rhetoric associated with the global rule (through states) of the

> World Trade Organisation suggests that this ordering represents the blossoming of a free trade regime, and yet the implicit rules (regarding agro-exporting) preserve farm subsidies for Northern powers alone, while Southern states have been forced to reduce agricultural protections and import staple, and export high-value, foods.

McMichael (2009, p.142) points that this new historical phase, coined as the third food regime, emerged in the late 1980s, and WTO was positioned at the centre, functioning to curb agricultural subsidies in the South and open agriculture to free trade. Relying on a shared analytical framework of food regimes, focal points of McMichael and Friedman have differentiated since then. McMichael's focus has turned on dispossession and extinction of peasant agriculture as a result of corporate food regime. On the other hand, Friedman (2005, pp.227-228) has paid more attention to "corporate-environmental regime", in her own words, and focused on food standards, environmental demands raised by diverse social forces, and positioning of corporate power.

Third food regime carried food regime analysis from a state-centred ground to a transnational ground which acknowledges the role of various social movements and actors in construction of food regimes. McMichael's putting great emphasis on the power of peasant movements and positioning of peasants as the anti-thesis of capital is criticized by Bernstein (2016, p.638) on the ground that this binary positioning involves bias and prevents objective testing of peasant agriculture versus industrial agriculture. However, despite the bias involved, this ground brings us closer to the relational perspective on sovereignty and opens up space for conceptualizing multiple of sovereigns in food sovereignty discussion. State sovereignty in this latest food regime is regarded as a means of securing corporate property and investment rights, R&D functions of the state are mostly transferred to private sector leaving plant breeding like strategic agricultural activities to corporate actors, and global food supply is provided more by operations of global value chains managed by Transnational Corporations (TNCs) that privilege providing high-value food to rich consumers rather than food needs of a more crowded population of the poor consumers. (McMichael 1992, 2009; Pistorius and van Wyk 1999, p. 51)

2.2. Drawing New Boundaries for Sovereignty

Political meaning of the sovereignty concept is transformed in the context of food sovereignty. Originating from the Peace of Westphalia (1648), "sovereignty" has long been defined as a fundamental juridical and territorial feature of modern states system. Juridical and territorial authority over a given time, space and community has been the essence of sovereignty claims by states. "Supreme authority within a territory" has been the most basic definition of sovereignty that has initially been conceptualized by the writings of Jean Bodin (1576) and Thomas Hobbes (1651) (cited Philpott 2020). Sovereignty has been closely associated with independence, autonomy, power, and equality of sovereigns. However, the concept has been evolving by debates on political/legal, absolute/ limited, internal/external, unitary/divided axes (Besson, 2011). Furthermore, currently, there is a growing account of academic research arguing for a relational perception of state power and sovereignty rather than a fixed one (Jessop 2008). In other words, sovereignty is more understood as a relational process consisting of multiple scales and agents rather than a stable superiority feature attributed to state. Once occupying the chair of sovereign alone, the state is gradually leaving more and more space for other social and political agents. Changes in the state-capital relations, emergence of new regional and local political organisations sharing power with the state, evolution of democratic institutions empowering individuals and communities visa vis the state, and power that science and technology grant to the agents outside the state can be listed as the driving forces behind this transformation. Considering the practical implications of these changes, it is now more plausible to talk about multiple, divided, and contingent sovereignties.

Given the fact that food sovereignty is a fairly new concept that is still in process of formation on theoretical and practical grounds, adopting a relational perspective to sovereignty increases the explanatory power of food sovereignty approach in the context of a complex global food system composed of diverse and interdependent political agents, and expands political space for a more democratic and egalitarian food system. However, purposeful efforts of academia and the practitioners in the field may bring great difference in interpretation of the concept and respective impact on society. Iles and Montenegro de Wit (2015) put aside an elaborate discussion on the scale of sovereignty in food sovereignty conception and come up with a non-territorial definition

of economic sovereignty that includes “the capacity to act authoritatively (or asserting agency); the ability to influence political and economic processes; and the rights to participate and to be consulted.” (Iles and Montenegro de Wit 2015, p.485)

2.2.1. Sen’s Capabilities Approach

Since food sovereignty challenges food security discourse on the grounds that security concept ignores political agency of the small agricultural producers and somehow adopts a welfarist, utilitarian approach to food, resorting to theories of development may help us better situate sovereignty beyond state borders in the context of food sovereignty. In this respect, noticing the common political philosophy behind the definition by Iles and Montenegro de Wit (2015) and *the capabilities approach* to wellbeing that was pioneered by Amartya Sen since the 1970s offers new theoretical synergies. The Nobel laureate development economist and philosopher Sen (1979) disagrees with utilitarian and Rawlsian approaches to equality that have long been overarching the development discourse by measuring wellbeing by the amount of resources brought into use or utilities gained after use of certain resources. Instead, Sen (1990, p.114) puts the concept of *capability* at the centre of his theory of justice and defines capabilities as follows:

> …the actual freedom of choice a person has over alternative lives that he or she can lead. On this view, individual claims are to be assessed not by the resources or primary goods the persons respectively hold, but by the freedoms they actually enjoy choosing between different ways of living that they can have reason to value. It is this actual freedom that is represented by the person's "capability" to achieve various alternative combinations of functionings, or doings and beings.

Although they are developed to explain different social phenomena, both food sovereignty approach and capability approach to development prioritise political agency and freedom to choose before basic material entitlements. Nettie Wiebe (cited in Nyéléni Newsletter 2017) who is a member of the National Farmers’ Union Canada and the LVC articulates the political dimension embedded in the food sovereignty concept as follows:

> The conventional term of “food security” was inadequate. This was about more than producing more food or distributing it more efficiently. We were grappling with fundamental questions of power and democracy: Who controls food producing

> resources such as land, water, seeds and genetics and for what purposes? Who gets to decide what is grown, how and where it is grown and for whom? We needed to have language that expressed the political dimensions of our struggle… "Food Sovereignty…provokes the necessary discourse about power, freedom, democracy, equality, justice, sustainability and culture. Food is taken out of the realm of being primarily a market commodity and re-embedded in the social, ecological, cultural and local contexts as a source of nutrition, livelihood, meaning and relationships.

There is a clear stance in this quotation that demands re-embedding food into society. This is no doubt a position against commodification of food in a global market and subjection of agricultural relations to the supply and demand mechanism as Polanyi (1944) argued against in his broader analysis on "market society".

2.2.2. Balibar's Diasporic Citizenship

Building on these strong references to capabilities, human freedom and democracy, taking state, the conventional subject of sovereignty, as the single bearer of sovereignty would miss the multi-scalar and relational conceptions of sovereignty needed in this new food system projection. In this respect, Balibar's (2014, 2015) conception of de-territorialized citizenship also offers some useful insights to locate food sovereignty on a much cosmopolitan and relational ground. Balibar (2014, p. 117-118) refers to Sen in his critical book problematizing the inherent conflict between citizenship and democracy and seeking ways to reconcile equality and liberty for a genuine global democracy. The following passage from his book, *Equaliberty* (Balibar 2014, p.117-118) carries some potential to bring in food sovereignty approach a more solid theoretical foundation:

> Freedom cannot be understood as mere negative liberty, even in the case of the classical liberties of opinion, expression, association etc., but only as a positive power, a "capability" as capacity to act, or again, a power of the individual to influence the collective choices on which his life and personal well-being depend.

Underlying the need for space to establish new belongings on the basis of "common actions of resistance" independent from citizenship documents issued by states, Balibar (2014, p.276) suggests a "relative de-territorialization of citizens belonging to the community they create through participation." Global food sovereignty movement, in this context, can be considered as one of the belongings that Balibar calls as "diasporic citizenship" which positions citizenship in "an equal distance from a simple ethical demand […] and the project of a world state […]" (Balibar 2014, pp.271-276). Balibar,

in this way, not only suggests a stronger reference point than moral universalism but also refrains from promoting a world-wide surveillance and police system to follow persons beyond borders, and counterproductively limit their freedoms. In this sense, global food sovereignty movement can be considered as a de-territorialized movement of agricultural producers, the peasant-farmer-citizens of the world, so to speak, who march for their capabilities, the actual freedoms to enjoy the process and product of their farming independent from commodification and dispossession threats by corporate capital. McMichael (2013, p.59) perceives this new manifestation of sovereignty as a movement "reconstituting state (and its spatial relations) via a politics of agrarian citizenship."

Food sovereignty approach rejects the industrial food system that privileges efficiency, productivity, economies of scale and profit maximization, and externalizes giant social and environmental costs while providing durable and cheap food. LVC reminded global public opinion about the main concerns of food sovereignty in the 25th year of its foundation, putting "globalizing, free-market ideology propagated by the defenders of the capitalist world order" in the firing line.

Food systems should be understood as social systems composed of diverse agents and relations interacting in production, distribution, consumption, and disposal of food. Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations (UN) is currently advocating sustainable agri-food systems which safeguard social, economic, and environmental sustainability concerns together. Food security and nutrition is at the centre of this sustainability agenda of the FAO. On the other hand, although FAO's sustainable food systems conception makes some slight reference to social sustainability, it does not enounce the role of democratic social relations and distribution of power in food systems as clear as food sovereignty movement does. Instead, FAO (2021) refers to "inclusiveness" and "reduced inequalities" in its sustainable food systems conception as part of its Strategic Framework 2022-2031. On the other hand, food sovereignty movement adopts a rights-based approach to food, and explicitly claims democratisation of food systems. Applying a Foucauldian conception of biopolitics and biopower, Kurtz (2015) argues that food sovereignty movement is a biopolitical struggle that aims to transform food systems though "invoking a provocative if ambiguous blend of individual and collective sovereignty" against the biopower of the

industrialized food systems in her case study on the local struggle of small farmers to get control over local food system in Maine, USA.

Speaking of individual and collective sovereignties reminds us of the unresolved questions of food sovereignty theory regarding who the sovereign subject is, sovereignty over what is claimed by the movement, and what the conditions for realization of such a sovereignty are. These questions are worth thinking over to see if it makes sense to stick with sovereignty concept to explain the global anti-capitalist movement of agricultural smallholders and peasants or look for a more flexible concept such as autonomy to include individuals, communities and states as different levels of subjects in this democratic food system projection.

Borrowed from a legal-political realm, concept of sovereignty challenged the food security paradigm with a new dimension of political agency. Raia Prokhovnik (2007) in her book criticizing the modern western legal definition of sovereignty for limiting the extensive political meaning of sovereignty to power and rule-making, suggests taking this concept as a political concept that includes negotiation and space for politics. Rather than putting the concept into the dustbin of history and ignoring its explanatory power in the age of globalisation and relational definitions of power, Prokhovnik (2007, p.4) underlines the potential of "sovereignty" as a political concept. Following this pathway, Michael Menser (2014, p.70) points food sovereignty as a political concept referring to multiple sovereignties involved with the following definition:

> a political programme that advocates for a mode of production constructed and controlled by non-state subjects (farmers, farming communities) framed by specific norms (self-determination, human rights, sustainability) but inclusive of other groups and institutions at a variety of levels (including state).

Edelman et al. (2014) present a comprehensive critical analysis of the food sovereignty concept in a series of articles focusing on diverse questions on identification of the sovereign, position of foreign trade, property relations, and linkage between rural and urban producers. An important part of constructive criticism points that there should be more than one holder of sovereignty referred by the food sovereignty concept, and sovereignty should be taken as something relational rather than absolute, in this context (Schiavoni 2015).

2.2.3. Benhabib's Demos

Benhabib (2004) also asks a very relevant question that can help us find outlets to apply sovereignty concept beyond state borders, in her notable book questioning the boundaries of political community in the context of territoriality, sovereignty and citizenship, as follows:

> How can democratic voice and public autonomy be reconfigured if we dispense with the faulty ideals of a people's homogeneity and territorial autochthony? Can democratic representation be organized so as to transcend the nation-state configuration? (Benhabib 2004, p.217)

Acknowledging the undeniable and complex interdependencies of peoples in a global world system, Benhabib (2004, pp.216-219) seeks a way to attribute features of flexibility and continual self-constitution to the concept of *demos* which is perceived as a unified, static, harmonious population living in a "*self-enclosed and autochthonous territory*" by the common references in history of democracy. In this regard, Global Food Sovereignty Movement, which is actually the movement of movements, a global network of farmers, community organizations, local social movements, and scholars, can be considered as a solid case to observe manifestations of sovereignty claims and constitution of a global demos beyond state boundaries.

2.2.4. Kioupkiolis's Common Democracy

Resorting to radical democracy literature would also enhance the potentials for going beyond hegemonic representation and its contradictions with peoples' food sovereignty against the processes of new constitutionalism, in this context. International rule of law, in favour of corporate capital is diffused through states, the old political sovereigns over peoples and producers. This recalls the question of food democracy. Only in a genuinely democratic political context, we can talk about existence of food sovereignty for individuals and communities. However, food sovereignty as a global movement is swinging between a "hegemonic representation" in Laclau's terms (Laclau and Mouffe 1985; Laclau 2005) and a "multitude" in Hardt and Negri's terms (Hardt and Negri 2004). In other words, food sovereignty as a cumulative body of theory and practice combines the state as independent, authorized Hobbesian sovereign that is defining and

transforming identities, interests and wills of the represented at the one end, and the chaos of an absolute democracy illusion where all subjects are taking part in democratic deliberation through a decentralized network of local food sovereignty movements at the other end. Theory and practice of food sovereignty indicates signs of unsteadiness between these two positions. Considering both of the hegemonic representation and absolute democracy or "democratic presentism" ends neither desirable nor feasible, Kioupkiolis (2017) in his seminal paper on "Common Democracy" proposes a midway to reconcile representation with equal participation. Kioupkiolis (2017, p.41) states that "In the spectrum between the representative as an accountable, instructed delegate and the representative as an independent, authorized Hobbesian sovereign (Pitkin 1972, pp. 14–20, 55–59), we are getting ever closer to the second extreme", and he does not find the solution in complete rejection of representation. Instead, based on his analysis on the Wikipedia-digital commons and the *Indignados*, and the Occupy movements in 2011, he suggests "common political representation" in which *"political governance becomes a common affair: a public good accessible to all members of a community on the basis of equality*" Comparing seeds and food as the commons of global society with the Wikipedia as the digital commons of the same population, common democracy approach carries transformative potentials for food sovereignty movement. Instead of limiting food sovereignty as an authoritative attribute of the state against other states and corporations, or as a certain experience of autonomy and participation into food-related decisions that is enjoyed by a narrow professional network of Non-Governmental Organisations' (NGO) leaders and scholars, food sovereignty is best to be considered as a common virtue of global food democracy enabling easy, flexible and changing participation of all producers to decisions at various territorial scales. Kioupkiolis (2017) mentions potentials of digital technologies to serve for flexible and dynamic participation in a common democracy setting, rather than bureaucratic and degenerative institutions of current representative democracy. However, it is never an easy task to operationalize such like an extensive sovereignty concept among farmers and peasants, the major agents of the food sovereignty movement. First and foremost, it requires a certain level of awareness about merits and potentials of food democracy on the side of agricultural producers and decentralized and flexible institutions of food policy making offering smart political participation modalities.

2.2.5. Moral Universalism Needed for Food Sovereignty

Raj Patel (2009, pp.663-673) coins the concept of food sovereignty as "over defined" and problematizes the concepts of "sovereignty" and "rights" embedded in food sovereignty. His focus on these concepts in his stimulating works brings another perspective into the questions of who the sovereign and the guarantor of the right is exactly to produce and consume food. Referring to Arendt and Benhabib's conceptualization of "right to have rights" and Kantian concepts of moral universalism and cosmopolitan federalism, Patel (2009) argues that food sovereignty is an egalitarian movement that resists inequalities stemming from class, race and gender, and it requires "multi-faceted series of democratic attachments" which is not necessarily meaning to get attachment with different layers of juridical sovereignties. Patel (2009) perceives moral universalism as a precursor of cosmopolitan federalism in realization of food sovereignty. Patel's perception of moral universalism and democratic attachment at multiple scales resonates with Kioupkiolis's common democracy approach and paves the way for operationalizing such an extensive sovereignty concept as in the context of food sovereignty.

LVC, organized across the borders can be considered to represent a global demos of peasants and small agricultural producers fighting for food sovereignty. Bringing farmers from various nationalities together, LVC operates on some sort of a universal morality. However, this global demos of peasants and small farmers does not fully qualify for constituting a demos in "democratic sovereignty" terms. Benhabib (2004, p.216) defines the widely accepted qualities of democratic sovereignty under three components: People should be in a position to both setting the rules and complying with the rules, members of the demos should form a harmonious unity, and demos should govern a certain territory with which it has ancient relations. Global demos of peasants and small agricultural producers lack each of these three qualities. They are not in a position to set the rules for food production although they constitute a growing democratic pressure in global policy platforms. They are not a harmonious unity, instead they exhibit a rich diversity of agricultural producers from various socio-economic and ecological contexts. Finally, they do not share a common spatial history. However, linking this challenge to the inescapable hegemonic relation between the representative and the represented in liberal democracies, food sovereignty movement needs to focus

on demanding transparency, collective monitoring, egalitarian and consensual deliberation, publicity, and free accessibility against institutionalized representation in liberal capitalist democracies which is functioning as the cunning channel of new constitutionalism. Kioupkiolis (2017, p.52) refers this process as "commoning political representation". Commoning political representation for peasants and farmers is essential to prevent the state from acting as the unique hegemonic representative of farmers in international policy platforms such as the WTO and endorsing corporate food and agriculture policies in detriment of peasants and farmers under the guise of "representing the nation". In sum, in order to make food sovereignty a common virtue of global food democracy that is functional at individual and community levels, food sovereignty movement should work on developing procedures and principles to mainstream the mentioned qualities of democracy within food system at every scale and extend smart participation channels for all components of the system from individual identity of peasants/farmers to hegemonic representative identity of states.

Despite the discussions on contradictions between state-centric right claims and universal morality observed in global food sovereignty movement, right to food is one of the main fields of concern for the most extensive inter-state organization, the UN and its specialized agency on human rights, the UN Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner (OHCHR). Practical implications of the concept are closely followed by the UN Special Rapporteurs on Right to Food. State of availability, accessibility, adequacy, and sustainability features of right to food in the world is elaborated in annual reports of the assigned rapporteurs. Former Special Rapporteur, Hilal Elver in her report to the UN General Assembly in 2019 interlinks right to food with inequality with the following statement:

> The right to food extends beyond productivism, the paradigm in which Goal 2 (zero hunger) is rooted. Realizing this right requires tackling the historical and structural inequalities that undermine availability, adequacy, accessibility and sustainability of food systems (Elver 2019, p.4).

After referring to all these philosophers speaking for expansion of democracy and linking their propositions to a democratic and multi-scalar conception of food sovereignty, this dissertation aims to lay out perception and experience of sovereignty at individual identity of small agricultural producers and changing legal-institutional

regulations in detriment of food sovereignty at the institutional identity of state in Turkey. Facing limitations and even vagueness of the sovereignty concept to define the anti-capitalist position of a global and somehow de-territorialized movement, it has been a serious challenge throughout this study to operationalize this concept at multiple scales despite its deep historical legacy inherited from state-centric theories of power. However, as it has been elaborated so far, the concept of sovereignty has evolved into a much cosmopolitan and relational meaning in theory and practice of food sovereignty, embracing peasants, farmers, farmer communities and states as different subjects that experience sovereignty within global food system. In this regard, carrying discussion to scale of individual farmer required to knit up meanings of autonomy, independence and capability within sovereignty concept. Extra care was paid in development of the farmer survey questions to elicit what is going on at different scales regarding food sovereignty. State and farmer are taken as two different scales of analyses in this respect. Questions asking respondents to deconstruct the concept of food sovereignty and explain sovereignty over what and whom should be meant by this framework, and questions like "how would you define?", "who do you think is responsible for?", "can you list of the milestones?", "are you involved in any organized movement?" aimed at identifying where and which scale exactly the respondent farmers position food sovereignty in their daily experiences. In order to lay out validity of the selected theoretical propositions of Sen (1990), Balibar (2014), Benhabib (2004), Kiopkiolis (2017) and Patel (2009) into the experiences and perceptions of small farmers, certain questions were included in the Farmer Survey. Building on Sen's (1990) capabilities framework, Farmer Survey scrutinized if farmers perceive themselves free in their production decisions. On the other hand, presence of a "demos of farmers" at local, national and global level were questioned in the Farmer Survey to lay out if food sovereignty concept can bring farmers collective subjectivity together at local, national and global level for food democracy. Farmers' level and methods of participation to agri-food policy processes were also examined in the Farmer Survey in an attempt to see if there is any chance to speak about common democracy for farmers. Finally, farmers' moral attachments were questioned to see if there is any sort of universal moral values that farmers of Turkey share beyond their national attachments. Level of success in operationalizing this multi-scalar and relational conception of sovereignty into farmer surveys is demonstrated in the final chapter.

2.3. Positioning Food Sovereignty as a Countermovement to Neoliberal Third Food Regime

Neoliberalism treats food primarily as a commodity in the global market that should operate on the basis of the law of demand and supply. This perception limits food as a subject of market economy. Against this neoliberal perception of food, food sovereignty as a social movement and an evolving theory perceives food initially as a subject of politics and human rights. In this respect, food sovereignty interrupts the hegemonic discourse of neoliberalism on food and agriculture and reclaims food democracy and equality. Positioned as a countermovement against neoliberal corporate agriculture, food sovereignty carries theoretical and practical features inside the association of two concepts, "rights" and "sovereignty" at the intersection of politics and economics.

The Third Food Regime, as presented in the previous section on food regimes, is built on the notions of distance and durability, which are very contradicting with principles of proximity and seasonality on which food sovereignty is grounded. Agricultural products travel along a complex route of global supply chains after which small agricultural producers and peasants are left at the margins with gradually declining terms of trade in this new food regime. McMichael (2005) argues that this new food regime consists of rising trends in "the determination of a world price for agricultural commodities strikingly divorced from costs". Primary producers of the global South (a disputed but useful category for our discussion) are gradually integrated into the global supply chains losing their autonomy, bargaining power and ownership of their means of production, mainly land and labour within this process. Furthermore, farmers in this process experience a *metabolic rift* in Marxist conception. In other words, third food regime stipulates the separation of agricultural products from land, and human beings from nature by dissolving small agricultural production and peasantry (Foster 1999). Friedman (1993) opposes this breach of proximity and seasonality for its paving the way towards an undemocratic food policy.

The Third Food Regime works hand in hand with liberalisation and privatisation aiming at accumulation by dispossession as Bernstein (2015, p.14) explains with references to Harvey (2003) and McMichael (2005, 2013) in the following passage:

> …'corporate globalization' proceeds through 'mechanisms of "accumulation by dispossession"', in the term popularised by David Harvey (2003), such as the 'global displacement of peasant cultures of provision by dumping, the supermarket revolution, and conversion of land for agro-exports' (McMichael 2005, 265), with 'a state-finance capital nexus dedicated to constructing new frontiers of accumulation (McMichael 2013, 130).

At this juncture, Bernstein's reference to accumulation by dispossession requires to set forth what Harvey means by this concept and what is the explanatory ease it offers us to better position food sovereignty as an anti-capitalist movement. Building on Marx's definition of primitive accumulation, as "historical process of divorcing the producer from the means of production" and Rosa Luxemburg's argument that primitive accumulation is not peculiar to early phase of capitalism but it still operates through fraud, violence and predation, Harvey (2004, 2006) follows up Luxemburg's argument and deliberately replaces "primitive accumulation" with the concept of "accumulation by dispossession" as an umbrella concept referring to the latest methods of sustaining capitalist accumulation in this era, namely privatization, financialization, management and manipulation of crisis, and the state redistribution. Harvey (2004) also points out intellectual property regimes promoted under WTO roof and consequent extension of patenting and licensing practices for seeds and genetic materials as new forms of accumulation by dispossession and a type of privatization.

Based on Harvey's propositions on accumulation by dispossession methods, the following list is presented to make it more perceptible to understand the main aspects of accumulation by dispossession process in agriculture:

1. Privatization of agricultural state economic enterprises and withdrawal of state from production of agricultural inputs such as seeds and fertilizers,
2. Commodification of commons historically preserved and reproduced by farmers such as seeds, water, meadows, etc.,
3. Extension of credit and insurance market in agricultural sector and consequent rise of farmers' debts and dependency to finance market,
4. Structural reform programmes offered by IFIs to the crisis-ridden countries as a remedy to national economic crisis and operated as a means of liberalisation of national agriculture,

5. State investment decisions expropriating and diverting agricultural lands of farmers for the use of extractive industries such as mining or giant infrastructure projects such as motorways and airports.

Throughout these methods, peasants and small farmers are divorced from their means of production mainly including land, labour, water, and seeds, and they are exiled from their autonomous soil of social, economic, and biological reproduction into the land of debts, external markets, and global supply chains managed by corporate capital.

Despite the formal publicity of global food sovereignty movement under LVC, it is not easy to identify a crystallized, sustained, and coherent anti-capitalist agenda within food sovereignty movements across the world which include fragmented local movements and individual agents co-constituting the theory and practice of food sovereignty with their simultaneous but also time to time conflicting interpretations. Although objection against commodification of biological resources, dispossession of farmers, and call for solidarity among different social classes are some of the common catchwords within LVCs publications, there are cases like a local food sovereignty movement has close relations with an institution advocating GMO technologies. (Jacobs 2013:4) This demonstrates coherence problems among local interpretations of the movement. On the other hand, LVC has a publicly declared position against capitalism, free trade agreements and World Trade Organization in the Declaration of Nyeleni in 2007. If we take LVC as the umbrella organization of the global food sovereignty movement, it is easier to identify an anti-capitalist discourse questioning power relations in industrial food regime and claiming democracy within and beyond boundaries of neoliberal states system. However, we should still keep in mind that it is difficult to secure a harmonious interpretation among participating local movements and political agents to global food sovereignty movement across the world. Then, it becomes more plausible to refer to LVC's food sovereignty approach as the contestant of food security approach which is dominating international policy ecosystem.

Speaking of food security as the mainstream approach which food sovereignty challenges, it is now time to have a closer look at the defining characteristics of the food security paradigm. Today, FAO declares its goal by reference to food security as follows:

> Our goal is to achieve food security for all and make sure that people have regular access to enough high-quality food to lead active, healthy lives. (FAO, n.d., b)

FAO has been pioneering the food security agenda since the first World Food Conference in 1974. Convened in the middle of debt and hunger crises of the Third World, the first summit proclaimed that *"every man, woman and child have the inalienable right to be free from hunger and malnutrition in order to develop fully and maintain their physical and mental faculties"* (United Nations 1974) Freedom from hunger was pointed as a universal right in this Summit. However, acknowledged by FAO itself, the first conference stayed short of reaching its objectives. The second summit, which was a milestone for institutionalisation of food security within the UN system, took place in 1996. The Rome Declaration on World Food Security and the World Food Summit Plan of Action are two important outputs of this summit. It was confirmed in the Plan of Action that food security exists when all people, at all times, have physical and economic access to sufficient safe and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life (FAO 1996).

Food security as part of the broader conception of "right to food" has been gradually consolidated in the UN system. Article 11 of the UN International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (1966) affirms that everyone has the right to adequate standard of living including adequate food.

Food security is also operated in the Goal No.2 within Sustainable Development Goals of the UN that is "End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture".[1] Among eight targets set for Goal 2, access, availability, utilization and stability components of food security are included (FAO n.d.,a).

At this point, food sovereignty manifests itself as a countermovement rejecting both norms, rules, agents, and structures of dependency that sustain neoliberal third food regime and "food security", the conjoint alternative of third food regime. Food security is criticized by radical food sovereignty supporters for being an offshoot of neoliberal food regime. Holt-Gimenez (2009) clearly states that food sovereignty is not only opting

[1] United Nations. Sustainable Development Goal 2.

for access to food but also establishment of a democratic food system in which countries of the global-South, farmers and rural-urban communities directly get involved in production, processing, distribution, marketing, and consumption decisions regarding food. Food sovereignty claims to be a transformative alternative to mainstream neoliberal food policy discourse.

Food sovereignty is conceptualized as part of a social movement that came together under the umbrella of *La Via Campesina* (LVC) since 1993. Supporters of the movement include peasants, small and medium size farmers, landless people, rural women and youth, indigenous people, migrants, agricultural workers and scholar all over the world. As declared in their website, LVC fights against three phenomena, capitalism and free trade, transnational companies and agribusiness, and patriarchy (La Via Campesina, n.d). Founded in 1993, LVC-the Peasants' Way, has been advocating for food sovereignty since then. World Food Summit in 1996 has been the first global platform that LVC declared their food sovereignty vision. Food sovereignty was proposed as a democratic and peasant-based alternative to food security concept-the flagship concept of the Summit. Food sovereignty fights against the "food without farmers" vision of third food regime, in this context (McMichael 2014:348). Food sovereignty was clearly described in the Nyéléni World Forum for Food Sovereignty in 2007 and Nyéléni Declaration has been the main reference of action afterwards. The definition in this declaration is as follows:

> Food sovereignty is the right of peoples to healthy and culturally appropriate food produced through ecologically sound and sustainable methods, and their right to define their own food and agriculture systems. (Declaration of Nyéléni. 27 February 2007)

Six pillars of food sovereignty were defined by LVC as follows (Nyeleni Newsletter 2013):

1. Focuses on food for people
2. Values food providers
3. Localises food systems
4. Puts control locally
5. Builds knowledge and skills
6. Works with nature

Focus on people differentiates food sovereignty from food security discourse which has been extensively operationalised since the Green Revolution and adoption of intensive agriculture and food aid programmes to end hunger and consolidate the hegemony of US-led global capitalism in the post-World War II era. Trauger (2015, p.4) highlights that food security resulted in dependency on modernist industrial model of agriculture through using market mechanisms, overproduction of global commodities and territorial state-based policies. On the other hand, food sovereignty challenges the hegemony of transnational capital behind the protection of state policies. Somehow, food sovereignty aims democratising the global food system by letting people decide what, where and how they produce and consume, and downscaling the system from global to local.

Hannah Wittman (2010, 2011) is another scholar who contributed a lot in positioning of food sovereignty against neoliberal/corporate food regime with her books and articles. She uses a four-dimensional comparison between food sovereignty and corporate food regime that explains differences between two in terms of feeding the world, role of agriculture in advancing national development, role of technology in advancing agricultural development and environmental stewardship. Her comparison framework is a useful guideline to assess the distance of any food system to food sovereignty conditions.

On the other hand, Henry Bernstein (2014) criticizes the binary thinking predominating food sovereignty movement and the supporting academia. Against Hannah Wittman's binary table positioning food sovereignty versus corporate food regime, Bernstein (2014, p.25) criticizes conceptualization of food sovereignty in the context of binary positions between "agroecological 'peasant' farming versus corporate industrial agriculture, the (rural) local versus the global of capital, sustainability versus unsustainability". Calling for acknowledging complexities of modern age, Bernstein (2014) adopts a sceptical approach to food sovereignty movement's stance to feed the world of a vast non-farmer population with small farming.

Jan Douwe van der Ploeg is another pioneer agrarian sociologist and development economist who has been providing articulate assessments on political economy of agriculture and food to fill "the intellectual deficit" in agricultural studies in Bernstein's (2010:300) terms. He challenges the dominant discourse that claims necessity of co-

existence of small farmers/peasants and large/corporate farmers to feed the world. He argues that this discourse is serving legitimization of a food system in which entrepreneurial and capitalist farms push peasants outside the system. (Van der Ploeg 2014) He identifies five productive potentials of peasant agriculture that can feed the world in a sustainable way. Van der Ploeg (2014, pp.999-1030)) explains these potentials as follows: "Growth is intrinsic to peasant agriculture; Peasant agriculture embodies resilience; Peasant farming continuously reinvents itself, especially in periods of crisis; Peasant agriculture builds on and enriches nature; and Peasant agriculture can contribute to society at large." Van der Ploeg (2014) puts these potentials of peasantry at the heart of food sovereignty concept.

Kees Jansen (2015) presents another perspective to this debate on positioning of food sovereignty against neoliberal third food regime. Criticizing McMichael (2009) and Van der Ploeg's (2014) conceptualization of food sovereignty that perceive peasants as the central subject in restoring a sustainable agriculture, Jansen (2015) takes side partially with Bernstein (2014) and argues that a generalized, simplified, and homogenous description of peasantry as a resistant social force detached from capitalist relations and means of production does not exist in the modern global relations of production. Instead, a "disrupted peasantry" exists in the peasant-centred food sovereignty projections. (Jansen 2015, p.16) There are many internal contradictions within this simplified mass. He also adds that binary thinking about agro-ecological knowledge of small farmers and peasants versus scientific knowledge of corporate agriculture will not help us feeding the world. Based on this criticism, he suggests better understanding the willingness of the small farmers to be incorporated in world market, complex relations of production functioning to feed the world, and acknowledging the complementary positive roles of state, science, and social movements for a food sovereign world.

Accompanied by this live academic discussion, definition of food sovereignty has been expanded and gained international recognition in the last 25 years so much that it took place in the UN Declaration on Rights of Peasants and the Other People Living in Rural Areas. LVC assumes this UN Declaration as a historical success of the movement. (La Via Campesina 2021) Although the formal definition in Nyeleni Declaration is the most common one referred by LVC, there is also the use of a broader definition in certain

LVC documents which indicates changes in perception of sovereignty within the movement:

> Food sovereignty is the peoples', Countries' or State Unions' right to define their agricultural and food policy, without any dumping vis-à-vis third countries. (La Via Campesina 15 January 2003)

Changing scope of the subject of sovereignty in different publications of LVC very much resonates with the changing answers to critical questions of "who is the subject of sovereignty?", and "who is the guarantor of this right?" An elaborate account of these critiques is also available in the article by Edelman et.al. (2014) in the Journal of Peasant Studies. Identifying the subject of food sovereignty is the crucial step to position conflicting parties involved in this global movement and locus of the political struggle in question. Food sovereignty concept is being used to define several confrontations that happen to take place on various grounds such as state versus other states, state versus certain international organizations, state versus TNCs, local farmers versus state, local farmers versus TNCs, local farmers versus certain international organisations, national, regional or global networks of farmers and agro-ecologists versus TNCs and certain international organizations, and farmers and agro-ecologists versus various combinations of state, TNCs, and certain international organizations. Mobile position of state among these combinations of confrontations is the predicament of food sovereignty theory. Although farmers and TNCs constantly appear at opposite poles of the confrontation despite changing parties clustered in each pole, state is positioned on both sides in different times and spaces. Position of Ecuadorian state ruled by former president Rafael Correa which is one of the pioneering case of an institutionalized state policy for food sovereignty as it was included in the state constitution, and position of the Indian state under Narendra Modi's prime ministry which experienced a long-lasting conflict with millions of farmers upon liberalisation plans for agriculture in 2020-2021 period carry significant differences with regard to their relation with capital and agrarian social movements. Clark (2015, p.202) in his case study on Ecuadorian experience of state policy for food sovereignty argues that food sovereignty cannot be improved in the absence of state sovereignty and suggests inclusion of "traditional redistributive state" into the formulae of food sovereignty, emphasizing also the need to acknowledge "polycentric nature of sovereignty" in this context. Local governments, agrarian civil society, peasants and indigenous organizations are referred by Clark (2015) as the other

political agents to share sovereignty with the state and get involved in food policies in this polycentric power network.

Functioning as a passkey to explain multiple political confrontations renders the concept of food sovereignty weak in terms of theoretical profoundness. However, this also makes food sovereignty an all-encompassing food democracy theory and practice owned by a rich composition of political agents. The concept has been roaming across borders for more than 25 years and anti-capitalist point of departure is overlooked time to time. Jacobs (2013, p.2) touches upon the importance of keeping anti-capitalist message of food sovereignty movement alive in his particular analysis on African food sovereignty movements. Jacobs (2013) in his article on LVC's 20th year open book warns food sovereignty movements against deviations towards "democratic capitalism" and "capitalism with a human face" and calls food sovereignty movements to stick with the original anti-capitalist agenda which is indispensable to transform the current industrial food regime into a democratic food regime.

In this respect, it becomes even more helpful to adopt a relational and multi-scalar approach to the concept of food sovereignty and trace potential and actual alliances within and between different political agents against the capitalist structuring of agriculture and food worldwide. For that reason, this dissertation took both farmers and the state as subjects of food sovereignty and searched how individual identity of farmers and institutional identity the state are positioned visa vis the other political agents shaping agriculture and food policies.

2.4. Seed Sovereignty as A Prerequisite for Food Sovereignty

Food sovereignty is a multidimensional topic to analyse and associating state of food sovereignty with processes of new constitutionalism is a challenging task. Assessing capitalist transformation of agriculture by help of two separate theoretical frameworks, new constitutionalism and food sovereignty, requires interlinking legal-institutional transformations of state and changes in daily lives of farmers, and identifying knots between macro-level transformations and micro-level transformations. For that purpose, seed sovereignty was chosen as a special focus area within the whole study as story of seeds provide one of the most dramatic and practical examples of commodification and

dispossession processes within agriculture in the course of capitalist restructuring of state and society. Although all six dimensions of food sovereignty were scrutinized in the farmer survey, seed sovereignty issue has been covered in both legal-institutional analysis and farmer-level analysis as a horizontal topic. Commodification process of seeds were traced via legal-institutional analysis as well as the farmer survey so as to identify macro and micro-level transformations. During the field study, farmers and relevant sectorial representatives were invited to think about food sovereignty in close relation to development of property relations, and dependency and dispossession processes around seeds. In this respect, it now makes sense to open a conceptual and historical window on seed sovereignty issue before presenting the field findings.

Seed is the chest where all the genetic assets of plants are stored and transferred to the next generation. Having autonomy and independence over saving, using, breeding, bartering and/or exchanging seeds is one of the initial prerequisites for a broader experience of food sovereignty. For that reason, it is important to dig into the position of seeds in food sovereignty framework and analyse if certain types of seeds and crops have different positions in seed sovereignty debate.

Vandana Shiva, the prominent Indian food activist, defines seed as "the ultimate symbol of food security" and fights against patenting of living organisms since it undermines food democracy. She suggests kind of a civil disobedience movement against monocultures and terminator technologies applied through genetically modified seeds patented and commodified by agro-business (Shiva 2007, pp. 4-5).

Seeds have been used, shared, improved and exchanged by the farmers throughout the history of agricultural society, and treatment of seed as a collective good outside private property rights maintained the biodiversity and food security in the world (Shiva 2000:8). It was not until early 1980s that patenting of living organisms, the genes, was legalized. Ironically, an Indian-American biologist, Ananda Mohan Chakrabarty applied to the US Patent Office for the output of his research, a human-made, genetically engineered bacterium capable of breaking down crude oil which is possessed by no naturally occurred bacteria (Diamond v. Chakrabarty Case). His application was rejected on the ground that living things cannot be patented according to US Patent Law (1951). Marie-Monique Robin (2010), the French journalist, elaborates this case and the broader

historical evolution of patent law in relation to genetic technologies and agro-food corporations in her seminal book "The World According to Monsanto". Patent applications for living organisms would not meet one of the three main criteria for patenting in the US Patent Law, that is "the product did not exist before the inventor created it" until 1980. After his application was rejected, Chakrabarty carried this case to the US Supreme Court and the Court made a historical decision legitimizing not only Chakrabarty's individual patent application but also all the claims raised by biotechnology firms working on genes and seeds, since then (Supreme Court of the United States). Chakrabarty was defending his research as a genuine innovation for ecological protection of oceans; however, the result turned to be an ecological and economic destruction for the peasants and small agricultural farmers across the world and so much for the Indian farmers that thousands of Indian farmers committed suicides as a result of the debts they could not pay to the patent owners of seeds and pesticides that they had to use.

The EU can be listed at the top of institutional opposition against patenting of seeds. European Patent Law prohibits patenting of plants and animal varieties. However, the European Patent Office (EPO) which is not an EU institution but organized in 38 countries in the region including Turkey, is granting patents for plant varieties including seeds. The vested interests represented by EPO and activities of EPO disregarding principles of European Patent Law is subject to very high public criticism that a civil initiative has been organizing a wide-ranging opposition campaign under the title of "No Patents on Seeds".[2]

Currently, seed system is composed of two categories of supply sources, informal/local seed supplies and formal seed supplies. Although this division is not based on clear-cut definitions of the concepts of formal and informal, FAO (2016) endorses a practical division between the two, based on the composition of suppliers. Accordingly, while formal seed supplies refer to seed companies, input dealers, government agencies and international aid agencies that deal with plant breeding and commerce activities, informal seed supplies refer to the rest of the agents reproducing and sharing seeds through their own harvest, between friends, relatives and neighbours via multiple methods including barter, gift and purchase from local informal markets (FAO 2016).

[2] See "No Patents on Seeds" https://www.no-patents-on-seeds.org/en/background/problem

As of December 2017, global seed industry was valued at USD 52,7 billion and annual growth rate of the industry is expected to unfold as 7% during 2018-2023 period (Mordor Intelligence 2017).

Capital in the seed market is highly concentrated as it can be verified in the market shares of giant agri-business corporations such as Bayer, Syngenta and DuPont. In order to lay out the concentration in seed market, Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD 2018) compares the share of farm-saved seeds (from informal sources) in the total seed sources. Share of the farm-saved seeds varies according to regions and crops. While it is less than 10% in the north America, it reaches to more than 60% of the total in the less developed regions of Asia, Middle East and Africa. Crop-wise data shows that farm-saved seeds constitute almost 0% of sugar beet seeds whereas almost 60% of wheat, barley, rice and potato seeds (OECD 2018). This OECD (2018, p.14) study also reveals that market concentration is higher in sugar beet, cotton, sunflower, maize and rapeseed seeds compared to potato, soybean, wheat and barley seed markets in general

According to the recent data revealed by the market research company Mordor Intelligence (2020), after the latest mergers between the giant agri-food corporations such as the one between Monsanto and Bayer, following ten corporations dominate the global seed market: Bayer CropScience, Corteva Agrisciences, Syngenta AG, Groupe Limagrain, KWS AG, Sakata Seed, DLF-Seeds and Science, Rijk Zwaan, Takii Seed and BASF. With regard to crop type, maize, soybean, rice, vegetable and cereals are the top five crops in terms of the share of value in global seed market (OECD 2018). Another comprehensive report prepared by International Panel on Sustainable Food Systems lay out the scale of horizontal and vertical integration of global food systems. While on the one hand, purchase of smaller companies operating at different levels of production within the same value chain by bigger companies occurs as horizontal integration, mergers between competitors in the agri-food industry are also ongoing as vertical integration of food systems. (International Panel on Sustainable Food Systems 2017) Monopolistic and oligopolistic features define the actual profile of global agri-food market.

There are couple of factors increasing the investment appetite to seed industry. Looking from a Marxist perspective, capital expands opportunities for more profit through means of accumulation by dispossession at global scale. Commodification of the commons of countless types from land to water and even the folk songs has been the long-lasting strategy of capitalism so far. In this respect, in the presence of narrowing time and space for practicing accumulation by dispossession in the age of *hyper-capitalism*[3], capital needs new spatio-temporal fixes to overcome crises and generate more profit. In this regard, seed, the ancient chest of genetic material that has been reproduced and shared as commons, serve as the new tiny continents to invade, appropriate and market. Given the rising global population and squeezed up arable lands due to developmentalist and urban-biased (un)planning choices intertwined with climate change, there is also a rising discourse on the necessity for investment for more productive and resilient agricultural production inputs and methods including seeds to feed the world population (Mordor Intelligence 2020). Farming, in this sense, is turning to be a much scientific activity which is dominated by the giant agri-business corporation with vast R&D capacities, and technological and legal tools over peasant-farmers producing with conventional inputs and methods. Peasant-farmers are left deskilled and dispossessed in this picture. Deborah Fitzgerald (1993) analyses this deskilling process for the case of hybrid corn producers in the USA, stating hybrid seeds are more deskilling than other mechanical farming tools farmers had to welcome so far. On the other hand, Eric Holt-Gimenez (2019) has a strong counter-thesis against this corporate thesis about feeding the world with augmented technologies concentrated at the hands of few. Holt-Gimenez (2019), challenges the scarcity myth, stresses the problems generated by overproduction and overconsumption in global food system, claims that we can feed the word without destroying it. Holt-Gimenez (2019) proposes localized, resilient, and equitable food systems worldwide.

2.5. Conceptualizing New Constitutionalism in the Context of Food Sovereignty

This dissertation argues that through processes of new constitutionalism, agricultural inputs including seeds are commodified, agriculture is opened to global free market, and consequently food sovereignty is disrupted in Turkey. In this respect, it is vital to set forth a clear definition for new constitutionalism as the factor of change in this process.

[3] See Marina Vujnovic (2012). Hypercapitalism. Blackwell Publishing.

In the last thirty years, collective property features of seeds have been gradually resolved and seeds have turned to be subject of private property that is mostly owned by TNCs and protected by very binding international agreements for the signatory parties such as the Trade Related Intellectual Property Rights Agreement of WTO (TRIPS) and the The International Union for the Protection of New Varieties of Plants (UPOV) Convention. Afşar Jafri (2018:6) in his study on privatization of seeds in India, one of the top agricultural GDP and employment generating countries in the world, states that tested, biodiverse, affordable and reliable seeds are replaced with TNCs' costly, uniform, monoculture, unreliable and self-certified seeds, and this results in erosion of rich genetic diversity, increasing farmers' vulnerability against climate change and relevant environmental disasters, and rising seed dependency of farmers to TNCs. Positioning seed sovereignty as a fundamental prerequisite for food sovereignty, there are quite a few social movements and civil society organizations fighting for seed sovereignty across the world including *Bharat Beej Swaraj Manch* (India Seed Sovereignty Alliance) in India, "No Patents on Seeds" in Europe, *La Red de Semillas*, the Seed Network in Uruguay, "Seed Savers Network-Kenya" in Kenya. Common concern of all these movements is that seeds have been vital common goods in food systems throughout the agricultural history and they should be protected from corporate appropriation under the guise of intellectual property rights, incentives for entrepreneurship, glorification of private scientific know-how, and biased explanations on problem of feeding the globe in conditions of climate change and population increase. Ownership of seeds gained so much public attention in the recent years that the UN Declaration on Rights of Peasants and the Other People Working In The Rural Areas (2018) acknowledged the right to seeds in the Article 19 as follows: "Peasants and other people working in rural areas have the right to seeds, in accordance with article 28 of the present Declaration" and explained the scope of this right in conformity with the agenda advocated by all mentioned grassroots organisations and LVC, so far. The Declaration (2018, Article 5) also enjoined the States to ensure that businesses respect rights of peasants and people working in rural areas with the following article:

> States shall take all necessary measures to ensure that non-State actors that they are in a position to regulate, such as private individuals and organizations, and transnational corporations and other business enterprises, respect and strengthen the rights of peasants and other people working in rural areas.

In this respect, new constitutionalism discussion led by the neo-Gramscian international political economist Stephan Gill provides us a useful analytical framework to understand the commodification and appropriation processes of seeds which cannot be explained only by individual, local or national choices and capabilities.

Stephan Gill conceptualized "new constitutionalism" in his seminal articles published in 1998 and 2000 consecutively. Referring to Gramscian concepts of coercion, consent, *trasformismo* and passive revolution; Gill (2000) positions new constitutionalism as the dominant political-juridical form of global political economy in contrast to democratic constitutionalism. "Investor" rather than "citizen" becomes the prime political subject of this new type of constitutionalism. Gill (2000) in his paper titled as "The constitution of global capitalism" elaborates the concept with its modus operandi in detail and puts several descriptive statements such as:

> …new constitutionalism can be understood historically as part of the longue durée of liberal state formation as well as a political project to "lock in" the power gains of capital on a world scale in the 1990s and beyond - that is it combines the old and the radically new (Gill 2000).

In a previous paper on the topic, Gill (1998, p.38) uses following statements to clarify functioning of new constitutionalism within global capitalism:

> …new constitutionalism is a subtle attempt to legitimate neo-liberal globalisation. It mandates a particular set of state policies geared to maintaining business confidence through the delivery of a consistent and credible climate for investment and thus for the accumulation of capital. It relies on a combination of political and economic discipline and ideas concerning efficiency, welfare and democracy. It stresses the rule of law. Thus, we are witnessing an expansion of state activity to provide greater legal and other protections for business, and efforts to stabilise the investment climate worldwide.

Gill (1998, p.37) claims that the dominant political subject in the context of new constitutionalism is the "investor" who has practical and legal sovereignty over deciding on major economic and social issues. This brings us back to "sovereignties" discussion again. Both the citizen and the state lose sovereignty against the investor, the new prime political subject in this new constitutionalism order. Gill (1998) identifies three main processes through which new constitutionalism operates:

1. **Measures to restructure state as the facilitator of market, an enabling state in service of capital:** Increasing power of executive vis a vis the legislative forces and consequent insulation of economy policies from politics and democratic accountability constitute the essence of this process.
2. **Measures to construct, develop and protect markets for fictitious commodities of land, labour and capital:** All legal reforms aiming to ease primitive accumulation as well as accumulation by dispossession by global capital, and extension of market through fictitious commodities such as the seeds in this context lay at the core of this process. Regulations protecting the property rights of investors including patents, non-discrimination rules in trade, attempts to promote climbing up in *Doing Business Index* of the World Bank so that the capital can easily enter and exit national economies, privatisation of public properties and compliance with monitoring networks of the global capital over national economic policy through several reporting channels such as reporting agricultural incentives to WTO to prove no distortive actions are taken against global "free" trade within the context of Agreement on Agriculture, can be listed as common measures within this process.
3. **Measures to get to grips with the problems generated by the fictitious commodities:** These measures involve containment of the opposition forces to neoliberal restructuring, legitimizing the neoliberal rule of law and incorporating potential opposition forces, and letting democratic participation showcased in soft policy areas, excluding economy.

All these three processes can be traced in the story of seed as a "fictitious commodity" in Polanyi's conceptualisation (Polanyi 1944, pp.75-76). For a very long history of agricultural production, seeds were not produced for sale in market, but they are now treated as commodities with an exchange value determined in global market. Polanyi (1944, p.75) defines the concept of commodity as "objects produced for sale in the market" and "are subject to supply and demand mechanism"; differentiates land, labour and money from the category of commodities, and tags them as fictitious commodities. Neither produced for sale, nor can be isolated from the other realms of life, fictitious commodities have their own market for which Polanyi argues that they should not be left to a self-regulating market. Applying Polanyi's conception into development of "seed market", it is plausible to say that we are witnessing rise of a very typical

fictitious commodity in the commodification history of seeds. Although the latest scientisation of seed development and production under the control of corporate capital detach seeds from land and labour of farmers and transform seeds into industrial products for sale, seeds are inherently part of nature. Polanyi (1944, p.74; 60) argues that a self-regulating market pushes for "separation of society into an economic and political sphere" and embed social relations in economy, which is perilous for society. Building on Polanyi's theoretical contributions to criticism against capitalism, transformation of seeds into fictitious commodities and embedding of agricultural social relations into economy can be looked from the conceptual lenses of Gill, specifically the three main processes of new constitutionalism that he categorizes. On the other hand, Marxist conceptualisation of David Harvey (2004, p.64) on "spatio-temporal fix" may provide another critical theoretical synergy with Gill's conception to explain capitalist transformation of agriculture and resulting food sovereignty outcomes. Harvey (2004, p.64) argues that when labour and capital surpluses created as a result of overaccumulation in a certain space cannot be employed for productive and profitable investment, these surpluses are absorbed through either of the following:

> (a) temporal displacement through investment in long-term capital projects or social expenditures (such as education and research) that defer the re-entry of current excess capital values into circulation well into the future, (b) spatial displacements through opening up new markets, new production capacities and new resource, social and labour possibilities elsewhere, or (c) some combination of (a) and (b)

Considering the current state of development, production and sales of seeds in the global market, it is permissible to say that seeds operate as sort of spatio-temporal fixes for global agri-food capital accumulation, combining "temporal deferment" and "geographical expansion" possibilities. Investment in seed market is absorbing the global surplus capital through vast long-term R&D projects on so called seed science and opening up of genetic resources of various spatial units for commodification and new markets. This is presenting us a concrete example of spatio-temporal fix in Harvey's terminology. Building on these critical theoretical backdrop, Gill's conception of new constitutionalism provides us a new explanatory tool to understand operating mechanisms of neoliberal rule of law over seed and food sovereignty across the world.

Considering the multi-dimensionality of the concept, Gill and Cutler (2014) in their edited book, "New Constitutionalism and World Order", bring together a rich set of scholars from different disciplines including law, politics and economy to analyse new

constitutionalism from a critical perspective problematizing the existing relations of power, shaping law and promoting so-called “good governance” at global level. New constitutionalism as promoted under the names of international trade agreements, rule of law, and good governance are criticized in this book as a political and social project in favour of extension of capitalist market and transfer of sovereignty from citizens to investors. More and more spheres of life are subjected to contractual relations, which are governed by global corporate interests in the name of rule of law. Blurring lines between public and private international law and consolidated hierarchies between international law and national law grant more and more sovereignty to global corporate capital disregarding questions of legitimacy, ethics, and rights. Susan Sell (2003) lays out how giant private corporations affect public international law analysing adoption process of the TRIPS Agreement of the WTO in the early 1990s. Sell (2003) claims that twelve US-based global corporations (Bristol-Meyers, CBS, Du Pont, General Electric, General Motors, Hewlett-Packard, IBM, Johnson & Johnson, Merck, Monsanto and Pfizer) came together under the Intellectual Property Commission in the WTO, drafted the agreement and succeeded in getting it adopted by political support of the US government. Democratic accountability and legitimacy features of classical constitutionalism are discarded through subjugation of national law to such international agreements adopted after not so much democratic and legitimate legislative processes. Despite their weakness in terms of legitimacy and normative processes, trade and investment agreements are functioning as national constitutional rules which are binding for long periods of time and difficult to change (Sinclair 2014).

Gill (1998, p.25) uses the verb “lock-in” selectively to define how neo-liberal reforms and private property rights are embedded in national laws, rules, regulations, procedures, and institutions by means of binding international agreements, legal guarantees and sanctions. On the other hand, pointing out the vast bail-out operations of Central Banks during 2008 Financial Crisis, Gill and Cutler (2014, p.13) highlight the pragmatic flexibility of new constitutionalism. Bailout operations of Central Banks is one of the examples Gill and Cutler recourse in this context. Central Banks in this crisis period were let to use their so-called autonomous position to pump bailout funds to their financial system harming the kernel of neoliberal economic policy myth. Bailouts were not limited to financial sector but utilized for the US automobile producers, as well. Bailout measures favouring the US-origin producers are also presented as a

contradiction with another neoliberal myth that is "non-discrimination in trade and investment regimes". Interest of the capital is guarded under changing scales of sovereignties depending on the advantages available at the moment. Bob Jessop (2018), in this context, is a useful reference to better understand multi-scalar and relational sovereignties. He calls consolidation of the protection of capital at global level as "scale jumping" emphasizing the function of new constitutionalism for limiting "the territorial and temporal sovereignty of national states". (Jessop 2018)

All these discussions on the concept of new constitutionalism brings us to this brief definition: new constitutionalism is the umbrella concept referring to three main processes through which neo-liberal reforms and private property rights in favour of freely roaming global capital are embedded in the national laws, rules, regulations, procedures and institutions. These three main processes are the restructuring of state as a facilitator of market, extension of the market for fictitious commodities, and legitimisation of the neoliberal rule of law and containment of the opposition forces against neoliberal restructuring. In other words, new constitutionalism is the so called "rule of law" for the interest of global capital which is challenging the rights and sovereignties of citizens and states regardless of democracy, legitimacy and accountability questions.

Howard Philip (2016) analyses power concentration in food system listing seven strategies that multinational corporations adopt to concentrate more power at hand. Philip (2016) states that hiding the information about their market shares, Multinational Companies (MNC) utilize the following strategies to increase and maintain their power:

- Changing the interpretation of antitrust laws
- Restructuring exchange networks
- Reshaping consumption habits
- Manipulating prices
- Maintaining government subsidies
- Strengthening intellectual property protections
- Influencing voluntary standard

These factors work hand in hand and bring about the scramble of common genetic resources, the seeds, in the form of intellectual property rights, plant variety protection laws, patents, licenses, trade deals, contract farming and market concentration by corporate capital. States and public funds gradually withdraw from seed production and willy-nilly accept dispossessing terms and conditions presented under the name of international agreements. At this point, new constitutionalism debate provides us a useful compass to position the functioning of international law for the benefit of capital. As Stephan Gill (1998) explains in his seminal work, new constitutionalism is the well-designed legitimization process of capitalism. Considering the roles and interaction between international and national laws and institutions, new constitutionalism is the name for the latest facilitating role of state and law to serve capital accumulation at the cost of democracy and citizenship rights. It is beyond any doubt that food sovereignty resists tools and objectives of new constitutionalism, say it patents, monopolies, or contracts secured by law in the expense of right to produce and have food.

CHAPTER 3

FACTUAL GROUND ON PRODUCTION AND CONSUMPTION OF FOOD IN TURKEY

This chapter will lay out the state of agricultural production, consumption, producers' profile, available statistical indicators on indicators of food security and commodification trajectory of seed market since 1980s.

3.1. Understanding the Agricultural Producers in Turkey

The third food regime is used as an explanatory framework in the analysis of Aydın (2010) on transformation of Turkish agriculture. He contends that traditional crops of developing countries were replaced by agri-food production to be controlled by TNCs. Secure and sustainable production of traditional crops (like wheat, cereals, tobacco and sugar beet for Turkey) was replaced by high-value food, luxury cash crops and animal feed which are labour intensive in nature. Conditional aid programmes of International Financial Institutions (IFIs) and donors in this period obliged once agriculturally sufficient countries to cooperate with the TNCs. Production of high value crops required cheap labour, input dependency on TNCs and contract-farming like production relations to guarantee the dependency setting in this new food regime. Farm-level production was interlinked with international trade. Friedman and McNair (2008, p.408) analyse this process as a process of breaking off farmers from local and national markets and obliging them to integrate into transnational supply chains at unfair terms of trade.

Neoliberal economic policies have transformed Turkish agriculture and peasantry dramatically since 1980s. Agriculture constitutes 18.2% of employment (TurkStat 2019a), 6,8% of GDP (SBB 2019), and 3,35% of exports (SBB 2019). 34,5% of agricultural holdings in Turkey have an economic size below 2000 TL whereas 24,7% of agricultural holdings have a size between 2000-4000 TL, 23,9% between 4000-8500 TL as of 2006 (TurkStat 2006). As per a more recent data, average agricultural

enterprise size in the country is 6 hectares. This size is measured to be 16.1 hectares in the EU-28 region (Eurostat 2019).

3.1.1. Turkish Farmers Are Getting Old, Dispossessed, Poor and Hopeless

Rather than official statistics published by TurkStat and the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, findings in private research studies conducted by research companies mostly conducted on behalf of certain agri-food companies and financial institutions provide important clues about the features of the producers in Turkish agriculture via broader dataset with comparative and qualitative analyses on state of farmers' real life experiences. In this respect, "Farmers' Survey" conducted in 81 provinces of Turkey with participation of 3.100 producer by the local agri-tech company Doktar (2019), which promotes itself with business references to Bayer, Syngenta and Cargill like global agri-food corporations; Farmers' Mind Map Research conducted by Konda Research and Consultancy in 2021 on behalf of Cargill Turkey; and the Agricultural Outlook Surveys conducted annually by Kredi Kayıt Bürosu (KKB, Credit Registration Bureau) which is a joint initiative by nine commercial banks giving credits to farmers in Turkey provide important insights about the profile of farmers in Turkey . Below are selected findings from the mentioned research studies and brief assessments suggested in relation to the research interest in this dissertation:

1. Median age of farmers is found to be 51 in Doktar (2019) and KKB (2021) research studies, while share of farmers above 49 years old is found to have increased from 25% in 2010 to 41% in 2020 in the Konda (2021) research. Based on product and income level segmentation, vegetable and fruit producers have higher median age (53) compared to cereal and industrial agricultural producers, likewise the small producers (53) have a higher median age compared to medium and big producers (Doktar 2019). This might be interpreted as the greater the labour input, the higher the producer's median age whereas the greater the capital input, the lower the producer's median age. Relation between share of labour input and producer's median age can be taken as an indication of dissolution of peasantry and small agricultural production, which requires use of farmer's own labour, in Turkey. Growing number of seasonal agricultural workers in the country is just another evidence of

dissolution of peasantry and rise of an agricultural proletariat selling their labour in labour-intensive branches of vegetable and fruit production. Although there is not an up-to-date and officially declared data about the size of seasonal agricultural workers, size of seasonal agricultural workers is said to be around 300 thousand in the Parliamentary Investigation Commission Report on Problems of Seasonal Agricultural Workers, published in March 2015 (Türkiye Büyük Millet Meclisi 2015). On the other hand, in another official handbook published by the Ministry of Labour and Social Security, it is stated that the number of seasonal agricultural workers corresponds to almost half of the total agricultural workers in the country which means more than 2 million workers constitute this group of precarious workers (ÇSGB 2015, p.10). It is interesting to observe such a big gap between two official statements. Apart from these official statements, the official labour statistics published by TurkStat (2020) also indicate that there is a 749 thousand of difference between the number of workers in agricultural sector in March and July 2020, the lowest and the highest in 12 months period. This might be considered as the most up-to-date estimation on the number of seasonal agricultural workers. Comparing this number with the number of farmers who left agriculture in the last 13 years opens up another interesting discussion on the relationship between commodification, dispossession and proletarianization in agriculture. As per the official data published by Social Security Institution, number of self-insured farmers declined from 1.093.241 in 2007 to 547.075 in 2020 (Statistical Yearbook of Social Security Institution 2020). Thousands of seasonal agricultural workers are replacing the more than 540 thousand small farmers that left agriculture.

2. 15% of producers sold land in the last five years (Doktar 2019). Among these, producers from Thracian and Southern Marmara regions have the highest proportion. This can be interpreted as an impact of vast public infrastructure projects on narrowing of farmlands in this region. Airport, bridges and motorways intensively cross-cutting these regions may be strong determinants in this result.

3. 61% of farmers state in Doktar (2019) research that their income levels decreased compared to last year. Disaggregated data show this indicator is the

lowest for vegetable and fruit producers. On the other hand, 56% of farmers in KKB (2021) Research state that they are not satisfied with their incomes.

4. 45% of producers in Doktar (2019) research think that it is not possible to make money out of agriculture. This ratio is higher for vegetable and fruit producers (48%). This can be interpreted as a result of labour-intensive structure of vegetable and fruit production and consequent disadvantage of producers of these products in the third food regime. There is also a significant gap between responses of small and big producers to this question on income expectation. Big producers have a greater expectation about increase in their incomes compared to small farmers.
5. High input costs, low sales prices, and electricity/water problems are listed as the top three problems by all producer groups whereas big producers expressed high input costs as a greater problem compared to small producers (Doktar 2019). On the other hand, a more recent research study by KKB (2021) indicate that high input prices, climatic problems, and lack of irrigation water as the top three problems for another nationwide farmer sample. Despite differences in samples, it is interesting to see high input prices at the top. This may be interpreted as lower self-sufficiency and higher dependency to global input supplies on the side of big producers applying intensive agriculture.
6. 51% of producers are not member of a cooperative as per Doktar (2019) Research. This ratio is higher for vegetable and fruit producers as 60% and small producers as 56%. Membership rate and positive perception about the benefits of cooperative membership are relatively higher for big producers and producers of industrial crops. This should be the result of a pro-market restructuring of agricultural cooperatives in the country.
7. 41% of all producers that participated in Doktar (2019) Research state that no one will continue production after himself or herself, and this rate is lower for big producers. Producers in Aegean and Thracian regions indicated higher ratios for having no one to continue agricultural production after them. This can be considered as an indication of the level of pressure on agricultural lands and economic diversification in these regions.

3.1.2. Turkish Farmers Are Losing Their Resource Autonomy

KKB releases annual reports based on nationwide surveys about agricultural outlook in Turkey. As the latest Agricultural Outlook surveys published by KKB (2019, 2021) present, share of farmers who deal only with animal breeding increased from 2,4% in 2001 to 13,6% in 2019, whereas share of farmers dealing with plant and animal breeding activities together declined from 67% in 2001 to 44% in 2021. This can be taken as an important indicator of disengagement from peasantry. Industrial farming which requires purchasing of inputs from the market is gradually replacing peasant way of farming which adopts a circular production method using outputs of plant and animal breeding activities as inputs for each other in a cyclical manner.

3.2. Indicators of a Fading State of Food Security in Turkey

Rural settlements and "villages" in particular were gradually neglected as subjects of development policy in Turkey due to the prevailing neoliberal development discourse that positioned urban settlements and mass urbanisation at the centre of modernisation and progress. Restructuring of the state along with the neoliberal policies applied since the early 1980s have brought out a state that assumes responsibility to endow all subjects, either individual or institutional, as capable market actors, and abandons a great majority of its redistributive roles. This has stimulated urbanisation, rising conglomeration economies in the cities, centralisation of means and processes of production, the rise of urban consumerism whereas a neglect of primary agricultural producers and peasants who have gradually been pushed to migration to cities since 1950s. Çağlar Keyder and Zafer Yenal (2013, p.191-218) portray the story of Turkish peasants in their seminal work *"Bildiğimiz Tarımın Sonu: Küresel İktidar ve Köylülük"*. They argue that peasantry and rural settlements have passed serious transformations due to the neoliberal development policies since 1980s (Keyder & Yenal 2013). Commodification of land, influx of speculative finance into agriculture, rising *metabolic rift*[4]separating agricultural products from land and human beings, replacement of small commodity farming with centralized corporate agriculture, minimized state incentives and extensive deregulation on agriculture, rising indebtedness of small farmers,

[4] See Foster, J. Bellamy (1999)

expanding practices of contract farming and non-farm employment as coping mechanisms are some of the main findings that Keyder and Yenal (2013) identify in terms of the impacts of neoliberal transformation of agriculture in Turkey. Acknowledging the neoliberal transformation of agriculture and consequent disruption of village as a major social organization in Turkey, Öztürk et al. (2021) identify "dual settlement and multi-place life" as one of the main responses of rural communities to subversive effects of this neoliberal transformation. New linkages between urban and rural settlements and diversified modalities of work and life established on these linkages emerge as new defining features of agriculture and rural population in contemporary Turkey. Following sections will present selected food security outcomes stemming from this neoliberal transformation of agriculture in Turkey.

3.2.1. Import Dependency and Domestic Food Price Volatility Are Rising

Food security is defined by FAO (n.d.,a) as physical, social and economic access for all people, at all times to sufficient, safe and nutritious food, which meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life. FAO's food security indicators show that food security is under seriously threat worldwide, hitting certain regions more severely. According to the Figure 2, Turkey, the gene centre of wheat is the seventh biggest wheat importer in the world. On the other hand, cereals import dependency rate, as illustrated in the Table 3 is 1% for Turkey while it is -1.8% for world and -28% for Europe, and 46.2% for Western Asia region in which Turkey is classified together by FAO, in 2015-2017. Comparative fluctuations in cereal import dependency of Turkey and the world are more visible in the Figure 1 which indicates the volatile position of Turkey. These indicators bitterly exhibit the imbalanced distribution of food security among nations in the third food regime. Domestic food volatility rate is another key indicator of FAO to measure food security. Turkey exhibits comparatively higher levels of volatility than both of the developing and developed world averages as presented in Table 4.

Another set of interesting statistics is extracted from TurkStat showing the foreign trade values of selected chapters and economic activities in 2013 and 2019.[5] Validating the

[5] As COVID-19 pandemic caused significant disruptions in international trade, trade data regarding 2020 and 2021 are selectively excluded from this table by the writer.

thesis of McMichael and Friedman on the new division of labour in global agriculture, Table 5 presents that, imports of cereals are more than 10-fold of the export of cereals. Food products predominate over agriculture, forestry and fishing trade in the total agricultural trade of Turkey. In addition to these, significant gap between exports and imports of the processed food products made out of cereals including flour, starch, and pasta indicates where the imported cereals are used. Cereal imports seem to increase by more than 70% from 2013 to 2019. Turkey is positioned as a rising food-processing country, which is an important part of the transnational supply chains in the third food regime. As wheat is the major cereal produced in Turkey, having a closer look at the story of wheat starting from the seeds will tell us more about the food sovereignty implications of this international division of labour and relevant state of trade for Turkey.

Table 3: *Cereal Import Dependency Ratio of Turkey and Selected Regions*

Year	Turkey (%)	World (%)	Europe (%)	Western Asia (%)
2000-2002	1.1	-0.5	-6.6	38.6
2001-2003	3.8	-0.5	-6.7	37.5
2008-2010	2.4	-0.8	-13.3	45.8
2015-2017	1	-1.8	-28	46.2

Source: *FAOSTAT. Cereal import dependency ratio (percent) (3-year average)*

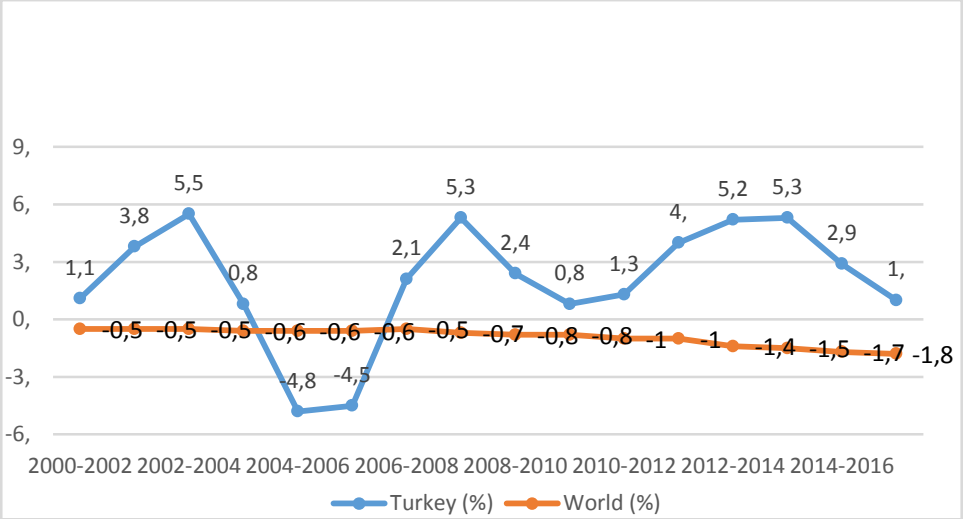

Figure 1: *Cereal Import Dependency Ratio of Turkey and World Compared, 2000-2017, %*

Source: *FAOSTAT. Cereal import dependency ratio (percent) (3-year average)*

Table 4: *Comparison of Domestic Food Price Volatility of Selected Regions and Turkey (percent)*

Regions/ Subregions/ Countries	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
World	3,6	6,2	5,4	7,1	7,8	6,3	9,8	5,6	6,8	9,9	6,5	5,7	6,9	7,8	6,4
Developing countries	4,8	3,7	4,0	3,7	4,3	7,7	6,2	14,1	5,1	7,4	3,2	2,9	4,4	6,3	7,2
Turkey	19,8	15,4	25,2	19,1	15,1	33,5	13,9	14,4	14,4	13,0	19,0	23,0	16,0	14,8	12,9
Developed countries	2,2	5,4	4,3	5,4	5,1	4,0	8,4	5,0	8,1	5,2	3,8	5,1	4,0	4,8	3,9
Least developed countries	7,4	4,7	4,8	3,0	5,7	5,8	9,2	4,6	9,2	8,0	3,5	3,1	4,6	8,9	7,3
Landlocked developing countries	5,5	6,9	6,0	4,6	5,4	7,3	8,6	4,9	11,6	9,9	3,5	5,5	10,2	9,3	
Small island developing states	7,1	3,5	3,7	6,4	13,0	3,5	5,9	12,4	7,1	5,4	12,2	6,6	3,5	6,1	15,8
Low income economies	4,6	4,2	3,7	2,9	4,8	5,9	7,9	4,7	7,9	8,8	2,9	3,4	4,8	8,2	2,6
Lower-middle-income economies	4,4	3,8	4,0	2,9	3,8	6,8	6,4	5,4	8,2	7,6	4,0	4,3	3,9	6,0	8,5
Low-income food-deficit countries	3,4	4,3	5,0	3,4	5,2	6,3	7,3	6,7	7,1	7,3	3,0	7,0	4,0	5,0	10,0

Source: *FAO (2014). Food Security Indicators. Food and Agriculture Statistics Webpage*

Table 5: *Trade Values for Selected Chapters and Economic Activities, 2013-2019*

		Exports (Value: Thousand US $)		**Imports (Value: Thousand US $)**	
Year		**2019**	**2013**	**2019**	**2013**
ISIC Codes	**Agriculture, forestry and fishing**	5 588 545	5 339 324	9 835 392	7 792 640
	Manufacture of food products	13 436 543	12 259 401	5 643 833	6 461 589
Chapters	**Cereals**	345 165	320 929	3 522 624	2 024 838
	Products of the millings industry, malt and starches, gluten, inulin	1 309 021	1 115 721	110 574	98 611
	Preparations of cereals, flour or starch or milk	1 912 227	1 551 287	219 127	236 069

Source: *TurkStat (2021a). Foreign Trade Statistics. Imports and Exports by ISIC, Rev.4, 2013-2019 (general trade system) and Imports and Exports by chapters, 2013-2019 (general trade system). April 2021*

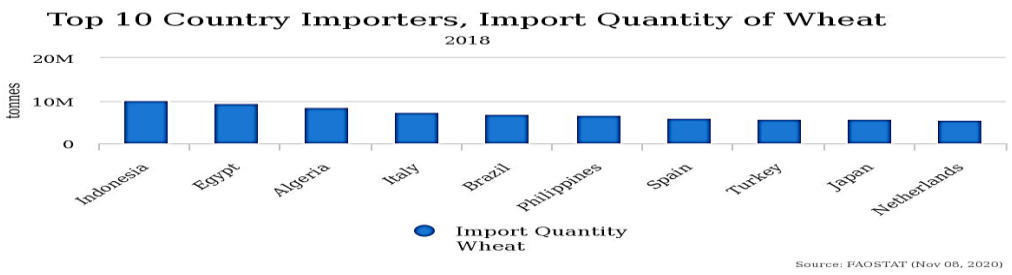

***Figure 2**: Top Wheat Importer Countries, 2018*

***Source:** FAOSTAT (2018). Crops and Livestock Products. Import Quantity by Crops*

3.2.2. Farmers Earn Declining Incomes

As per the latest Income and Living Conditions Survey results of TurkStat (2019b) in the Figure 3, the lowest average annual income is earned in agricultural sector with 21.807 TRY for 2019. This amount corresponds to below minimum wage monthly income in agricultural sector.

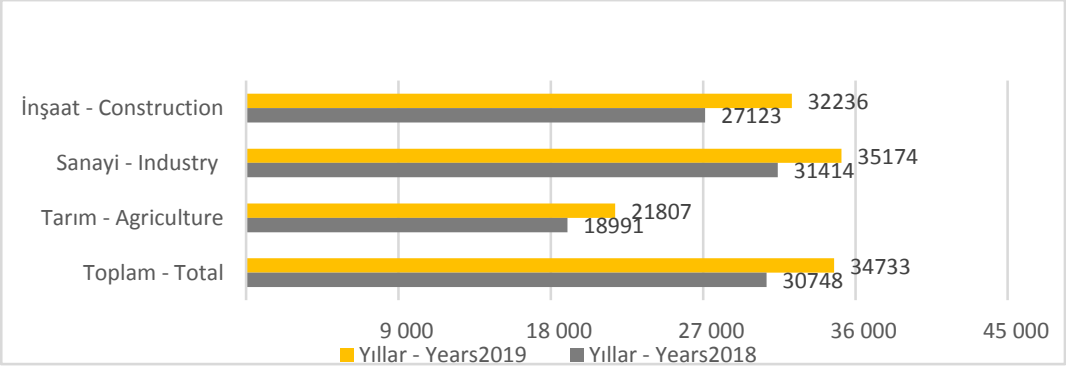

***Figure 3:** Mean Annual Income at Main Job by Branch of Economic Activity, TL, 2018- 2019*

***Source:** TurkStat (2019b). Income and Living Conditions Survey 2019. Retrieved from: https://data.tuik.gov.tr/tr/display-bulletin/?bulletin=gelir-ve-yasam-kosullari-arastirmasi-2019-33820*

3.2.3. Consumers Face Rising Food Prices and Reduced Economic Access to Food

Consumers in the country also do not have a sustained advantageous position in the food system. As per the latest consumer price index published by TurkStat (2021b), food and non-alcoholic beverages prices present 27.11% annual rate of change. (Figure 4) This is a very significant food inflation rate for a country with high shares of agricultural production in the economy. Knowing that the previous year's food inflation rate was

around 14%, food prices seem to increase two-fold in one year. With this food inflation rate, Turkey performs the worst among categories of G20 and Europe in 2021. Although the pandemic and global supply crisis have caused dramatic increases in food inflation worldwide, it is interesting to witness Turkey like a food exporter country ranking at the top ten countries with the highest inflation rate (Trading Economics 2021). This very much contradicts with food for people principle of food sovereignty approach. Citizens of a major food exporting country cannot have access to affordable and healthy food.

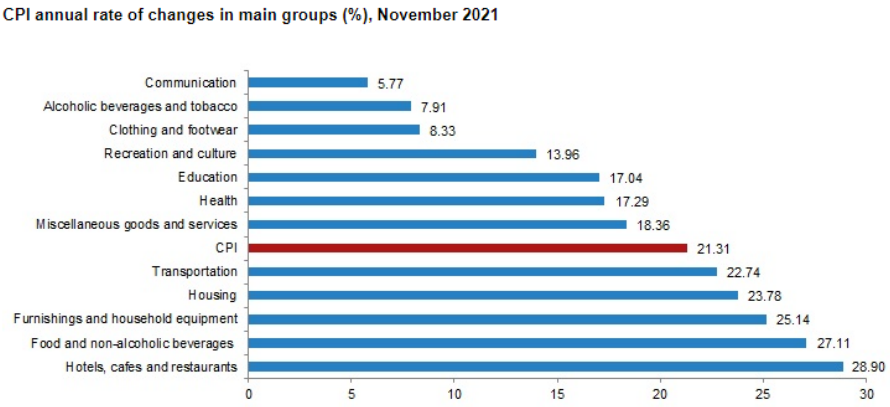

***Figure 4**: Consumer Price Index Annual Rate of Change in Main Groups (%), November 2021*

***Source:** TurkStat (2021b). Consumer Price Index. November 2021*

Another interesting data in Figure 5 shows the share of expenditure spent on food vs. gross domestic product per capita. While the rate is 22% for Turkish citizens, it is 6% for Americans, 18% for Bulgarians and 56% for Nigerians. This indicates a relatively high cost of food for a county with significant food production and exports and recalls the uneasy relation between trade and development.

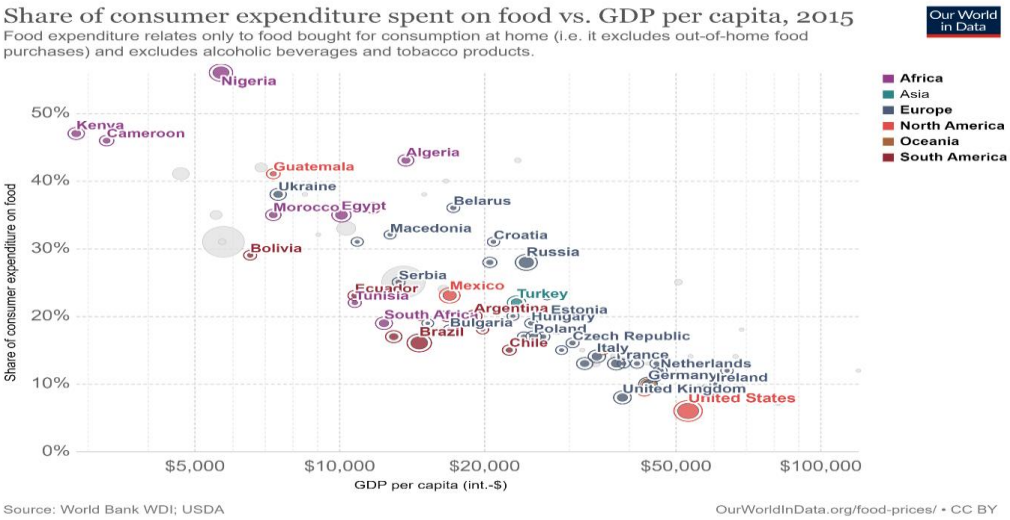

***Figure 5**: Share of Consumer Expenditure Spent on Food vs. GDP Per Capita, 2015*

***Source:** Roser, M. & Hannah, R. (2021). Food Prices. Published online at OurWorldInData.org.*

All these data on consumer prices and expenditure for food show that Turkish citizens have low economic access to sufficient, safe, and nutritious food which is one of the defining characteristics of food security for FAO.

3.3. Development of Seed Industry and Implications for Food Sovereignty in Turkey since Foundation of the Republic

The development policies adopted in the foundation years of Turkish Republic paid great attention to development of national seed industry. In this respect, early research institutes and state seed production farms constituted the building blocks of state monopoly over seed in the young republic. Seed breeding stations were first established in 1925. (TAGEM 2018) Former Law No. 308 with regard to Registration, Control and Certification of Seeds (1963) was the first comprehensive regulation on seed industry of the Republic of Turkey. However, liberalisation of Turkish economy in 1980s deeply affected the seed industry, as well. Liberalization of seed prices in 1982 and seed imports in 1984, Seed Incentive Decree in 1985, in this sense, can be listed as important milestones in rising of private sector as the leading actor in seed industry in the country (Elçi 2000). Following these liberalization steps, the early non-governmental organization to speak for private seed industry, Turkish Seed Industry Association

(TÜRK-TED, *Türkiye Tohumculuk Endüstrisi Derneği*) was founded in 1986 and became a member of International Seed Federation in 1998.

3.3.1. Private Seed Companies Are Organized Under TÜRKTOB

Based on the previous liberalization steps, a more structural change in seed legislation was introduced by the Seed Law No. 5553 in 2006. Being adopted after severe public criticism against the Law from its preparation process to restrictions it brought against seed trade among farmers, Seed Law has been a by-product of the never-ending EU accession process and the respective harmonisation of national law to EU legislation. In this respect, it has been subject to multiple criticisms questioning the motivation behind, dependency relations it serves for and threats against national sovereignty in several respects including food. Union of Turkish Seed Producers (TÜRKTOB, *Türk Tohumcular Birliği*), which was established as a professional institution with public institution status as part of the mandate of this Law, has then been perceived as the spokesperson for global capital and multinational agri-food corporations by public opinion. TÜRKTOB, on the other hand, stayed at a defensive position by adopting national sovereignty and seed sovereignty discourse in its public statements and claimed to be "domestic and national" with its vision, mission, and structure against all these criticisms. Former chair of the Executive Board of TÜRKTOB has public statements calling domestic seed firms to get united against the threat by foreign capital. In a press conference in 2017, he claims that domestic firms prefer acting independently and this prevents sufficient capital accumulation to compete in the world. He also underlines that foreign seed companies are getting bigger by mergers, and they are purchasing domestic seed firms which have limited capital assets. 35 out of 791 seed producing companies in Turkey are of foreign capital and this foreign capital is concentrated in industrial crops (Tarım Dünyası 2017).

Defensive position of TÜRKTOB has sometimes turned into proactive statements even against the projects declared by the Ministry of Food and Forestry as it was the case with the National Unity in Agriculture Project (TMBP, *Tarımda Milli Birlik Projesi*,) which was declared by the Ministry in 2019 as a pre-mature plan to restructure Turkish agricultural organization. TÜRKTOB has raised one of the strongest objections against this project idea on the grounds of threats to national sovereignty and future of small

farmers (Tarımdanhaber 2019). This is one of the interesting historical moments when national commercial seed producers and small farmers meet in the same objection against processes of new constitutionalism operating for global monopolistic structuring of agriculture in the country. It is interesting to observe crystallisation of the concept of relational sovereignties in this positioning of TURKTOB visa vis the ministry, national small farmers, and global agri-food capital.

Turkish government launched National Agriculture Project (MTP, *Milli Tarım Projesi*) in the last months of 2016 declaring that producers would be allowed to use only the certified seeds by 2018. Consisting of several measures to speed up vertical integration of small agricultural producers into third food regime, MTP was popularly justified on the bases of improved national food security and global competitiveness (Tarım ve Orman Bakanlığı 2016). However, in a short while MTP has turned into being a temporary project owned by a certain political-bureaucratic cadre and lost its popularity and consistent implementation speed. Frequent and major changes in the structure and organization of the Ministry brought about ownership and coherence problems for many popular projects like MTP. As it is stated in the previous paragraph, strategic orientation of national agriculture and food policy has recently been marinated with a new discourse under the title of National Unity in Agriculture Project, TMBP which is ironically named with very similar wording with former National Agriculture Project (MTP). Launching of TMBP which was expected to take place in April 2020 was suspended due to widespread public criticism including the claims of TÜRKTOB on breach of the Constitution by this latest project. Outbreak of COVID-19 pandemic and relevant changes in social and economic needs might also have a stake in this suspension process. However, TMBP intended to restructure organization of agriculture and food governance, and open state economic enterprises and agricultural cooperatives for foreign capital by combining all agricultural productive resources under state control within a single holding, Semerat. Semerat Holding would be open to shareholding by multinational agri-food corporations, as it was partially explained to public opinion. In this public debate process, potential threats of TMBP against national sovereignty was frequently referred by relevant social actors who have a consensus on relationship between food and sovereignty issues. Turkish policy ecosystem has long been suffering from frequent and drastic changes in bureaucratic cadres and policy tools that creates challenges before adoption of coherent and long-lasting public policies. Nevertheless,

despite radical differences between these two latest projects, they both serve liberalization of agriculture and food sector, and vertical and horizontal consolidation of multinational capital over local producers. Certified seed use is still in practice and state pays incentives for use of these seeds.

3.3.2. National Self-Sufficiency for Seeds Is the Lowest for Vegetable Varieties

As presented in the Figure 6, Turkey has insufficient export/import coverage ratio for seed trade, in 7/14 seed variety groups. Among these, vegetable crops need extra attention considering the importance of these crops in typical daily dietary composition in the country, share of these crop varieties in exports, and comparatively expensive prices of vegetable seeds in the world. When compared to the value of imports by seed varieties data presented in the Figure 7, it is permissible to say that seeds of vegetable crops should have a critical position in the food sovereignty discussion for Turkey. Experts Commission Report on Competitive Production in Agriculture and Food for the 11th Development Plan states that national sufficiency rate for seed production is 95% for wheat, 55% for barley, 112% for rice, and 40% for vegetables (State Planning Organization 2018).

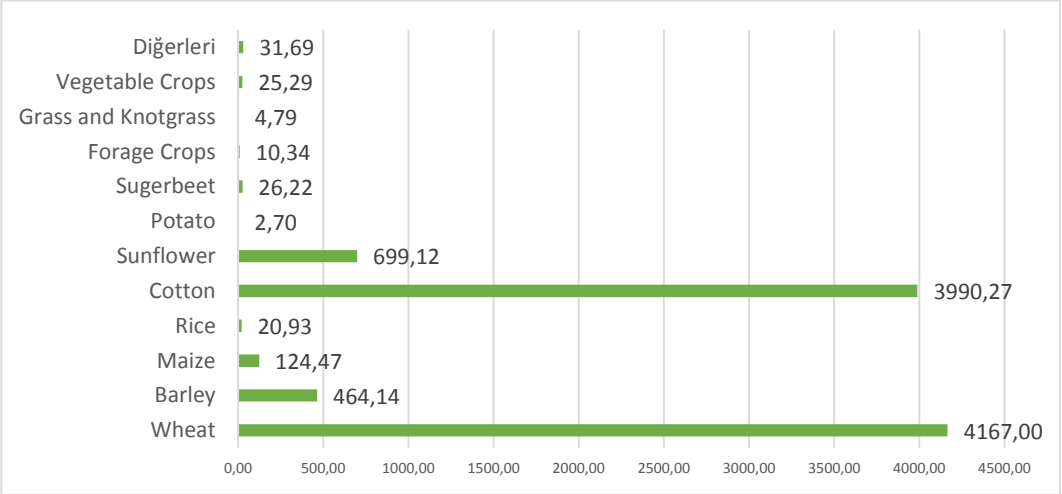

Figure 6: *Export/Import Coverage Ratio for Seed Trade, Turkey, 2019, %*

Source: *Calculated on the basis of available data from Tarım ve Orman Bakanlığı (2020a). [Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry]. Seed Trade Statistics. ((ExportsValue/Imports Value)*100)*

3.3.3. Global Agri-Food Capital Has High Interest in Tomato Seed Markets

Vegetable seeds are a crowded group including beans, carrots, onions, cucumbers, and tomatoes. Among these, tomato is assessed as the most important seed variety in the global seed market analyses. It is stated in the Global Seed Market Research 2020-2025, conducted by Mordor Intelligence, that tomato, eggplants, sweet pepper and hot pepper are the major vegetable seeds sown in the world. China is the largest tomato producer, followed by India, the United States, Turkey, Egypt, Iran, Italy, Spain, Brazil, Mexico, and the Netherlands. Syngenta, Limagrain, Bayer, BASF, and Rijk Zwaan control 45% of the tomato varieties in the European Union (Mordor Intelligence 2020). On the other hand, as per another report prepared by IMARC Group, grain seeds are the largest seed type constituting almost half of the global production and they are followed by oil seeds, vegetable seeds and fruit seeds (IMARC Group 2019). Sylvie Bonny (2017) in her article analysing the market concentration in global seed industry points out that sugar beets, vegetables, corn, and soybean seeds are expensive per hectare, while the seed cost of cereals other than corn is considerably lower. This makes global vegetable seed market a very competitive one witnessing scramble of vegetable producing countries by seed corporations. Interlinked with the seed production data, production level of tomato crop in the national agricultural production is another variable helpful to decide the object of enquiry in this research. As per the latest report on tomato production, released by the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, tomato has the biggest share in total vegetable production in the country (Tarım ve Orman Bakanlığı 2020b). Considering all these data, tomato producers feature as a suitable sample to see processes of new constitutionalism over seeds and food sovereignty in Turkey.

3.3.4. Wheat for Feeding People vs. Wheat for Trade?

On the other hand, focusing on tomato producers alone would provide us an insufficient picture of the state of food sovereignty in the country. Incorporating the prior claim of the food sovereignty movement that is “food for people” with the tacit and indispensable claim of the movement that is “food not for trade”, wheat producers are taken as the other half of the research subject in this study. Wheat is both a staple food and it has a major position in the agri-food exports and imports of the country either as primary crops or processed food. Constituting the 44% of total cereal production in the country,

79% of the cultivated wheat is used in food production, 13% in fodder industry, and 8% in seed production (Tarım ve Orman Bakanlığı 2021). Turkey is listed as a net wheat importer, but on the other hand a net wheat seed exporter in the International Trade Centre data (International Trade Centre 2021). In terms of seed exports wheat is in the top three field crop seed exports of the country (Tarım İşletmeleri Genel Müdürlüğü 2019). State provides incentive payments for the use of certified wheat seeds in selected water basins. The country which is the gene centre of wheat imports a significant amount of wheat to meet the food processing sector demand. Considering all these, wheat producers are selected as the complementary research subjects to tomato producers in this study in order to present some evidence on the uneasy relationship between trade and food sovereignty.

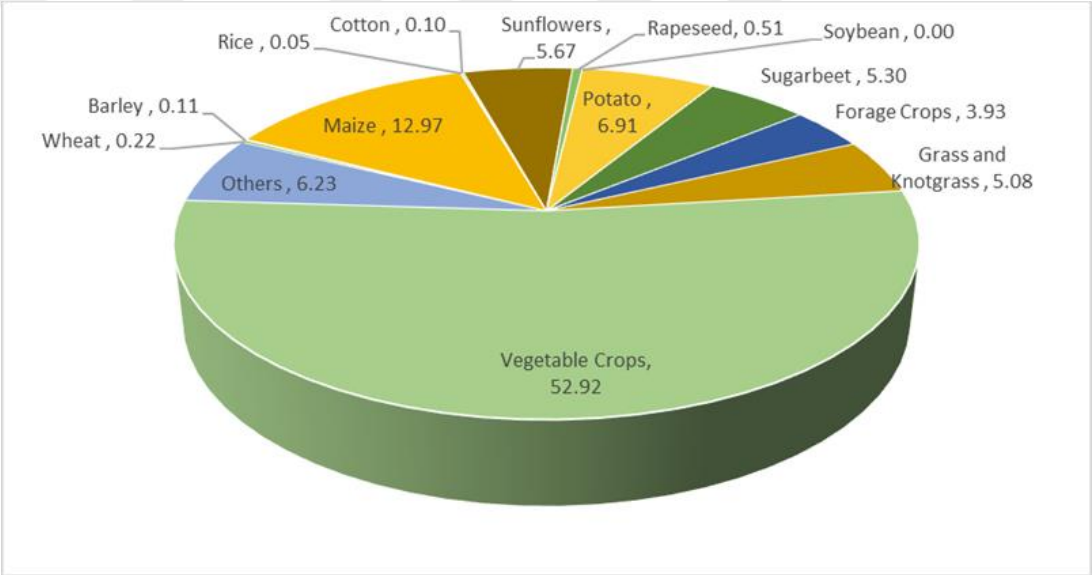

Figure 7: *Share of seeds by crop types in total seed imports in Turkey, 2019, thousand*

Source: *Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, Seed Trade Statistics, 2020*

3.3.5. Intellectual Property Regimes Are Pushing for Transferring Ownership of Seeds to Private Capital

Given the current structures and institutions of accumulation by dispossession under the names of patents, formal seed markets, outlawing of informal seed sources, and expansion of market control by multinational agri-food corporations, a pro-market discourse for liberalisation and integration of local seed systems within global seed

market is also reinforced through prestigious research studies by international organisations such as the World Bank. World Bank's "Enabling the Business of Agriculture" (EBA) is one of these studies. Previous EBA (2017) covered 64 countries including Turkey while the recent one covers 101 countries. EBA seed indicators measure time and cost to register a new cereal variety and the quality of the seed regulation that support and promote the development, evaluation and release of improved varieties, as well as seed quality control. Data derived from the latest EBA (2019) Report ranks Turkey's quality of seed regulation index (0-9) as 8. Basically speaking, there are three main groups of indicators under the titles of plant breeding, variety registration, and seed quality control and these indicators are measured through 34 questions in EBA 2017. Among these, there are questions as follows (EBA 2017):

- Conditions to benefit from plant breeders' rights do not differ between national and foreign applicants
- Companies are obtaining access to germplasm preserved in publicly managed gene banks

Countries are scored 1 or 0 depending on their response to the questions. With regards to the questions above, if a country grants equal conditions to national and foreign plant breeders it scores 1 whereas 0 if conditions differ. On the other hand, a country scores 0 (zero) if companies are not allowed for access to the germplasm preserved in publicly managed gene banks. Overall, these indicators measure to what extent the seed systems of countries are "liberalised" for global private capital. Turkey is ranked 12th among 64 countries in EBA 2017 presenting a fairly formal and "liberal" seed system.

Geoff Tansey (2002) compares multinational seed companies to feudal lords before industrial revolution. By controlling science and technology, management, information, and laws MNCs establish relations of serf and lord between farmers and companies. In this new feudalism setting, farmers never own the seeds but are just allowed to use seeds under conditions determined by companies. Patents and intellectual property rights are effectively used to consolidate this new serfdom system. Tansey (2002) points out that withdrawal of public authority and resources from agricultural research and development and hand over of this field by private capital and interest brings erosion of

public interest, public control and qualities of public good in the agricultural research and development (R&D) processes.

According to the World Intellectual Property Organisation data published in 2019, Turkey is among the top 20 countries for plant variety applications and 44.4% of applications from Turkey come from non-residents. This can be considered as an important indicator of interest by foreign capital to Turkish seed market and relative power of domestic and global seed firms in the country.

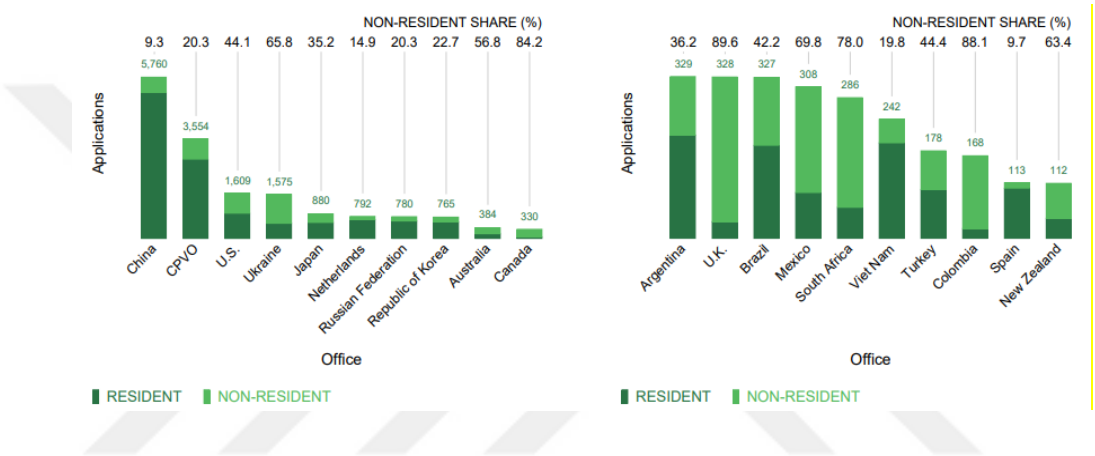

Figure 8: *Plant Variety Applications for the Top 20 Offices, 2018*

Source: *World Intellectual Property Organization (2019). World Intellectual Property Indicators 2019*

In this respect, consolidation of certified seed use and protection of plant varieties in line with the standards set through processes of new constitutionalism, and consequent erosion of right to food and food sovereignty needs some practical evidence from the daily lives of agricultural producers in the country.

3.3.6. Imported Agricultural Inputs Increase the Cost of Production for Turkish Farmers

Agricultural Input Price Index indicates the changing cost of production for Turkish farmers on annual and monthly bases. As per the latest TurkStat (2021c) data presented in Figure 9, seeds and planting stock prices increased by 12.11% between October 2020 and 2021, the agricultural Input Price Index is estimated to be 29.58%, and fertilizers and soil improvers performed the highest price increase among all agricultural inputs by

90% annual change. These indicators tell us how vulnerable Turkish farmers against external input markets and what a big threat is imposed on sustainability for agricultural production in the country.

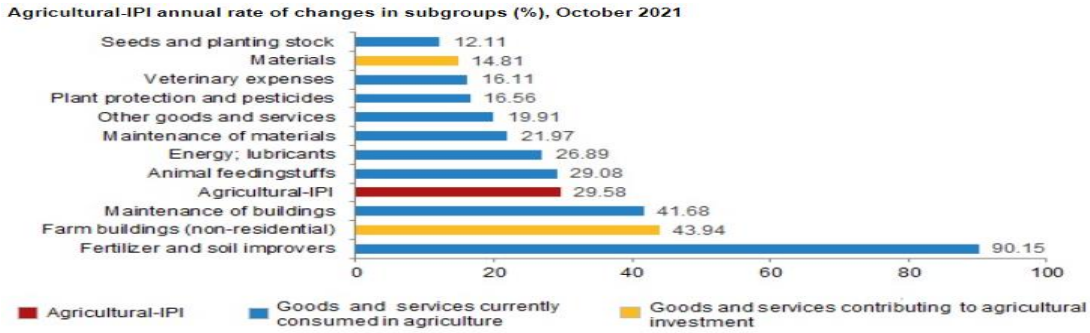

Figure 9: *Agricultural Input Price Index (IPI) Annual Rate of Change in Subgroups (%), October 2021*

Source*: TurkStat (2021c). Agricultural Input Price Index. October 2021*

CHAPTER 4

THREE PROCESSES OF NEW CONSTITUTIONALISM THREATENING FOOD SOVEREIGNTY IN TURKEY

In this chapter, certain indicators are suggested and applied to analyse three main processes of new constitutionalism bringing forth food sovereignty outcomes in Turkey. Considering the extensiveness of any attempt to analyse agriculture and food policies within the limits of a doctoral dissertation, a selective approach is adopted, focusing mostly on legal-institutional transformations taking place around production and consumption of seeds. However, impact of neo-liberal state-restructuring on agriculture is also assessed with a broader perspective under special references to transition to Presidential Government System. Post-2000 period is focused on this assessment since the commodification and global market integration of agriculture and seeds in Turkey have gained extra speed in the last twenty years. Timing and frequency of reform steps introduced in the following sections prove the importance of last twenty years for commodification of agriculture, the seeds being in the first place, and resulting changes in food sovereignty position of the state, producers, and citizens.

Gill's (1998) framework on global disciplinary tools of new constitutionalism is operationalized through three main dimensions/processes in this dissertation, focusing on seeds and food sovereignty in Turkey. For that purpose, below-mentioned indicators which are matched with three processes of new constitutionalism as suggested by Gill are identified to analyse Turkish agri-food policy and practice in terms of the impact of new constitutionalism over food sovereignty in Turkey. Gill's (1998) three-dimensional analytical framework is applied to Turkish context through a legal-institutional analysis, whereas a complementary field survey is implemented to lay out reflections of the identified food sovereignty impacts of the legal-institutional reforms on daily farming practices and perceptions of small agricultural producers in the country. Findings from the field survey are utilized to verify the findings from desk review on legal-institutional changes. So, the first step which includes a legal-institutional analysis of the neoliberal restructuring of Turkish agri-food governance aims to lay out the indicators of three

major processes of new constitutionalism over agriculture with a special focus on seeds. Disciplinary impact of global capitalism is presented through three main dimensions/processes and respective indicators in the context of Turkey including legal reforms, international agreements, commitments, and projects, all serving for commodification of agriculture and resulting in disrupted food sovereignty in the country.

Table 6: *Gill's Three Processes of New Constitutionalism and Indicators of a Disrupted Food Sovereignty in Turkey*

Dimensions/Processes	**Indicators of New Constitutionalism in Process of Disrupting Food Sovereignty**
1) Increasing the power of executive for an enabling state	Presidential Government System and Implications for Agricultural Policies: ▪ Legislative power of the Parliament weakened. ▪ Supervisory power of the Parliament weakened. ▪ Power of the Purse is transferred from legislative to executive. Agricultural budget act is prepared and approved by the head of the executive, outside parliamentary deliberation. ▪ Ministers assigned from outside the Parliament, the chain of accountability between the producers/citizens and Ministers broken ▪ Investor-friendly policy discourse undermining political agency and rights of producers, privileging trade ▪ Agricultural policies determined by closed, highly centralized political cadres, Policy Councils within the Presidency predominating ministerial bureaucracy and the Parliament. ▪ Very centralized decision-making processes consolidated around personality of the President. ▪ Arbitrary and personal decisions of the President over all national and international legal engagements, opening space for "fast and efficient" relations with global corporate capital.
2) Instilling the sublime rights of global investors to the national law	Restructuring of national laws in line with commitments in certain International Agreements setting standards in the field of food, agriculture and seeds. Agricultural policy prescriptions at the early 2000s by the IMF, WB and the EU were based on the WTO Agreement on Agriculture (1995), the Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights of WTO (1995) and UPOV 1991 Convention.

Table 6: *continued*

	A set of pro-capital changes were introduced in line with these international prescriptions and commitments that mainly serve restructuring for plant variety protection regime in the country, commodification of seeds, and introduction of legal guarantees and patents for plant breeders and seed producers. Following legislative regulations and reforms are analysed in this respect: ▪ Law no. 5042 on Protection of Rights of Breeders of New Plant Varieties (2004) ▪ Seed Law no. 5553 (2006) ▪ Agriculture Law no. 5488 (2006) ▪ Biosecurity Law no. 5977 (2010) ▪ The ARIP Project* funded by the World Bank. **The ARIP Project with the World Bank ended up with suspension of "artificial incentives and subsidies" for agricultural producers and introduction of Farmer Registration System (surveillance for global reporting, particularly the EU and WTO commitments).*
3) Legitimation and extension of consent for the neoliberal food and agricultural policy	▪ Discourse of being, promoting, and seeking "the domestic and national" *(yerli ve milli)* is utilized to ensure legitimacy of a rich set of public policies including agricultural policies and projects. ▪ "Invited policy spaces" are opened up for agricultural stakeholders, ensuring controlled participation. ▪ Limited space is secured for informal seed market and local varieties in a final objective for extension of formal seed market Small financial support schemes are provided for dispossessed rural populations

In this respect, each of these dimensions are elaborated in relation to indicators of the impact of new constitutionalism on seeds and food sovereignty in Turkey in the following sections.

4.1. Increasing the Power of Executive for an Enabling State

Food sovereignty movement claims food democracy. However, dominant industrial food system is structured on the basis of profit maximization and imbalance of power between peasants, small farmers and corporate actors in agricultural supply chain. This

structure conflicts with deliberation, representation, equality and accountability features expected from a democratic food system. In this respect, increasing the power of executive branch visa vis the legislative operates as one of the major processes of new constitutionalism to consolidate power of global agri-food corporation visa vis small farmers as producers and citizens as consumers of food. An enabling state governed by a comparatively stronger executive visa vis other social forces can easily insulate economy policies from politics and democratic accountability. Authoritarian neoliberalism (Tansel 2018), competitive authoritarianism (Özbudun 2015; Esen & Gümüşçü 2016) and new developmentalism or state capitalism (Öniş 2019) are just some of the concepts used to define this concentration and centralisation of executive powers for pro-market restructuring of state in Turkey. All these concepts have strong associations with Poulantzas' "authoritarian statism" concept, which he developed to explain capitalist state in 1970s. Poulantzas had pointed out replacement of parliamentary system and legal-formal bureaucracy with dominant mass parties in service of the executive, and consequent separation of the political and the economic (Poulantzas 1978:233 as cited in Resch 1992:362). The new Presidential Government System which entered into force by 2018 in Turkey carries significant features that provides a real-life case for Poulantzas's authoritarian statism concept. Öniş (2019, p.18) argues that new developmentalism in Turkey is "significantly institutionalized and entrenched by the new presidential system". In this respect, the major building blocks of this Presidential Government System that increase the power of executive over agriculture and food policies and consolidate a market-enabling state in harmony with global corporate capital are identified as follows:

1. Office of prime ministry and council of ministers composed of elected parliamentarians were abolished and executive authority was given to the President. Ministers do not have to be assigned from the Parliament, anymore. Rather, ministers are assigned by the President among figures from private sector and civil society with a frequent justification on merits of the assigned ministers to manage the ministries likewise a CEO manages a corporation.
2. Legislative power of the Parliament is weakened. Presidential decrees enacted by the President are replacing laws enacted by the TGNA. Although there is a clear statement in the Constitution that the President cannot enact decrees on issues already covered by legislation, there are three other features of the

Constitution that changes this balance in favour of the President. First of all, the president can become a member and even the leader of a political party. Secondly, presidential and parliamentary elections are done on the same day in a way to ensure the Presidency and parliamentary majority of a political party at the same time. This prevents electorate from changing majority party in the Parliament and warning the President about the discontent. Finally, as per the latest amendment in the Constitution, the President is authorized to declare the state of emergency and to enact presidential decrees without any limits during the state of emergency periods. As a whole, given the conditions in which the majority party controls the legislative and the executive branches both, it is actually impossible to enact any laws that are proposed by the opposition parties, and it is almost equally impossible to stop any legislation proposed by the ruling party, except some minor changes or postponements to manage public opinion opposing the proposal.

3. Supervisory power of the Parliament is weakened as motion of censure, parliamentary inquiry, and oral question were abolished as means of parliamentary supervision over the executive. Parliamentarians can raise questions in written and the executive is required to answer these questions in fifteen days as per the article 91 of the Constitution. However, based on statistical data in the Table 7 and 8, it is clear that written questions of the parliamentarians are getting answers in a declining rate and widening timespan which makes written questions dysfunctional.

Table 7: *Status of Answers for the Parliamentary Written Questions in Selected Legislative Terms*

Legislative Term	Number of Written Questions by Parliamentarians	Number of Questions Answered within Legal Time	Questions Answered on Legal Time as a Percentage in Total (%)
1999-2002	8240	7164	86,94
2002-2007	22994	14395	62,60
2007-2011	Not available	Not available	44,49
2011-2015	64112	Not available	22,22
2018-2019	Not available	Not available	10,69

Source: *Data derived from the newspaper article based on public statement of Özgür Özel, one of the parliamentarians of the main opposition party, CHP in Sözcü Gazetesi.*

Table 8: *Status of Answers for the Parliamentary Written Questions on Selected Key Words on Agriculture in the 27th Legislative Term (2018-May 2021)*

Key Word in the Written Question	Number of Written Questions Answered within Legal Time	Number of Questions not Answered within Legal Time	Number of Questions Answered After Legal Time	Number of Questions in Process or At Signature Phase	Total Number of Written Questions	Questions Answered on Legal Time as a Percentage in Total (%)
Agriculture	136	144	524	14	818	16,62
Farmer	30	12	104	1	147	20,40
Peasant	7	7	29	2	45	15,55

Source: *Data collected from official website of the Turkish Grand National Assembly (Türkiye Büyük Millet Meclisi 2021). May 2021.*

Not only the number, but also the quality of answers to parliamentary questions deserves a closer look. There are many short answers with "It is not within our mandate." statement despite the questions raised have inherent relation with the institution/ministry that received the question (Türkiye Büyük Millet Meclisi 2019). The executive organs of the state frequently answer written questions of the parliamentarians without a relevant and valid answer. There is a rich repertoire of diversions, in this respect. Referring parliamentarians to unofficial statements of ministers in newspapers, or to the vast statistical bulletins of ministries without exact data asked in the question, or to other ministries in a vicious cyclical manner, and finally stating that the requested information crosscuts confidential and commercial data which is not possible to share with the parliamentarians are some of the most frequent ways of answering written questions without giving relevant information. Questions and answers are publicly available on the website of TGNA, in the written questions page.

4. Power of the purse is transferred from legislative to the President. Authority to prepare the budget act (regulating the Central Government Budget) is taken from the Council of Ministers and granted to the President in the latest amendment of the Constitution establishing Presidential Government System in Turkey. Ministers used to be elected among parliamentarians and were accountable to the Parliament in the previous system. On the other hand, during

preparation of the budget, ministers used to work in close collaboration with the ministerial bureaucracy including the office of the undersecretary of the Ministry, which is abolished in the new system. As legislative and the executive are virtually under control of the President, it is not possible for TGNA to reject the budget act proposed by the President. On the other hand, the budget act is prepared by narrow political cadres including the ministers, assigned by the President from outside the parliament, and without bureaucratic technical input and consultation. Akbey (2020, p.22) provides an elaborate analysis on how the parliament's power of the purse is damaged under the current Presidential Government System in Turkey.

5. Policy Councils assigned by the President are positioned over ministerial bureaucracy diminishing strategic power of the bureaucracy. Policy councils are established by the Presidential Decree No. 1 regulating the organization structure of the Presidency. Councils are positioned as consultation bodies giving advice to determine strategic orientation in selected policy areas and monitoring the ministries for implementation of policies. President is the head of these councils. Nine councils are defined in the Presidential Decree 1, among which "Health and Food Policy Council" is the one assigned for agricultural and food policy tasks. Ministers in this new administrative organization are positioned more like public managers responsible for managing policy implementation on the basis of efficiency, and this efficiency is very much aligned to political efficiency to serve continuation of the President's power. This has a significant impact on accountability of the ministers to citizens and the Parliament.

6. Not only the ministers but also a long list of senior executives are directly assigned by the President in this new system. The President is granted with such extensive authorities over policy making and assignment of bureaucratic cadres that policy processes are deeply engaged to personality of the President himself. This inhibits effective, rational, and coherent policymaking and implementation processes operated through democratic deliberation and impersonality of implementing bureaucracy.

After all, increased power of the executive visa vis the legislative is consolidated by the latest Presidential Government System that entered into force in 2018 in Turkey. The new system was presented to citizens' vote with a justification to eliminate inefficiency of parliamentary system which gave way to coalition governments, weakened executive stability, and hindered economic growth of Turkey. Throughout the public campaign period towards system changing constitutional referendum in 2017, pluralism and democratic deliberation represented in the Parliamentary system was claimed to be detrimental to fast and effective decision-making processes. Instead, permanent political stability, and fast and effective execution were promoted as the top two advantages attributed to the Presidential Government System in the public communication campaign before the referendum (AK Parti 2017). Testing the presidential government system against all the claimed merits during referendum campaign is beyond the limits and purpose of this study. However, putting aside the relationship between a centralized executive power and consolidation of corporate agro-food system should be the value added expected from a new constitutionalism analysis in this study. Despite the short time after the new system entered into force and the unprecedented impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on all policy processes, below mentioned impacts on agriculture and food policies can be listed as symptoms of a centralized executive bringing agricultural and food policies out of political realm:

1. Agricultural policies are determined by closed, highly centralized political cadres, limited political deliberation and consultation takes place in the TGNA.
2. Agricultural budget is determined outside parliamentary legislation which prevents producers as citizens from reaching their representatives in the Parliament and getting their concerns reflected in the budget. The chain of accountability is broken for agricultural and food policies.
3. Executive branch is so much centralized that it is impossible for the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry to follow a foreseeable agricultural support policy with quick response capacity for potential disasters and crises.
4. Investor friendly policy discourse undermines the political agency and rights of small agricultural producers, and commodifies land, water, genetic resources and producers as investment instruments for global markets. This perspective is very much visible in the investment promotion language of the Investment Office of the Presidency (2021).

5. The Presidency gradually consolidates an actual state detached from legal foundation. The recent tension created by the President's decision to retreat from "Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence Against Women and Domestic Violence", *İstanbul Sözleşmesi* in other words, disregarding all national and international norms regulating entering and retreat from international agreements can be taken as an early attempt to grant more power to the executive to determine international relations of the country, including relations with the corporate capital and investors, and agreements regulating agricultural trade.
6. Commercial interests are prioritized over food sovereignty concerns of producers in existing presidential powers used for administration of international trade. Frequent release of presidential decrees for lowering or eliminating tariffs on agricultural products such as wheat, barley, lentils, rice, maize, legumes and molasses cane lowering domestic prices and discouraging national farmers from continuing to produce is just one example of the use of exclusive presidential authority in detriment of food sovereignty.

4.2. Instilling the Sublime Rights of Global Investors to the National Law

As this study takes seed at the centre of food sovereignty and new constitutionalism nexus, it is vital to have a closer look at the major international agreements regulating use and production of seeds in the country. In this respect, the WTO Agreement on Agriculture (1995), the Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights of WTO (1995) and the UPOV 1991 Convention have important roles in policy choices towards formalization, privatization and consolidation of seed market, and dispossession of small agricultural producers and peasants in the country. Agricultural policy prescriptions in Turkey at the early 2000s by the IMF, WB and the EU were also in harmony with these agreements.

Among a rich literature analysing neo-liberalisation of Turkish agriculture, Aydın (2010) emphasizes that TNCs gradually took over Turkish agriculture by the institutional support of the WB, IMF, WTO, and the EU. He argues that Turkey has been positioned as a high-value crop producer in a dependency relationship with the TNCs in the broader framework of third food regime.

Transnational corporations are the dominant actors of corporate food regime, which is built on centralised, monopolised and private control of agricultural inputs and finance, and transformation of primary agricultural commodities from industrial inputs into end use products through the lucrative food-processing sector. Aydın (2010) in this context suggest that production of high value crops require cheap labour, input dependency on TNCs, and contract-farming like production organisations to guarantee the dependency setting in the new food regime. Turkish farmers produce the labour-intensive fruits and vegetables for primarily Europe by using the seeds supplied by TNCs and market their products through another set of retailer TNCs after a total control of production and marketing processes under contract farming agreements with these TNCs. International free trade story is dramatically challenged by this new phenomenon of TNCs since their intra-firm commercial activities go beyond the rules and limits of free trade which was expected to serve the wealth of nation states. Aydın (2010) points several deregulation and structural adjustment policies as the safeguards of this dependency relation since 1980s. 2001 Tobacco Law, 2001 Sugar Law, 2006 Agriculture Law, 2006 Seeds Law and 2006 Bio-Security Law are some of the significant legal transformers that he mentions in relation to decline of national agricultural autonomy. The national legal reforms, in this respect, will be analysed in detail in the following pages.

World Bank and IMF have been two major international transformers of Turkish agriculture in the post-1980 era determining most of the legal and institutional restructuring. Privatisation of the agricultural state economic enterprises such as Turkish Dairy Industry Institution *(Türkiye Süt Endüstrisi Kurumu)*, Milk and Fish Institution (*Et ve Balık Kurumu*), YEMSAN (Turkish Fodder Industry Inc.) , Türkiye Gübre AŞ (Turkish Fertilizer Inc.), Türkiye Şeker Fabrikaları AŞ (Turkish Sugar Factories Inc.), TEKEL (State Monopoly of Tobacco, Cigarettes and Alcoholic beverages); making of agricultural sales cooperatives dysfunctional; and elimination of agricultural support policies have been the major steps leaving Turkish agriculture in a disadvantaged position in corporate food regime. Oyan (2009) raises a strong criticism against the dependency reinforcing commitments and legal regulations as part of a set of Letters of Intention to the IMF in 1999-2001 period. Bonding of wheat prices to Chicago Stock Exchange prices and regulating the elimination of support to the agricultural cooperatives through legal instruments are pointed as *capitulation like* dependency policies by Oyan (2009).

Yenal (1999) analyses the process of rising hegemony of TNCs and decreasing capacity of nation state in the third food regime in his paper on food TNCs. He lays out the new division of labour in the international food market positioning core countries as low value-added commodity producers (staples production) and periphery as the high value-added commodities (fruits and vegetables) and TNCs as the ultimate planner and controller of the whole system from seed modification and supply to agricultural financing. TNCs prefer mergers and acquisitions rather than international trade. (Yenal 1999) They keep the R&D monopoly and intellectual rights at their hands and benefit from the intangible assets of the local partners such as distribution networks, knowledge about market conditions and established brand names. Very much in line with Yenal's analyses, Investment Office of The Presidency Office of Turkey invites international capital to invest in Turkish agriculture by promoting the country with its labour cost competitiveness, business enabling legal-institutional setting, integration with international seed system, rising domestic demand and consequent opportunities for a growing market, opportunities for "capitalizing on locals' experience and network", strong government incentives including many tax reductions, and favourable climatic conditions and land and water resources (Presidency of Republic of Turkey Investment Office). Above all, it sounds like a misfortune to present high levels of education and qualified labour force in the country compared to several European countries together with a statement on relatively low labour costs in the country one after the other within the same document promoting international investment in Turkish agriculture.

WTO, which replaced GATT in 1994, can be considered as one of the primary international constraints on national agricultural policies of Turkey. Liberalisation of international trade in agricultural commodities and removal of protectionist policies have been the basic WTO rules imposed on members, in a nutshell. Agreement on Agriculture within WTO is in force since 1995 for Turkey as a member of the WTO. Turkey accepted to apply reductions on domestic support, market access and export subsidies as a party to this Agreement.

European Union (EU), on the other hand, poses another process of new constitutionalism, mostly functioning in collaboration with the IFIs in terms of the constraints on Turkish agricultural policy. Launching of the Customs Union with the EU in 1996 and signing of Accession Partnership Document in 2000 posed new

international constraints on Turkish agriculture which was expected to be further liberalized in the presence of an indeed very protective Common Agricultural Policy of the EU. Position of the EU in this context is open to criticism in terms of its internal consistency. EU expects modernization of Turkish agriculture without state subsidies and compete within the Customs Union disregarding the historical development of the Common Agricultural Policy of the Union based on extensive subsidies. This contradiction reminds us Chang's (2002) analogy on Western protectionism hidden behind free market fundamentalism discourse that is "kicking away the ladder". Although full accession seems like a far-reaching dream for that moment, negotiation process has been bringing many regulations on registration, food safety and monitoring mechanisms which ultimately serve the benefit of the customers in the Customs Union.

Before zooming in the particular national legal reforms regulating seeds, agriculture and food sovereignty in the country, it is useful to present the structure of three main international agreements and implications of these agreements on seed and food sovereignty in Turkey.

4.2.1. Agreement on Agriculture (AoA), World Trade Organization

Agriculture was excluded from General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) which was the predecessor of WTO for regulating international trade from 1948 until 1995. This exclusion enabled states to protect their agricultural sector. However, as part of the liberalisation storm in 1980s, agriculture was included in the Uruguay Round negotiations of GATT. "Agreement on Agriculture" which came into force in 1995 is presented in WTO official website as a major step for "reforming agricultural trade and making it fairer and more competitive" (World Trade Organization, n.d.,a) The Agreement is composed of three main groups of objectives as market access, domestic support, and export competition (World Trade Organization 1995a). Commitments of the party states to the Agreement are monitored by the Agricultural Committee. As it is defined in the official webpage of the WTO, "the committee monitors the elimination of agricultural export subsidies, new rules for export credits, and decisions on international food aid and exporting state trading enterprises agreed at the Nairobi Ministerial in its Decision on export competition" (World Trade Organization, n.d., b).

As part of the market access objectives, the Agreement prohibits all non-tariff barriers and the tariffs on almost all agricultural products internationally traded. On the other hand, as part of the domestic support objectives, members get into a commitment to discipline and reduce their domestic support and subsidies to agricultural production. Domestic supports are categorized mainly under Green Box and Amber Box, based on their impact on trade. Supports with no, or minimal distortive effect on trade is placed in Green Box measures, whereas trade-distorting supports are placed in "Amber Box" measures. While agricultural research and extension services and direct payments to producers provided by government are placed in Green Box, price guarantee by the government for agricultural products is considered as Amber Box measures. Party states also commit decreasing the total monetary value of Amber Box measures, with certain exceptions. Apart from Green Box and Amber Box, there are exceptional categories such as Blue Box (Any support that would normally be in the amber box is placed in the blue box if the support also requires farmers to limit production. Development expenses for rural areas are mostly justified by EU like big agricultural subsidy users to be placed in this box), and Development Box (supports that encourage agricultural and rural development and that constitute an integral part of the development programmes of developing countries). (World Trade Organization, n.d., c) WTO has a complex system of rules guarded by neoliberal rule of law. It is not an easy job to get a simple answer on WTO rules in the crowd of the complex documentation on the official website. Although WTO's communication strategy works on convincing global public opinion on democratic legitimacy and accountability of the organization and its decisions, statements like "At its heart are the WTO agreements, negotiated and signed by the bulk of the world's trading nations", which is selectively used in the official WTO website, resonates adversely on the side of food sovereignty movement (World Trade Organization, n.d., d). It is questionable whether negotiating and signatory parties are nations or corporations, indeed. *La Via Campesina* (2 September 2003) is actively using the catchphrase of "WTO out of agriculture!" claiming that there is no world market of agriculture.

There is an uneasy relationship between global food trade and right to food. Food sovereignty movement is criticized for not having a clear position about global food trade which is impossible to reject totally. Livelihoods of millions of farmers and peasants are dependent on international food trade since not all the time local markets as

promoted by LVC can cover local demand and supply for foods sufficiently. Kim Burnett and Sophia Murphy (2014, p.16) criticize food sovereignty movement for having an "ambiguous, unclear and sometimes contradictory position" on food trade, and suggest the movement to rethink its complete rejection of WTO. Rather, using opportunities to transform WTO rules as well as decision making procedures in a more democratic, legitimate and accountable line crosscutting the food sovereignty concerns may be a more reasonable choice for food sovereignty movement. COVID-19 pandemic, in this respect, is considered as a good historical opportunity to shape this transformation. WTO published a joint declaration with WHO and FAO in March 2020, the early months of the global pandemic, acknowledging that "Millions of people around the world depend on international trade for their food security and livelihoods." On the other hand, AoA is subject to harsh criticism by UN special rapporteurs on right to food. Michael Fakhri, the current UN Special Rapporteur on Right to Food criticize the AoA for putting trade before food security and considering people as pure economic agents rather than right bearers. Fakhri (2020) clearly identifies AoA as a "barrier to fully recognize the right to food." in his latest report on international trade to the General Assembly. Based on this perspective, Fakhri invites global community to transform trade systems in a way that trade complements local food systems rather than substituting them. (Cited in Ferguson 2020) However, there is sufficient evidence proving global food trade is destroying local food markets by cheap food imports, dumping and bans on domestic supports. Pressure of WTO and commitments in the AoA on governments have been major factors behind massive nationwide farmers' strikes in India that could not be mitigated since September 2020. Discontent created by processes of new constitutionalism are crystallized in this recent farmers' movement in India. Biswajit Dhar (2021, p.13) lays out the reasons behind the Indian farmers' uprising in his recent paper and he clearly presents that the domestic support provided to the farmers of the USA and the EU was the highest among all WTO members between 1995 and 2017 as per the notifications they submit to the WTO Committee on Agriculture. Dhar (2021, p.18) also criticizes Agreement on Agriculture for not differentiating types of subsidies on the bases of food security objectives and trade-related objectives.

Cutting of agricultural subsidies as part of the commitments to WTO, AoA creates tensions in many countries between the elected governments and farmers, the citizens.

Member countries are grouped in three as developed, developing and the least-developed countries, and Turkey is among the developing countries group. The agreement required developing countries to decrease total amount of domestic supports 24% in 10 years. However, as total amount of domestic support to agriculture was already less than 10% of the total agricultural production in Turkey, the country was exempt from this commitment. Yapar and Ay (2005, p.77) argue that due to the outward oriented and non-protectionist economic policies which were adopted long before AoA came into force, Turkey did not have difficulty in complying with the WTO Agreement on Agriculture. Liberalization policies since early 1980s had already brought agriculture to the point AoA imposes on members. Özalp (2019) lays out the building blocks of liberalisation of agriculture in Turkey, dividing republican history of agriculture in two parts as 1923-2000 and 2000 to date. Substitution of input subsidies and price supports with mono-typical direct income support based on the size of production area, privatization of state economic enterprises, and elimination of subsidized credits to agricultural producers by state banks are listed as some of the major changes in agricultural policies in early 2000s in line with the Stand by Agreements signed with the IMF, Agricultural Reform Implementation Programme signed with the World Bank and consequent legislation of Agricultural Law in 2006 (Özalp 2019). All these developments are found out to be serving liberalization purposes of the WTO AoA.

However, AoA continues to evolve based on the long-lasting Doha Development Round since 2001. Doha Round has started with the main objective to "*achieve major reform of the international trading system through the introduction of lower trade barriers and revised trade rules (...) to improve the trading prospects of developing countries*." (World Trade Organization (n.d., e). Throughout the negotiations within this last round, Turkey is acting with the G33 group of countries which ask for special positive treatment for developing countries and underline the importance of agriculture for food security and livelihoods. (Sarıal 2015) Turkey has been taking part with India, China, Indonesia, Malaysia, Venezuela, Bolivia, Nigeria, Tanzania and Kenya in the G33 (World Trade Organization, n.d.,f).

AoA obliges member states to provide regular notification on domestic supports to the Agricultural Committee. Members can consolidate the notifications of couple of years

and submit them at once. Turkey's last notification was for the calendar year 2016 and it is seen in the report that Turkey used domestic supports in the categories of green box and development programmes (World Trade Organization, n.d., g). Comparing the detailed reports on domestic supports provided to the WTO like an international organization with the very brief answers and even no answer to the parliamentary questions raised to the ministries in charge carries new constitutionalism debate to a concrete ground. State acts with a higher obligation to be accountable to trade partners across the border than it should normally be to the citizens.

4.2.2. Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS), World Trade Organization

The TRIPS Agreement, which came into effect on 1 January 1995, is presented by WTO as the most comprehensive multilateral agreement on intellectual property (World Trade Organization (n.d., h). The Agreement is based on previous Paris Convention for the Protection of Industrial Property (Paris Convention) and Berne Convention for the Protection of Literary and Artistic Works (Berne Convention). Copyright and related rights (i.e., the rights of performers, producers of sound recordings and broadcasting organizations); trademarks including service marks; geographical indications including appellations of origin; industrial designs; patents including the protection of new varieties of plants; the layout-designs of integrated circuits; and undisclosed information including trade secrets and test data are covered by the Agreement. Minimum standards of protection in terms of subject, duration, and framework of rights and exceptions in relation to the protection area are defined in the Agreement. The Agreement is justified with following objectives:

- The reduction of distortions and impediments to international trade,
- Promotion of effective and adequate protection of intellectual property rights,
- Ensuring that measures and procedures to enforce intellectual property rights do not themselves become barriers to legitimate trade,
- Contributing to the promotion of technological innovation and to the transfer and dissemination of technology, to the mutual advantage of producers and users of technological knowledge and in a manner conducive to social and

economic welfare, and to a balance of rights and obligations (World Trade Organization (n.d., h).

On the other hand, the TRIPS require member countries to make patents available for any inventions including products and processes after applying normal tests of novelty, inventiveness and industrial applicability. Three fields are considered to be permissible exceptions to patentability in TRIPS context. First one is the inventions that are contrary to *ordre public* and morality (inventions dangerous to human, animal and plant life or health); the second one is diagnostic, therapeutic, and surgical methods for the treatment of humans or animals; and the third one is plants and animals other than micro-organisms and essentially biological processes for the production of plants or animals other than non-biological and microbiological processes. However, as per the Article 27.3 (b) of the Agreement; "Members shall provide for the protection of plant varieties either by patents or by an effective sui generis system or by any combination thereof." (World Trade Organization 1995b). This implies necessity to establish a system of plant variety protection within TRIPS terms and conditions, either through patents or *sui generis* systems developed by member countries. Turkey, in this context follows the *sui generis* system option and runs its own plant variety protection system which is not a patent system but a looser protection mechanism.

4.2.3. International Union for the Protection of New Varieties of Plants (UPOV)

UPOV is an intergovernmental organization based in Geneva. Currently there are 76 members of the union, majority of which are states but includes also intergovernmental organizations such as the European Union. UPOV was established in 1961 by the International Convention for the Protection of New Varieties of Plants and so far, revised in 1972, 1978 and 1991 gradually increasing the protection of plant breeders in each revision. Turkey is a party to 1991 Act since 2007. A comparison of UPOV 1978 and 1991 Acts, laying out increased level of protection for breeders is presented in the Table 9 (Helfer 2004).

Table 9: *Comparison of UPOV 1978 Act and UPOV 1991 Act*

Subject	**UPOV 1978 Avt**	**UPOV 1991 Act**
Minimum scope of coverage	Increasing number of genera or species required to be protected from five at time of accession to 24 eight years later.	Increasing number of genera or species required to be protected from 15 at time of accession to all genera and species 10 eight years later (5 years for member states of earlier UPOV Act).
Eligibility Requirements	Novelty, distinctness, uniformity and stability.	Novelty, distinctness, uniformity and stability.
Minimum exclusive rights in propagating material	Production for purposes of commercial marketing, offering for sale, marketing, repeated use for the commercial production of another variety.	Production or reproduction, conditioning for the purposes of propagating, offering for sale, selling or other marketing, exporting, importing, or stocking for any of these purposes.
Minimum exclusive rights in harvested material	No such obligation except for ornamental plants used for commercial propagating purposes.	Same act as above if harvested material obtained through unauthorized use of propagating material and if breeder had no reasonable opportunity to exercise his or her right in relation to the propagating material.
Prohibition on dual protection with patent	Yes, for same botanical genus or species.	No.
Breeders' exemption	Mandatory. Breeders free to use protected variety to develop a new variety.	Permissive, but breeding and exploitation of new variety "essentially derived" from earlier variety require right holders' authorization.
Farmers' privilege	Implicitly allowed under the definition of minimum exclusive rights.	Allowed at the option of the member state within reasonable limits and subject to safeguarding the legitimate interests of the right holder.
Minimum term of protection	18 years for grapevines and trees. 15 years for all other plants.	25 years for grapevines and trees. 20 years for all other plants.

Source: *Helfer (2004). Intellectual property rights in plant varieties: International legal regimes and policy options for national governments.*

As it is exhibited in this comparison table, UPOV 1991 has increased the protection period up to minimum 20-25 years. Laurence R. Helfer (2004), in his book describing and analysing international legal regimes for intellectual property rights in plant varieties, lays out two main philosophical approaches behind protection of intellectual property rights. The first one is the moral approach that is linked to the 27th article of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and respective responsibility of state against its subjects to guarantee "*the right to the protection of the moral and material interests resulting from any scientific, literary or artistic production of which he is the author*." In this approach, plant breeding is assumed as an individual intellectual, scientific effort, which deserves to be protected and priced. On the other hand, Helfer (2004) puts aside another approach, which is the instrumentalist one. This second approach to IPR claims

that product of human intellectual effort serves welfare and richness of society. This approach is found out to be advocated in the Intellectual Property Clause of the United States Constitution. Helfer (2004) finds instrumentalist approach as determinant in IPR regimes for plant varieties and UPOV is the most extensive IPR regime for seeds.

UPOV has the authority to decide whether a specific plant variety meets criteria for protection. According to the UPOV Convention, protection is granted to plant breeders only after the new variety is examined and approved to have features of distinctiveness (D), uniformity (U), and stability (S) through a DUS Document released after tests, "*carried out by the authority competent for granting plant breeders' rights or by separate institutions, such as public research institutes, acting on behalf of that authority or, in some cases, on the basis of growing tests carried out by the breeder.*" (UPOV 2002) Tohumluk Tescil ve Sertifikasyon Merkezi (Seed Registration and Certification Centre), affiliated to Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry is the authorized public office in Turkey to run DUS tests.

As per the latest Plant Breeders Rights Report issued by Directorate General of Plant Production in Turkey (Bitkisel Üretim Genel Müdürlüğü, 2019), %42 of the applicants are domestic while 58% are of foreign origin. Among the foreign-originated applications received in 2019, the Netherlands comes first, and is followed by the USA and Spain. In terms of the companies, Nunhems B.V., a company owned by the German chemical giant BASF, is ranked first with its 125 applications. It is noted in the report that this company is concentrated in vegetable varieties. Nunhems B.V. is followed with 118 and 117 applications by Monsanto A.Ş. and Trakya Tarımsal Araştırma Enstitüsü, respectively. In terms of crop varieties, wheat, maize and tomatoes constitute the top three applications (Tarım ve Orman Bakanlığı 2019). This data is an important determinant in decision to select tomatoes and wheat in the field survey for this dissertation.

Legal power of UPOV on national jurisdiction can be clearly observed in the court decisions and position of international legal consultancy firms in the county. Plenty of property law consultancy firms appear in a basic internet search for breeders' rights in Turkey and UPOV Convention is the major reference used by these firms to guide their

clients.[6][7]A growing number of infringement cases are reported to be carried to Turkish courts and compensation for material and immaterial damages are claimed by breeders.[8] It is interesting to see that legal advisory firms speak highly of Turkish courts' efficiency in enforcing the protection granted by the Law which is a reflection of UPOV Convention, and breeders are invited to apply Turkish courts to safeguard their property rights. (Özkan Law Office)

4.2.4. Neoliberal Reform Storm in National Agricultural Legislation

In the context of these three international agreements as well as the accompanying EU accession process, following national legal reforms have been introduced in a way to push neoliberal transformation of agriculture and commodification of seeds in the country:

4.2.4.1. Law No 5042 on Protection of Rights of Breeders of New Plant Varieties (2004)

This Law and a set of complementary regulations are protecting the plant breeder's rights including persons holding right to application as part of UPOV Convention. Objective of the law is defined as incentivizing development of plant varieties and protection of new varieties and rights of breeders (Yeni Bitki Çeşitlerine Ait Islahçı Haklarinin Korunmasına İlişkin Kanun). As described in the respective law, plant varieties which are identified as novel, distinct, uniform, and stable are protected with breeders' rights as long as the other criteria set in the Law are met. Turkish citizens and the citizens of the member states of UPOV can file applications and obtain registration for plant varieties in Turkey. Duration of protection is 25 years following registration for the breeder's right. The breeder is granted with the following exclusive rights:

[6] See TurkLegal Patent and Trademark Service. Plant Variety Rights in Turkey.

[7] See Özkan Law Office. Protection of Breeder's Rights.

[8] Many court decisions on conflicts between farmers and breeders are available publicly in the decisions portal of Turkish Court of Cassations: https://karararama.yargitay.gov.tr/YargitayBilgiBankasiIstemciWeb/ Searching for decisions containing the words "UPOV", "seed (tohum)", and "breeder (ıslahçı)" with a specific focus on 11. Civil Chamber provides quite an evidence to see enforcement of the UPOV Convention in Turkey.

Producing and reproducing, preparing for reproduction, supplying for market, selling or introducing into market in other ways, exporting or importing, and storing. The Law is criticized for its transferring common property rights of seeds from peasants to private property rights of corporations (Evrensel 2018). There is, however, a special clause on farmer's exception in the Law as follows:

> ARTICLE 17- for the purposes of protecting and safeguarding agricultural production, farmers are authorized to use for new production, on their own holdings, the product of the harvest which they have obtained by planting propagating material of a protected variety, except hybrid and synthetic varieties, without infringing the legitimate rights of breeder, provided that it is not contrary to paragraph 1 of Article 14. (Yeni Bitki Çeşitlerine Ait Islahçı Haklarinin Korunmasına İlişkin Kanun)

This clause is providing quite a conditioned and narrow right to use protected varieties by farmers in their own agricultural holdings. It prohibits farmers from acting against the exclusive rights granted to the breeder in the article 14 of the Law and this ensures a privileged position to the persons/institutions acknowledged as breeder. This is in contradiction with the communal and collaborative processes of breeding in which many farmers are involved, adding on each other's knowledge and experience. The Law give the breeder's right exclusively to the investor/employer, excluding even the scientists, engineers and technicians working for breeding process under employment or service contracts. In sum, the Law is very much speaking for individual private property rights against common property features and social collaboration embedded in plant breeding processes. The Law and the respective regulation give holder of rights (the breeder) the right to monitor the farmers and seed preparers and request certain documentation from farmers including personal data during implementation of farmer's exception clause (Çiftçi İstisnasi Uygulama Esaslari Yönetmeliği). As per the rigid institutionalization of breeding by these legislative tools, there is some kind of a criminalization of free farming activity which is supposed to include breeding, production, and exchange of seeds in local farmers' networks.

4.2.4.2. Seed Law No. 5553 (2006)

This Law was enacted in a time period when Turkish economy had recently passed through a serious crisis and regulatory power of IMF and the WB over institutions of the country was at its zenith. The Law entered into force right after the Agriculture Law

(2006) for which one of the founding principles was stated as compliance to international commitments (5488 Sayılı Tarım Kanunu). The objective of the Seed Law is stated as follows:

> ...increasing productivity and quality in plant production, providing quality guarantee for seeds, regulating production and trade of seeds, making regulations needed for restructuring of seed sector. (5553 Sayılı Tohumculuk Kanunu)

The Law includes regulations for registration, production, certification, trade, market control and institutional structures with regard to seeds. This Law has been subject to public criticism since its legislation on the ground that it serves commodification of seeds, transfer of national farmers' rights to global investors, and criminalization of peasants' and small agricultural producers' farming activities with regard to seed production and exchange.

In a nutshell, the Law permits production and trade of registered seedlings only, the Ministry is authorized to register seedlings, registered seedlings should be certified, and certain fees are collected for the services given and certificates issued in line with this Law. The fees include a) fee for application examination, b) fee for registration, c) fee for production license, d) fee for registration of standard seedling, e) fee for registration of genetic resources, f) fee for certification service, f-1. fee for field controls, f-2. fee for laboratory controls, f-3. fee for documentation, f- 4. fee for label, g) fee for publication h) other fees. The Ministry may delegate its authority fully or partially for registration, certification, trade licensing to the TÜRKTOB, universities, public institutions and private legal entities. A close look at the subjectivity allocated to certain agents in a legal document gives a lot of information about the interests and power relations embedded in law. In this context, it is interesting to see that the word "Birlik" which refers to TÜRKTOB is used for 141 times in this Law document, whereas the word "producer" (üretici) is used for eight times and "farmer" (çiftçi) is used for only once which is only for an exception clause on barter activities between farmers. More interestingly, the word "peasant" is non-existent in the document although the name of the Ministry used to be "Agriculture and Village Affairs Ministry" when this law was enacted. The original Turkish words for peasant and village are akin to each other. ("köylü" for peasant and "köy" for village) In this respect, it is plausible to say that the Seed Law clearly associates no political subjectivity to peasantry in Turkey. In line with

this linguistic representation, TÜRKTOB is positioned as a professional organization with public institution status and given extensive functions in seeds market such as developing seed policies, providing cooperation and coordination among seed producers, professional organizations and public authorities in the sector, issuing contracts of seed production, monitoring the implementation of these contracts, and arbitration for conflicts between the Union, sub-unions, members and third parties.

Based on these findings, it would not be an unwarranted deduction to say that rather than a rights-based approach acknowledging the rights of farmers, small producers and peasants who have been the real persons involved in production and development of seeds as well as protection of biodiversity throughout the agricultural history, there is a market-based approach safeguarding property rights of corporate legal persons, and commodification of the seeds is prevalent in the Turkish Seed Law. Çiftçi-Sen opposes the Seed Law and the complementary Regulation on Registration, Production and Marketing of Local Varieties claiming that this legislation disregards the right to seed for peasants and other people working in rural areas as acknowledged in the UN Declaration on Rights of the Peasants, Article 19. (Karasaban.net 2018) One of the few grassroots organizations of the peasants and small agricultural producers in Turkey, Çiftçi-Sen have been asking for a legal regulation that positions local seed varieties as common goods and provides public legal protection against privatization of these common goods. (Karasaban.net 2018) In response to this public criticism, the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry revised the relevant regulation on local varieties, abolished the regulation published in 19/10/2018 in the Official Gazette No. 30570, and promulgated a new regulation in 3/9/2019 (Yerel Çeşitlerin Kayıt Altına Alınması, Üretilmesi ve Pazarlamasına Dair Yönetmelik). This latest regulation acknowledges local varieties as public goods and authorizes only the research institutes affiliated to the Ministry to apply for registration of local varieties. This can be considered as a positive outcome of civil society action against commodification of seeds in the country. On the other hand, the current legislation still loads significant financial and bureaucratic burdens to get involved in legal seed production and marketing activities which is practically excluding peasants and small agricultural producers from formal seed market and narrowing space for informal seed market.

4.2.4.3. Agriculture Law No 5488 (2006)

Agriculture Law is enacted in 2006 with the stated objective as "Determining the necessary policies to develop and support agricultural sector and rural areas in line with development plans and strategies and making (necessary) regulations." Principles of agricultural policies listed in the article 5 of the Law tells a lot about the market-oriented structuring of agriculture in the country under the pressure of new constitutionalism. Nine principles set in the Law are as follows:

1. Holistic approach in agricultural production and development.
2. Compliance with international commitments.
3. Use of support tools that will not disrupt market mechanisms.
4. Organization and institutionalization.
5. Increasing the role of the private sector.
6. Sustainability, human health and environmental awareness.
7. Decentralization.
8. Participation.
9. Transparency and informing.

Among these principles, there is an open statement on compliance with international commitments, a special care for not disturbing the market, and promotion of private sector. International commitments in this context specifically refer to the commitments made to the European Union for membership process, (compliance with the Common Agricultural Policy), WTO for Agreement on Agriculture, and the IMF for the consecutive Letter of Intends between 1999-2002.

The Letter of Intent sent to the IMF (2000) in December 2000 clearly declares a commitment to the following policies for pro-market restructuring of agriculture in the country:

- Transfer of agricultural companies to the Privatization Authority,
- Phasing out indirect support policies by the end of 2002 and replacing them with direct income support (DIS),

- Reduced involvement of the state in the production and marketing of agricultural products,
- Rapid privatization of the State Economic Enterprises involved in agricultural production and marketing.

On the other hand, the EU anchor, which has been affecting a wide variety of policy realms in the country despite fluctuating phases of rapprochement and divergence between the Union and Turkey since the Ankara Agreement in 1963, is another determinant process of new constitutionalism over agriculture in the country. Compliance with the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) of the European Economic Community (EEC) over a period of twenty-two years constituted the Chapter Four in the Additional Protocol signed between the EEC and Turkey in 1973 (Official Journal of the European Communities (261/1). Despite little progress in the compliance to CAP in this time period, compliance with agriculture and rural development chapter in the *Acquis Communautaire* has been a major strategic reference in Turkish agricultural policy, with a stimulus in the mid-2000s when Turkey was recognized as an official candidate to membership to the EU. Determining role of the EU accession process on agricultural policy has been so strong in this period that 12 major laws were enacted/amended between 2004-2007 in line with the harmonisation the Union as follows:

1. Law No. 5262 on Organic Agriculture Law (2004)
2. Law No. 5200 on Agricultural Producers' Unions (2004)
3. Law No 5184 on Amendment in the Turkish Agricultural Chambers Law (2004)
4. Law No. 5179 on The Admission by Amending the Decree on The Production, Consumption and Inspection of Food (2004)
5. Law No. 5042 on Protection of Plant Breeders Rights for New Plant Varieties (2004)
6. Law No. 5300 on Licenced Warehousing for Agricultural Products (2005)
7. Law No 5363 on Agricultural Insurances (2005)
8. Law No 5403 on Soil Protection and Land Use (2005)
9. Law No 5488 on Agriculture (2006)
10. Law No. 5553 on Seed (2006)

11. Law No. 5648 on Agriculture and Rural Development Support Institution (2007)
12. Law No 5661 on Termination of Guarantee Arising from Group Loans Extended by T.C. Ziraat Bank A.Ş. and Agricultural Credit Cooperatives (2007)

However, it is noteworthy that divergences from the CAP principles especially in the agricultural incentives system is highlighted in The EU Country Report 2020 as a problem. The latest progress report notes that strategic choices of Turkey to increase production bound support tools and region or agricultural basin-based support management system indicate divergence from the CAP and invites the county to revise its agricultural strategies (European Commission 2020).

Agricultural support tools in the Agriculture Law are grouped under six main groups as Direct Income Support (DIS), Deficiency Payments, Compensatory Payments, Livestock Support, Agricultural Insurance Payments, Rural Development Supports, Payments for Environmental Protection of Agricultural Lands, and Other Support Payments which include a set of secondary support tools such as research, development, agricultural extension, organic production, agricultural basin supports and input supports. DIS which is stated at the top of this subsidy list in the Law has been the main type of agricultural subsidy promoted in the AoA of the WTO, Agricultural Reform Implementation Project (ARIP) of the World Bank and throughout the EU accession negotiations and harmonisation process for Turkey. DIS mainly aims to disconnect agricultural subsidy payments from product type and production amount and make support payments to the farmers based on unit prices paid for cultivated land. However, based on empirical data, DIS implementation in Turkey has been criticised for its favouring big landowners and distorting income distribution to the detriment of small and poor farmers (Yılmaz et al. 2008, pp. 262-263). Critics also argue that DIS was operated to establish and consolidate the Farmer Registration System *(Çiftçi Kayıt Sistemi)* in the country in response to the commitments made to the EU and in the absence of effective inspection, big landowners regardless of their production level benefited from this support by undertaking transaction costs of application and manipulating land size data. Standalone DIS implementation in Turkey was criticized for lacking complementary support tools such as processing, marketing, and insurance supports (Günaydın 2005, p.397). Acknowledging the negative impact of widespread

DIS implementation on agricultural production and on declining popular support for government, Government of Turkey has gradually decreased the share of DIS in agricultural supports, and increased the amount of input supports, instead. Diesel oil support in 2003, fertilizer support in 2005, certified seed use support in 2005 and certified seed production support in 2008 were gradually added to the agricultural support tools.

The latest official notification on support components for agricultural production which was published in November 2020 includes the following support tools: Bumblebee use support, field-based hazelnut income support, support for rehabilitation of traditional olive gardens, support for good agricultural practices, solid organic-organomineral fertilizer support, small family business support, diesel and fertilizer support, organic agriculture support, certified sapling / seedling and standard sapling user support, certified seedling production support, use of certified seed support, soil analysis support, deficiency payments in line with Turkey agricultural basins production model, support for fodder crops and domestic certified seed production support.[9] It is clear in this list that the country utilizes input supports and price supports again after a suspension period due to the DIS conditioned by the World Bank in the ARIP Project until 2008.

In addition to the structure of Agriculture Law serving for corporatization and financialization of agriculture in the country, implementation shortfalls in the Law also have been subject to criticism. Although it is stated in the Law that resource allocated from the budget to agricultural support programmes shall not be less than 1% of Gross National

Income (GNI), the actual annual support amounted maximum 0.63% of the GNI in 2007-2020 period and it was only 0.45% in 2020 (CHP 2020, p.38). Another significant criticism is about the implementation timing for the agricultural supports set in this Law. Unlike the seven-year agricultural budget planning in the EU and the five-year planning in the USA, irregular and short-term planning of support notifications put Turkish farmers in a risk regime in which farmers do not know when and how much exactly will be paid for their production. In line with this criticism, the major nationwide social

[9] Bitkisel Üretime Destekleme Ödemesi Yapılmasına Dair Tebliğ. Tebliğ Numarası 2020/31. Published in Official Gazette No. 31315, on the 25th of November 2020.

dialogue platform for agricultural stakeholders, the Agriculture and Forestry Forum (*Tarım ve Orman Şurası*) also came up with a recommendation to establish a guiding support system which is based on minimum three-year implementation calendars and principles of protection of natural resources and environment, targeting active farmers, quality, accessible prices and sustainability (Tarım ve Orman Bakanlığı 2019a). This recommendation is not reflected in the latest strategic plan of the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry. Instead, a special strategy is adopted in the Plan that aims development of the agricultural support system that serves integration of agriculture and industry, and protection of environment and natural resources (Tarım ve Orman Bakanlığı 2019b, p.67). In this respect, it would not be a groundless claim to say that integration of agriculture and industry inherently prioritizes processed food producers and exporters before farmers and consumers in the country. Considering the vertical and horizontal integration of local food markets under the monopolistic control of few global corporations, contradiction with the food sovereignty principles becomes even more visible in this latest official strategy of the Ministry.

4.2.4.4. Biosecurity Law no 5977 (2010)

Objective of this law is stated as preventing risks stemming from genetically modified organisms and products which are developed by using modern biotechnology; protecting environment, bio-diversity, human and animal health and phitosanitary, establishment and operationalisation of biosecurity system to provide sustainability. The law bans production of genetically modified plants and animals whereas it permits imports, exports, and experimental use of genetically modified organisms (GMOs). This feature of the law is triggering the criticism on the ground that the law makes the country an open market for GMO traders. As per the regulations in this law, traders may import GMOs for the use of fodder production in the country. The law mandates application to Biosecurity Council before use of a GMO indicating the purpose of use. Biosecurity Council was initially positioned as an inter-ministerial and autonomous body independent from direction by any person or institution. The council was authorized to assess the applications under the guidance of scientific committees on risks, socio-economic impact, and ethical dimensions, established for each application. However, right after the change in the system of government in Turkey in 2018, the inter-ministerial Council was abolished, and authority of the Council was transferred to the

Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry by a presidential decree. The Council has approved 39 different types of GMOs mainly composed of maize and soybeans to be used for fodder production in the country since 2011.[10] The Council decisions are criticized for not being transparent and lacking scientific coherence as there has been cases of approval of certain applications for GMO trade despite previous rejection decisions for the same products (Yıldırım 2015). Moreover, due to lack of effective and widespread inspection, there have been various cases of GMO use in human food. This issue caused high public criticism so much that the leakage of GMO into human food mainly through bread was confirmed in the official statements of the Minister of Agriculture in 2017 (Tarım ve Orman Bakanlığı (2017). Apart from the EU accession negotiations and The Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety to the Convention on Biological Diversity, two significant international agreements that Turkey signed within the World Trade Organization, the Agreement on the Application of Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (SPS) and The Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT) Agreement have determinant role in development of Biosecurity Law in Turkey. Agreement on SPS enables members to take sanitary or phytosanitary measures upon risk assessments based on scientific and risk assessment techniques developed by relevant international organizations. On the other hand, the TBT requires that "technical regulations are not prepared, adopted or applied with a view to or with the effect of creating unnecessary obstacles to international trade." (World Trade Organization, 1995c). TBT considers human, animal and plant health as legitimate objectives to make technical regulations for trade of certain products adding a special warning that "technical regulations shall not be more trade-restrictive than necessary to fulfil a legitimate objective, taking account of the risks non-fulfilment would create." (World Trade Organization, 1995c). Both SPS and TBT refers to scientific evidence before applying any technical barrier before trade of agricultural products including genetically modified organisms or transgenic plants. At this very point, comes the problem of objective scientific evidence produced by public good purposes versus profit-oriented data produced by corporate science. In the absence of sufficient public funds allocated for health and biodiversity research, corporations fill this gap and produce scientific data in favour of their interests. This is very valid in research on GMO and relevant impact assessments on health. So, scientific evidence is always open to manipulation by corporations. The manipulation is in such high levels

[10] See Türkiye Biyogüvenlik Bilgi Değişim Mekanizması. Onaylı GDOlar. http://www.tbbdm.gov.tr/OnayliGDO2.aspx

that there are Biology Fortified Inc and Genetic Literacy Project like so-called "non-profit" organizations/initiatives that work on either shadowing the roots of corporate interest or increasing legitimacy of corporate science on GMO research. Although the Genetic Engineering Risk Atlas, the searchable database operated by the US-based non-profit organisation Biology Fortified, Inc promotes itself as an organization aiming to *"find and show people how much scientific research has been conducted on genetically engineered crops, and by whom*", there are serious counter claims revealing the linkages between these organizations and Monsanto, the giant agro-food corporation that was merged with the Bayer in 2018.[11][12]

In the context of food sovereignty and new constitutionalism, legislation and implementation processes of Biosecurity Law in Turkey presents us a solid example on how global corporate interest overarches rights of people to decide what to produce and consume as food and concerns for protection of biodiversity through disciplinary power of international agreements and corporate science.

4.2.4.5. The Agricultural Reform Implementation Project (ARIP) with the World Bank

The ARIP is a long-term project funded by the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) and implemented by the World Bank between 2001-2008. The restructured the agricultural policy and respective institutional backbone in Turkey with 600 million dollars of a budget. Objectives of the project is stated as "reducing subsidies, substituting a support system for agricultural producers, and agro-industries, with incentives to increase productivity, responsive to real comparative advantages" in the official webpage of the WB (World Bank, n.d). The Project was actually serving a massive liberalization process limiting state intervention and opening local agricultural producers and State Economic Enterprises which were fairly protected by state funds until then to global market. As it is openly referred in the official statement,

[11] See Biology Fortified website for "GMO Studies with independent funding" https://biofortified.org/genera/independent-funding/

[12] See U.S. Right to Know Organisation website for claims on linkages between Monsanto and Biology Fortified: "Biofortified Aids Chemical Industry PR & Lobbying Efforts" https://usrtk.org/gmo/biofortified-aids-chemical-industry-pr-lobbying-efforts/

“comparative advantages” which is a liberal trade concept is given priority over any other features of agriculture. Food security, food democracy and food sovereignty concerns stayed behind trade concerns infringed in this Project. The World Bank rates this project as “satisfactory” in terms of the outcomes achieved, using its own 6-level success rating. Satisfactory means there were only minor shortcomings in the achievement, in WB terminology. This project was an extension of the 2000 Economic Reform Loan (ERL) of the Bank in which agriculture was one of the seven development areas identified. WB (2005) assesses the agricultural outcomes of the ERL as a success with the following statements in one of the official evaluation documents of the project:

> About 90 percent of the country's farmers were registered and received direct income support payments by September 2004. Subsidies and price supports were nearly eliminated. Budgetary transfers to Agriculture Sales Cooperative Unions were terminated. Significant progress was made in the privatization of other agricultural state enterprises. This was an extraordinary achievement.

Looking from the WB lenses, this project mostly succeeded its objectives leaving 16 Agricultural Sales Cooperatives restructured or ceased operations, input support and price guarantee supports to farmers substituted with Direct Income Support unbound from production, and privatization of major agricultural State Economic Enterprises initiated.

The ARIP was definitely the co-owner of this “extraordinary achievement” in the WB’s terms. Güler (2002) argues that not only the ERL and the ARIP but also a wider series of WB credit programmes since 1980 have been gearing to each other as tools of globalization and limiting national sovereignty against global capital. Oyan (2009) joins this critical front with his highlights on significant indicators of dissolution of agriculture as a result of the ARIP between 2000-2008 period. As per Oyan’s list of indicators, agricultural employment declined from 36% to 26%, agricultural foreign trade performed consecutive deficits, agricultural producers were left outside organized cooperatives and unions in these eight years in Turkey. Briefly speaking, World Bank loans have been functioning as tools of new constitutionalism over neoliberal restructuring of agriculture in Turkey.

4.3. Legitimation and Extension of Consent for the Neoliberal Food and Agricultural Policy

Stephan Gill argues that new constitutionalism operates through both coercive and consensual measures. Consensual measures serve co-opting political opposition, legitimate neoliberal policies, elicit social support, and prevent rise of demands for structural changes against commodification created by neoliberal policies. Following the footsteps of Gramsci, Gill (2000, pp.15-18) claims that global hegemony is established and consolidated through both coercive and consensual methods and *trasformismo* in Gramscian terms, or incorporation of opposition is achieved through the consensual measures of new constitutionalism. Putting agriculture and food policies in Turkey at the centre of analysis with a special focus on seed sovereignty, the following are identified as consensual measures to legitimate neoliberal policies and limit social opposition against commodification and dispossession created by neoliberal agricultural policies:

4.3.1. "Domestic and National" Policy Discourse

Discourse of being, promoting, and seeking "the domestic and national" *(yerli ve milli)* is utilized to ensure legitimacy of a rich set of public policies including agricultural policies and projects. The government intentionally uses adjectives of "domestic and national" to refer any policy, programme, or project it presents to the public opinion. Regardless of the actual impact of the respective policies on food sovereignty in the country, agricultural policies are also tagged with these adjectives through active communication campaigns operated by a centralized media that is voicing up the government discourse. In this way, public perception is managed, and opposition is contained. Some of the recent agricultural policies that can exemplify such illusive communication campaigns are as follows:

4.3.1.1. National Agriculture Project

National Agriculture Project (*Milli Tarım Projesi*, MTP) mainly aimed to condition agricultural supports to the use of certified seeds in certain products matched with certain water basins. Farmers producing 21 strategically important plant varieties can

receive support payments only if they use certified seeds in the water basins matched with these plant varieties. Turkish government launched MTP in the last months of 2016 declaring that producers would be allowed to use only the certified seeds by 2018. Consisting of several measures to speed up vertical integration of small agricultural producers into third food regime, MTP was popularly justified on the bases of improved national food security and global competitiveness. However, in a short while MTP has turned into being a temporary project owned by a certain political-bureaucratic cadre and lost its popularity and consistent implementation speed. Frequent and major changes in the structure and organization of the Ministry brought about ownership and coherence problems.

4.3.1.2. National Unity in Agriculture Project

National Unity in Agriculture Project (*Tarımda Milli Birlik Projesi*-TMBP) was first declared to the public opinion in late 2019 and could not even be launched. Launching of TMBP which was expected to take place in April 2020 was suspended due to widespread public criticism including the claims of TURKTOB on breach of the Constitution by this latest project. Outbreak of COVID-19 and relevant changes in social and economic needs might also have a stake in this suspension process. However, TMBP intended to restructure organization of agriculture and food governance and open state economic enterprises and agricultural cooperatives for foreign capital by combining all agricultural productive resources under state control within a single holding, “Semerat Holding”. Semerat Holding Was supposed to be open to shareholding by multinational agri-food corporations, as it was partially explained to public opinion. In this public debate process, potential threats of TMBP against national sovereignty was frequently referred by relevant social actors who have a consensus on relationship between food and sovereignty issues. Turkish policy ecosystem has long been suffering from frequent and drastic changes in bureaucratic cadres and policy tools that creates challenges before adoption of coherent and long-lasting public policies. Nevertheless, despite radical differences between these two latest projects, they both aimed to serve liberalization of agriculture and food sector, and vertical and horizontal consolidation of multinational capital over local producers. Certified seed use is still in practice and state pays incentives for use of these seeds. However, the assertive TMBP was subject to harsh public criticism, it did not receive popular support and was put a hold on for the

moment. Using the adjective of "national" seems incapable of legitimating these initiatives on the eyes of producers in the country.

4.3.2. Opening up "Invited Policy Spaces" for Agricultural Stakeholders

Social dialogue and political participation for development, implementation and evaluation of agriculture and food policies are limited to the invited policy spaces defined and controlled by the executive. The Agriculture Council *(Tarım Şurası),* the main participatory policy space, once designed as a well-attended social dialogue and consultation platform for agricultural policies including the ministry, NGOs of a wide political spectrum, academia, and business parties, is gradually transformed into a quasi-participatory platform strictly controlled by the government. While the original regulation issued in 2004 used to list the participant institutions by name, in detail; the revised regulation, which was issued in 2019, very much narrowed down the membership and participation to the Council, and left it to the authority of the Ministry to decide which institutions to invite based on the agenda of the council.[13][14] Not a collaborative and genuinely democratic platform but a top-down and invited policy space controlled by the executive is operated to provide legitimacy to the agricultural policies.

4.3.3. Securing a Limited Space for Informal Seed Market and Local Varieties

Commodification of seeds and expansion of formal seed market in the expense of other types of seed exchange between farmers, villagers and producers in the informal seed market have long been subject to public criticism on the grounds of erosion of food sovereignty and biodiversity, transfer of genetic resources and common property rights to ownership of global corporate capital, criminalization of free farming activities, and consolidation of dependency relations between the dispossessed local producers and global agro-food industry. Law on Protection of Rights of Breeders of New Plant

[13] See *5/10/2004 tarihli ve 25604 sayılı Resmî Gazete'de yayımlanan Tarım Şûrası Yönetmeliği* [Agricultural Council Regulation No. 25604, published in the Official Gazette on the 5/10/2004] for the previous regulation on the Agriculture Council.

[14] See *17/05/2019 tarihli ve 30777 sayılı Resmi Gazete'de yayımlanan Tarım Şûrası Yönetmeliği* [Agricultural Council Regulation No. 30777, published in the Official Gazette on the 17/05/2019] for the revised regulation in force.

Varieties (2004) and Seed Law (2006) were enacted despite these criticisms and opposition stood upon these arguments over the past years. Aiming to manage these dislocations brought about by commodification of seeds, following two minor steps are taken by the Government:

4.3.3.1. Regulation on Registration, Production and Marketing of Local Varieties

This regulation acknowledges local varieties as public goods and authorizes only the research institutes affiliated to the Ministry to apply for registration of local varieties. This regulation came after criticism by civil society against commodification of seeds in the country. On the other hand, the current legislation still loads significant financial and bureaucratic burdens to get involved in legal seed production and marketing activities which is practically excluding peasants and small agricultural producers from formal seed market and narrowing space for informal seed market.

4.3.3.2. Government-led Campaign to Protect and Register Heirloom Plant Varieties

Local heirloom plant varieties have continued to be exchanged between farmers, especially in the popular farmers' fairs organized by grassroots organizations in Turkey. Farmers' fairs and local seed banks have been rising methods of resistance against full commodification and dispossession with regard to seed ownership, in this respect. Informal seed market continued its existence through such initiatives. Opposition against commodification of seeds and privileges granted to individual property rights in formal seed market have been the major motivations behind these civil initiatives. The Ministry for Agriculture and Forestry could not stay indifferent to the potential of such local seed protection initiatives to legitimate existing seed policies. In this regard, "Local Seeds, Our Legacy Project" *(Local Heirloom Seeds are Our Heritage)* was launched by the Ministry in 2017 under the aegis of the first lady Ms Erdoğan, as it is presented in the official website of the Ministry (Tarım ve Orman Bakanlığı, n.d.,a) As per the information released, the Project aims to identify local heirloom seeds, get them registered as public goods in national local seed variety lists, and reproduce these seeds in the facilities operated by the ministry. Indeed, the Project replicates what NGOs and farmer communities have been doing as a mode of resistance against formal seed

market, and gradually pulls informal seed market into the formal seed market. Accounting for Marxist propositions on dependency of capitalist modes of production on modes of production outside capitalism, informal seed market is somehow protected by such public schemes for the continuation of capitalist mode of production in formal seed market. (Luxemburg 1913, Harvey 1975,) These public campaigns and projects serve not only for legitimation of commodification processes functioning on private property and corporate R&D grounds, but also for ensuring protection of rich natural breeding processes in the context of common property relations among farmers.

4.3.4. Providing Small Financial Support Schemes for Dispossessed Rural Populations

One of the major dislocations created by neoliberal agriculture policies in Turkey is dissolution of peasantry and small agricultural production, mass migration from rural areas to urban metropoles, consequent income inequality, mass unemployment and exceeding of carrying capacity of urban settlements. A small population of dispossessed and heavily indebted agricultural farmers try to survive in the rural settlements under very much declining turns to their farming activities, transitioning from being free farmers to contract farmers and agricultural proletariat dependant to few agri-food monopolies, or switching to alternative economic activities outside agriculture. Vast majority of rural youth do not perceive a productive and happy horizon in staying in their family farms. Issue of farmers' debts is one of the top political agenda for opposition parties, frequently voiced up in public statements and written questions to the government. On the other hand, around 90 percent of the world's 570 million farms are owned and operated by families and family farms and FAO (n.d.,d) promotes small family farms as the centre of solution for producing more food, creating jobs, and protecting natural resources worldwide. Sustainability of agricultural production is based on sustainability of small family farming and involvement of youth in agricultural production. In this regard, although the structural interventions push youth and small family farmers outside agriculture in Turkey, there are few ostensible schemes targeting these rural populations who are subject to long-term dispossession and proletarianization due to neoliberal agricultural policies in the country. Two of these small schemes are as follows:

4.3.4.1. Support Scheme for Small Family Enterprises in Plant Production

This scheme targets agricultural holdings with a size below 5 decares, registered to Farmer Registration System and producing fruits, vegetables, ornamental plants and medicinal and aromatic plants.[15] A certain amount of payment is made per decares. Villages are losing their importance as socio-economic units; peasantry has already lost its political subjectivity whereas there are such small steps to keep rural communities in villages without referring to "villages" and "peasants" in the official regulations.

4.3.4.2. Support Scheme for Young Farmers

This scheme targets young farmers between age 18-40 and provides a lump sum payment for production, processing, storing, and packaging activities as part of plant, livestock or local agricultural production that takes place in situ.[16] Applicants should be residing in settlements with a population less than 20 thousand. Given the vast unemployment and despair in the young population of the country, such small schemes should be aiming to legitimate structural transformation of agricultural policies in the country.

[15] See Bitkisel Üretim Yapan Küçük Aile İşletmelerinin Desteklenmesine Dair Kararın Uygulanmasına İlişkin Tebliğ (Tebliğ No: 2016/2) *[Notification with regard to the Decision for Supporting Small Family Enterprises Dealing with Plant Production (Notification No 2006/2)]*

[16] See Kırsal Kalkınma Destekleri Kapsamında Genç Çiftçi Projelerinin Desteklenmesi Hakkında Tebliğ (Tebliğ No: 2018/12). *[Notification with regard to Supporting Young Farmers within the Scope of Rural Development Supports (Notification No. 2018/12)]*.

CHAPTER 5

TRANSLATING FOOD SOVEREIGNTY IN TURKISH CASE AND OPERATIONALIZING THE FARMER SURVEY

The word "translate" is purposefully used in this chapter to indicate that concepts go through linguistic journeys and get localized in the minds and experiences of people who receive them. Food sovereignty concept which is literally translated in two different Turkish expressions, *"gıda egemenliği*" and *"gıda bağımsızlığı"* has diverse resonations in the minds of Turkish civil society and academia. While the word "*egemenlik*" is generally used interchangably for translation of the concepts of "hegemony" and "sovereignty" in Turkish, the word "*bağımsızlık*" is used for translation of "independence" in Turkish. So, it is meaningful to dig into how this concept is interpreted by Turkish civil society and academia who have received the concept before farmers and peasants. This inquiry is expected to support identification of gaps in the literature and potential contributions of this study.

5.1. Food Sovereignty Resonates in Turkish Civil Society

Whereas food sovereignty owns a central position acknowledged in the national constitutions in Bolivia and Ecuador as a legitimate result of relations between state, capital and civil society; it presents features of a rather marginal civil movement led by Çiftçi-Sen (Farmers' Union) and supported by a handful of local food movements and academicians in Turkey.

Nevertheless, concept of sovereignty in Turkey has such a strong historical and political connotation with national territorial sovereignty and independence that state becomes the prime subject of sovereignty and food sovereignty takes the colour of a statist-nationalist language that conceals the multi-scalar foundation of the concept. It is interesting to observe how such a post-modern concept melts down and is translated in a state-centred and territorial concept of sovereignty, if there is not enough political space for democratic deliberation over development alternatives that a country and its people

have. In the context of this state-centred perception of sovereignty, interests of different scales of political subjects including farmers, peasants, rural communities, urban consumers, and merchants are all converged in the totality of state sovereignty. The topic is subject to conspiracy theories in the popular publications in the country and it is also interesting how these theories are hamstring development of a reasonable social movement fighting for a universal right to food sovereignty (Yalçın 2018). On the other hand, Çiftçi-Sen which is officially established in 2020 as the confederation of farmers' unions and also a member of the LVC is the unique institutional body of farmers adopting food sovereignty approach in close connection with the global movement. Çiftçi-Sen's public visibility goes beyond nationalist territorial sovereignty claims and presents a food sovereignty claim for all farmers fitting in with the definition set in the UN Declaration on Rights of Peasants and the Other People Working in The Rural Areas. This nation-wide farmers' organization is established by product-based farmers' unions (syndicates) which were founded right after the widespread liberalization measures implemented in the country following the 2001 economic crisis. Çiftçi-Sen's internationalist conception of food sovereignty is declared in its Statute as follows:

> Çiftçi-Sen does not conceive farmers of other countries as rivals. It believes that internationalism of farmers/peasants and their joint struggle can establish food sovereignty, the food system of farmers and people.[17]

Çiftçi-Sen has its own epistemic community support that comes together on a digital platform called "karasaban.net". Variety of academicians, professional politicians, and NGO leaders write for this platform to empower discourse of right to food and provide strategic support to the organized movement of farmers and peasants in the country.[18]

On the other hand, there is another farmers' syndicate organization, the Syndicate of All Producer Peasants (TÜMKÖYSEN) which was established against neoliberal restructuring of agriculture in Turkey right before and after 2001 economic crisis. Head of the TÜMKÖYSEN, who is also a wheat farmer could be reached and included in the interview plan and story of farmers' organized movement in Turkey as delivered by him is presented in the last chapter. However, despite their shared anti-capitalist position

[17] See Statute of Çiftçi-Sen, Objectives: Article 14, http://www.ciftcisen.org/tuzuk/

[18] See https://www.karasaban.net/

with Çiftçi-Sen, TÜMKÖYSEN adopts food security in their official statements (TÜMKÖYSEN n.d.) Both of these farmer organizations are found to sustain their institutional presence despite cases of closure and administrative barriers on the ground that farmers are not entitled to get unionize in Turkish legislation. Details of these legal-administrative challenges before farmers' organized movement are presented in the chapter six.

5.2. Food Sovereignty Resonates in Turkish Academia

Incremental influx of food sovereignty analysis in the national academia is an important indicator of the rising discursive power of the food sovereignty movement. When we look at the recent academic publications in Turkey, food sovereignty does not seem to be a very popular topic in Turkish academia. However, number of studies taking the concept at its centre is an indicator of expansion of the movement. Among the national dissertation portal, two postgraduate dissertations elaborating the reflections of food sovereignty movement in Turkey at local level are identified. Gürel (2018) analyses the food sovereignty movement in Turkey through a small case study on Kadıköy Cooperative, a small consumers cooperative in one of the districts of Istanbul known for its highly educated residents. Another local case study is conducted by Kara (2020) analysing local food sovereignty movement in one of the top touristic districts of Turkey, Bodrum through a small-scale case study on Bodrum Seed Association (Bodrum Tohum Derneği). Both of these case studies are analysing economically well-off and educated communities and are not providing much structural analyses on agricultural producers in the context of food sovereignty movement, beyond small local circles. Gürel (2018, p.57) himself highlights the need for a complementary study focusing on food sovereignty positions of rural producers rather than metropolitan consumers, in his dissertation.

Büke (2018), on the other hand, provides a theoretical analysis on comparison of the merits and limitations of political economic and post-developmentalist conceptions of agrarian studies in understanding the current agrarian question and proposes merging the merits of two conceptions and utilizing a contemporary Marxist perspective, instead. Food sovereignty is one of the post-developmentalist concepts that Büke (2018) positions in the critical agri-food studies. Capitalist food regime is at the centre of his

conceptualization, but this study does not intend to provide any practical implications for Turkish context.

Based on the current available studies, this dissertation intends to provide a broader analysis of the impact of a locked in neoliberal rule of law on right to food sovereignty in Turkey, taking seeds and producers at its centre and tracing three processes of new constitutionalism that affect food sovereignty in the country. This dissertation acknowledges the limits of post-developmentalist focus on politics of knowledge and political economic focus on modernist development discourse, as it is clearly presented in Büke's (2018) work. In this respect, this dissertation refrains either from post-developmentalist binary positioning of "peasant versus corporation" and romantic glorification of a frozen peasantry or from tacit envy of political economy to capitalist development, association of peasantry and small commodity production with backwardness, and taking of the nation state as the prime unit of analysis. A multi-scalar conception of food sovereignty is adopted in this study and selected case studies are not location-based but product-based in order to shed light on a rich group of agricultural producers in the country.

After the theoretical analysis on processes of new constitutionalism over food sovereignty and practical evidence from Turkey derived from a desk review on legal and institutional changes that took place in the last twenty years, a small case study is conducted on the tomato and wheat producers to assess the manifestation of six dimensions of food sovereignty, with specific reference to seeds, in the daily farming practices and perceptions of tomato producers in Ayaş district and wheat producers in Polatlı district. A customized Farmer Survey for Food Sovereignty Assessment is used to analyse individual experiences and perceptions of food sovereignty at farmers' level with regard to small agricultural producers of tomato and wheat. Methodology of this assessment has strong references to the Seed Security Assessment methodology developed by FAO (n.d.,c) and the Food Sovereignty Assessment developed by the First Nations Development Institute (FDNI 2014). The Farmer Survey focuses on producer-level sovereignty analysis by taking agricultural producers as the object of enquiry.

5.3. Operating Six Principles of Food Sovereignty for Farmer Survey in Turkey

Manifestations of food sovereignty in daily farming practices of tomato and wheat producers are assessed based on six dimensions of food sovereignty that are determined by LVC based on Nyeleni Declaration and explained below. However, indicators of food sovereignty with specific reference to seeds are also developed in this dissertation for each of these six dimensions, based on the assessment design elements from the before-mentioned assessment tools used by FAO and FNDI. Farmer Survey is structured on the basis of the following dimensions and indicators:

Table 10: *Food Sovereignty Assessment Framework*

Dimensions of Food Sovereignty	Indicators of Food Sovereignty
1. **Food for people:** Production to feed the people first should be prioritized. Food is not only a commodity. People's food need should guide the food policies first, rather than commercial priorities and trade for capital accumulation.	Awareness on food sovereignty as a concept and practice, level of spending on food as a share of household income, sources of food (spatial inquiry) and access to means of production (land, water, seeds and credit)
2. Protection of livelihoods of food providers: Food production is a source of livelihood for millions of people. So, food policies should consider protection of livelihoods for these people including mainly the peasants and small-scale farmers.	Sources of income, income levels, asset control and ownership statuses of means of production including seeds, existence of local food procurements
3. Localizing food systems, decreasing food distance: Reducing food miles between producers and consumers is very important. Distance decreases accountability and sustainability and creates dependency.	Sources of foods consumed by agricultural producers, destinations of trade where agricultural products are traded, distance between the producers and consumers of the product of selected seed variety, level of dependency to external food sources
4. Local food providers' participation to decision making on food: Local food providers should have decision-making power over food policy.	Existence of cooperative organizations and membership status, awareness on who decides what is harvested in the community, individual and collective political actions, relation with local and national policy processes and politicians

Table 10: *continued*

5. Building on local knowledge and skills: Local knowledge and skills of the food producers should be appreciated, used as a foundation to develop farming knowledge, and should be transferred to next generations by use of technology.	Preservation of agricultural production and food traditions, awareness on value and state of local knowledge, relations with the agricultural extension services (passive acceptance of new techniques or collaboration with technicians)
6. Preserving natural resources: Natural resources should be preserved so to minimize environmental damage and global warming.	Awareness on effects of environmental changes on food systems and vice versa. Awareness on milestones in agricultural practices and consequent environmental changes

The farmer level food sovereignty assessment in this dissertation is suggested as a novel tool to identify manifestations of food sovereignty at individual farmer level. The assessment tool also carries adaptivity for future analyses of food sovereignty at bigger scales of subjects including community and nation. Sovereignty like a contested abstraction is driven towards a concrete, operational realm that is conducive for supporters of global food sovereignty movement to find direction for every single step in their anti-capitalist march.

CHAPTER 6

FARMER SURVEY FOR FOOD SOVEREIGNTY ASSESSMENT

As part of the Farmer Survey, in-depth interviews were conducted in June-October 2021 in two different districts of Ankara, Ayaş and Polatlı which are specialized in production of two crops, tomatoes, and wheat. A total of 20 interviews were conducted, 19 of them by face-to-face communication and one of them via Zoom, the indispensable distance video communication tool that entered our lives by the unprecedented global pandemic, COVID-19 and respective communication challenges humanity encountered in conditions of contagion and lockdowns. Interviews with the farmers are at the centre of the assessment. However, in complementary with the farmer survey, specific interviews were also conducted with the Head of the Chamber of Agriculture in Ayaş, Owner and Manager of a Seed Development and Trade Company in Polatlı, Head of the Wheat Breeders Union, and Head of the Syndicate of All Producer Peasants (TÜMKÖYSEN).

6.1. Introducing the Field

Available secondary data on structure of agricultural production in Ayaş and Polatlı districts of Ankara exhibits that agriculture has a significant share in local economies of these districts.

6.1.1. Ayaş District, Ankara

As per the socio-economic development index published by former State Planning Organization in 2004 (replaced by Strategy and Budget Office of the Presidency in 2018), Ayaş ranks fourth within districts of Ankara in terms of the share of labour force working in agriculture sector that is 70,73%. Ayaş ranked the 253. among 872 districts of Turkey and was placed in the category of third level districts based on six levels of socio-economic development in the mentioned index study. Despite the difficulty of finding valid and updated official information about district-level development indicators in the country, a more recent data source is found in briefing notes of the

district directorate of the ministry of agriculture and forestry.[19] According to a published briefing paper in 2017, there are 2.310 household working in agriculture sector in Ayaş. By addition of external households from outside the district, there are around 3.000 farming households in the district. Average land tenure per household is 251 decares (25.1 hectares). This is relatively a big size compared to the national average, which is 6 hectares. Characteristics of soil and climate in the district enables production of a rich set of crops including cereals, legumes, vegetables, fruits and sugar beet. Tomato production has a major share in district and province level vegetable production. It is interesting to see a particular reference in this briefing to land tenure system in the district saying "There is not any social structures like sheikhs or landlords" in the district. This reference brings us back to the historical discussion between Boratav and Erdost (1969) on whether Turkish agricultural producers can be pre-dominantly characterized by forms and relations of petty commodity production or feudal/semi-feudal production. Ayaş case can be considered to exemplify Boratav's thesis in this context. Proximity to the capital and one of the biggest metropoles in the country-Ankara, presents advantages to agricultural producers of Ayaş in terms of access to inputs and markets. Therefore, based on the findings from the interviews with tomato producers in Ayaş, we may get insights on to what extent small agricultural producers are subject to capitalist relations of production and losing their surplus product to merchants and usurer capital, and are being deprived from conditions of food sovereignty.

There are different types of agricultural producers in the district. "*SS Akkaya Köyü Tarımsal Kalkınma Kooperatifi*" [Akkaya Village Agricultural Development Cooperative] has gained wide public attention as it was established by a group of farmer women and launched its own tomato paste production factory and sales shop. Metropolitan Municipality of Ankara (ABB) has recently started purchasing products of this factory and presented a good example of local collaboration for food sovereignty (Women TV 2020). Latest initiatives by the ABB that include purchasing from local agricultural and food producers, opening up idle municipal lands for agricultural production, and provision of free locally produced food for poor households represent a

[19] See Briefing Report of the Ayaş District Directorate of Food, Agriculture and Livestock (2007). Retrieved from: https://ankara.tarimorman.gov.tr/Belgeler/Aya%C5%9F%20Brifing%202017.doc

good case for local food sovereignty initiative. This initiative decreases food miles in the capital of Turkey.

On the other hand, there is also a local private company named *Ayaşlıgrup* which is a local tomato seed breeder specialized in Ayaş tomatoes (the local heirloom variety) and operating in national seed market.[20]

Despite its nationwide fame on a specific heirloom tomato variety produced in the district, tomato is not present in the respective list of state incentives for Ayaş within the "Products to be Supported as Part of Agricultural Basins Production and Incentives Model of Turkey" *(Türkiye Tarım Havzaları Üretim ve Destekleme Modeli Kapsamında Desteklenen Ürünler)*. Instead, producers in Ayaş are promoted to use certified seed for barley, safflower, wheat, lentil, chickpea, triticale, sunflower (oil), forage crops, oats, potatoes, onion (dry) (Tarım ve Orman Bakanlığı (n.d.,b) This discrepancy is reproached by the head of the Chamber of Agriculture in Ayaş during the interview as he states that public incentives are provided only for dry farming in Ayaş although the district is the fruit orchard of Ankara, tomato and mulberry being at the top.

6.1.2. Polatlı District, Ankara

Polatlı is one of the biggest districts of Ankara in terms of population, acreage and economic size. Total acreage of the district is 3235 km^2. District population is 126.623 as of 2020. The district ranked 105th among 872 districts in the Socio-Economic Development Index then estimated by the former State Planning Institute in 2004. It was categorized as a 2nd level developed district among 6 levels identified for the same index study (Dinçer & Özarslan 2004). This indicates a high development index value.

Located at a 76 km distance from the capital city and by the crossroads of main motorways connecting Ankara with other provinces, Polatlı has a natural logistical advantage which is strengthened by railways passing the district. It is presumed that the district has been convenient for human settlement and agriculture since the Early Bronz Age.

[20] See Ayaşlı Grup Tohumculuk. Retrieved from: http://ayasligrup.com/tr/index.php/hakkimizda

The arable lands of the district are irrigated by water resources from Ankara Stream, Porsuk Stream and Sakarya River, as well as extensive water well applications used by the farmers. The district has continental climate conditions, and the natural land cover is consisted of moorland and steppes.

As it is stated in the Briefing Note of the District Directorate of Food, Agriculture and Livestock in 2017, total size of arable land is 224.058,70 hectares, which constitute 68,2% of total land size in Polatlı.[21] As per the information published in this latest available briefing note, wheat and barley in field crops category; onion, melon and watermelon in vegetables category, and apricots and quins in fruits category are among the top crop varieties produced in the district. 133,1 hectares of land is allocated for wheat production which has significant contribution in ranking of Ankara as the second largest wheat producing province in Turkey after Konya. There are 6.431 registered farmers as of 2018 covering 131.443 hectares of the total arable land. There is a gap between the land cultivated by registered farmers and total arable land in Ayaş. Problems in transition of land titles and relevant loss of entitlements for a significant number of farmers in the region pose a serious impediment before small farmers' livelihoods as well as production planning of the state. There are five Agricultural Credit Cooperatives, 16 irrigation cooperatives and 17 agricultural development cooperatives active in Polatlı as of 2017.

6.2. Findings of the Farmer Survey (Interviews)

Farmer interviews were mostly conducted in open-space settings nearby gardens, fields, roadside sales stands, verandas of village houses. Data derived in Ayaş and Polatlı are presented under separate sections, however the Table 11 summarizes my common observations in both districts.

[21] See Briefing Report of the Polatlı District Directorate of Food, Agriculture and Livestock (2007). Retrieved from: https://ankara.tarimorman.gov.tr/Menu/51/Polatli-Ilce-Mudurlugu

***Table 11**: Snapshot of the Research Field: Farmers and Farmlands in Ayaş and Polatlı*

I-Constrained political agency of farmers: insufficient freedom of expression and excess pessimism	II-Old and new peasantry co-exist: peasants are seeking for some comfort, enjoying the market, but relying on their own productive power in their sharing behaviours
III-Commodified land, neglectable farmers: farmlands for sale for anything but farming, farmers squeezed into urban infrastructure	**IV-Antinomies of urban-bias: farmer vs. urban consumer/settler, conflicting interests, assumptions, expectations**
V-Exploitative labour processes at two edges: peasants' self-exploitation and seasonal migrant agricultural workers' labour	VI-Challenge of making women visible in the "field": farmer women and researcher women

Below is a more detailed elaboration of this six-square snapshot of the field.

- Respondent farmers frequently exhibited a sarcastic and pessimistic approach to the interview using statements like "*There will not be any use of our conversation, it will get nowhere … many people come here for such research purposes, but …*" This might have a couple of explanations in combinations. Interests of academia, politically motivated research by political actors, and market-oriented research by agri-food industry are all addressing the peasants and farmers with their own agenda. On the other hand, peasant-farmers had enough of spending time to answer long list of questions without any return to their wellbeing.
- Not a very bright state of freedom of expression in the country revealed itself in the statements of farmers similar to this quotation "*I do not fear anyone, write it word-for-word, you can even give my name.*" (Wheat Farmer, 42 years old, Polatlı)
- Peasants/farmers offering an abundance of their products, filling our car-trunk indicated the still existing sociology of peasantry partially detached from exchange relations of market. This generous behaviour was especially observable in the peasants which we met in their own houses.
- Dual residence was found to be a common practice by farmers who mostly prefer residing in the nearest urban centre for education of children and central heating comfort of urban houses in the cold winters of the region. Farmers who own a modest house at village and another apartment in the centre of Ankara constitute a

distinct typology in this respect. This has root causes stemming from agricultural and urban development policies as well as impacts on food sovereignty in the country. This typology will be further elaborated in the upcoming pages.

- Along the road to villages, there were plenty of signboards that belong to land sales and real estate companies offering decares of land for non-agricultural use, mainly "hobby gardens" and housing. Agricultural lands in the urban peripheries of metropoles have long been under expansion pressure by housing and industry projects in Turkey. Mushrooming hobby gardens, private villas, and mass housing projects that reach up to villages of not so central districts like Ayaş and Polatlı indicate the level of commodification and pressure on agricultural lands and peasantry. Zoning decisions by metropolitan municipalities and district municipalities are worth to dig in to see the extent of transformation in this respect.
- It was sad to see that agricultural land is stuck between highways. Farmers who have cows, sheep and goats have to cross from highway traffic with their herds under very dangerous conditions, and road infrastructure is never responsive to the needs of farmers. Pouring millions of dollars collected from international finance capital as long-term loans into giant infrastructure projects under the motto of "*We built highways!*" in the last 20 years, the government seems to ignore the interest of peasants, farmers and citizen-consumers of the country, take side with the interest of construction, finance and trade actors, and leave long-term harms to the food sovereignty of the nation. Needless to ask what happens to wildlife around these new highways.
- Urban consumers who stop by the roadside sales stands to purchase vegetables directly from the producers were observed to be very discourteous and arrogant undermining the labour processes and costs behind these food products, asking for extra discounts by comparing producer prices with supermarket retailers in city, and addressing farmers pejoratively.
- It was observed that stopping by the vegetable gardens by the road and collecting vegetables turned to be a popular market behaviour by urban customers based on the grounds of knowing what you eat, where your food is produced and reaching so called healthy food by your own labour. However, there is indeed a growing antinomy between this rising consumer perception and the reality behind these road-side gardens. A significant portion of producers were observed to rent land by the

highways, use well water, produce vegetables on these lands, and sell them directly to the urban consumers with a strong claim for offering "natural-organic food". In order to catch up with the urban demand and cover their high production costs, these farmers either apply more productivity increasing inputs, the fertilizers and pesticides or they abandon methods of resting the soil, or they draw more and more well water. On the other hand, the products are subject to high exhaust residue released by hundreds of vehicles passing the highway each day. As a result, the crops are getting less and less safe and healthy under these contaminating factors pushed by market demand, the agricultural soil is getting exhausted by non-stop cultivation of the same marketable crops without fallowing and alternation practices, and groundwater is diminished. In this case, it is clearly visible that under conditions of free market fundamentalism and lack of regulation, all market actors, the producers and consumers act individually for their short-sighted profits and utilities, and the final result turns to be counterproductive for all actors.

- There was an obvious anger on the side of peasants and farmers against the urban settlers. In response to self-sufficiency related questions, it was a common reaction by respondents saying that *"We can be self-sufficient, you, city-dwellers are the ones to take care of yourself."*
- Self-exploitation was very prevalent in time-use and labouring practices of the respondents as I frequently had to fit the interviews in limited time slots that the respondents allocated for me amongst their long task lists to be finished before ending the workday. Especially the ones who are dealing with plant production and livestock production together were in a greater hurry to catch up with daily dues. Although they were not part of a wage-labour relation and were supposed to arrange their work and rest times on their own, their programmes were surprisingly tight. Rather than meeting with the happy and autonomous selves of soil, I found myself mingling with the tired, half-hungry and stressed persons who do their best to catch up with the market pressures.
- Seasonal agricultural workers were observed to be an indispensable part of production processes and their presence is rising in response to dissolution of peasantry in the country. Representing the proletarianization process of agricultural labour, seasonal agricultural workers are observed to undertake majority of labour-intensive production processes, especially in the vegetable production in the selected

districts. Local farmers and peasants exhibited conflicting perceptions against this migrant workforce composed of the most dispossessed populations of the country, the landless poor of the South-eastern Turkey and the refugees. On the one hand, farmers acknowledged that the seasonal agricultural workers work under very difficult conditions, on the other hand farmers envied this rural precariat for their earnings claiming that the seasonal agricultural workers earn more than the employer peasants/farmers. Temporary settlement areas composed of family tents of the seasonal agricultural workers appeared frequently as the hallmark of dissolution of peasantry, expansion of dispossession and de-territorialization, particularly in Polatlı.

- As I already explained in the section on sampling in the introduction, it was a challenge to reach out the women as farmer respondents. The three women that could be included in the interview programme were frequently interfered by a male figure (either a brother or a neighbouring male farmer) as a verification authority for the statements of the women. Despite these interferences, women were quite assertive to reflect their own perceptions and experiences. This was particularly the case for one of the respondents with higher education degree and another with a managerial position in a development cooperative.
- Women were not very visible in conversations and were not usually referred as "farmers". Subject was a "he" most of the time.
- Finally, I had to go to the interviews with my husband for two reasons. First, I needed his logistical support to drive the car in the bumpy and tiring roads to villages and let me spare my energy for a careful conversation with the interviewees. Second, I felt the inescapable safety motive as a woman outside her home. Despite the very kind and generous communication of male respondents with me as the researcher, I frequently found that the male respondent was in eye contact with my husband rather than me as the researcher who raises the questions. At some points, I needed to underline that I was also coming from a peasant-farmer family and I could empathize very well with their problems and standpoints. This definitely helped me to build rapport with the respondents and get them open their generic statements that they would otherwise spell to a woman, a stranger, an urban consumer who is supposedly very far from the real-life experiences of male farmers.

Following two sections present analyses of data derived from tomato farmers and wheat farmers in detail.

6.2.1. Tomato Producers in Ayaş

Interviews with the tomato producers in Ayaş were mostly focused on four villages namely Ilıca, Sinanlı, Akkaya and İlhanköy based on the recommendation by the Ayaş Chamber of Agriculture since the majority of tomato production takes place in these villages. Starting from the late June 2021, the interviews were completed in mid-October 2021 after one-day trips to the district at the weekends, following the available timeslots preferred by the producers. A separate conversation session with the retired farmers sitting in the village coffeehouse in one of the neighbouring villages to the selected villages, Çağa, at the very beginning of the field study provided me an opportunity to validate the relevance of my planned question form as I caught quite a parallel flow in the agenda of the old farmers and my question form. As per the highlights stated by these old farmers, average size of cultivated farmland used to be 30-40 decares and the village population was much higher in 1980s and 1990s. Children of the retired farmers are not dealing with farming anymore. Farmers' production of their own local seeds ended, and seedlings that are brought from the southern province of Antalya (which is one of the top producers of vegetable and fruit crops for exports of Turkey) are purchased by farmers, instead. Old farmers reproachfully stated that "They finished our own seeds." without identifying who exactly finished these seeds. Based on the statements by these old farmers, speed of the market, increased specialisation, and division of labour in agri-food market challenging cyclical and integrated farming practices of small agricultural producers who used to produce their own inputs rather than purchasing them from the market can be listed as some of the factors pushing farmers to stop producing their own seeds. Drainage of dam lakes because of drought was another highlight by these old farmers. Fears on climate change, environmental disasters and resource depletion were clearly detected in the statements of these peasant farmers. On the other hand, they also stressed the increased competition in national market, and emerging rival producers in provinces which were not used to be known for tomato production such as Konya, as common concerns of the tomato producers in Ayaş region.

Data gathered in interviews with eight farmers and the head of the Chamber of Agriculture in Ayaş are categorized under seven groups in line with the six dimensions and respective indicators of food sovereignty that are introduced in the methodology chapter and an additional category on seed sovereignty, which has been a special topic of concern throughout this study.

Eight tomato producers and the Head of the Chamber of Agriculture are interviewed in Ayaş. Only two women could be reached among the total number of interviewees in Ayaş. List of interviewees is presented in the Figure 12.

Table 12: *List of Interviewees for Tomato Production/ Ayaş*

Interviewee no.	**Gender**	**Age**	**Land size**	**Education Level**	**Who is the first buyer of the product**
1	Male	52	10 decares	Secondary Education	Milk collectors-middleman
2	Male	54	10 decares	Primary education	Direct selling to the urban customers from his own mobile vehicle.
3	Male	65	10 decares	Primary education	Direct selling to the customers from his own stall in front of his house by the road.
4	Male	26	900 decares	Secondary education	Direct selling to the urban customers from the family stalls by motorway.
5	Female (widow)	46	5 decares	Primary education	Direct selling to the urban customers from the family stalls by motorway.
6	Male (only for seedling)	60	27 decares	Higher Education	Seed sellers, farmers and home-based customers through e-marketing.
7	Male	43	30 decares (owning 13 decares, renting the rest)	Secondary education	Ankara Wholesale Market and Akkaya Agricultural Development Cooperative
8	Male	42	5 decares	Secondary Education	Direct selling to the urban customers from the family stalls by motorway.
9	Head of Ayaş Chamber of Agriculture				

6.2.1.1. Focusing on Food for People

This dimension of food sovereignty concept implies that the food needs of people should guide food policies, rather than commercial priorities for capital accumulation in a global food market. Food in this respect is considered as a subject of rights rather than a commodity in exchange market.

In order to find out how agricultural producers position food, couple of questions were raised scrutinizing awareness on food sovereignty as a concept and practice, level of spending on food as a share of household income, sources of food (spatial inquiry) and access to means of production (land, water, seeds and credit.)

One of the key questions in this respect was asking what does the term food sovereignty mean to the respondent if s/he considers herself/himself, her/his family and community? As this was a conceptual question, I was not expecting bookish definitions by farmers, for sure. Quite understandably, almost all the respondents stated that this is the first time they hear this concept. However, the concept evoked some interesting and common associations in the respondents' minds. Farmers generally defined food sovereignty with self-sufficiency and absence of input-dependency.

"Self-sufficiency" was one of the key concepts used by the respondent farmers to describe what they understand from food sovereignty. A significant rejection on agricultural trade was also obvious in farmers' responses to this question. One of the interesting quotes from a better off farmer who has a very much demanded road-side vegetable sale stand is as follows:

> It is your own country's creation of its own things, not to look to China, Holland, France…There are not agriculturalists in our country. Seeds from Holland, cows from Austria…2 tonnes of tomatoes produced by seeds from Holland and France are sold compared to 200 kilogrammes of local tomatoes … It is not defencing Azeri, Tatar, Kurd…start from your own home first. I do not buy meat from the butcher at the district centre while we have a butcher in the village. This is nationalism. (Tomato Farmer, 42 years old, Ilıca village, 5 decares)

Presenting quite a nationalist standing, this farmer was criticizing the government for prioritizing a securitized foreign policy over agriculture and food policies, and shadowing consolidation of dependency relations that the country is left in.

Another concept frequently referred to describe food sovereignty was "*dependency*". Respondents have been underlining the input dependency in agricultural production of Turkey including the seeds. Hybrid seed market was particularly referred as a source of dependency in this context. The unique breeder of local tomato variety seeds stated the following:

> I feel myself free as I produce my own seeds. Unfortunately, 90% of farmers are dependent to seeds and fertilizers. Farmers cannot allocate their seeds from their surplus. There is a legal barrier and productivity also declines technically. (Tomato Seed Breeder and Farmer, 60 years old, Sinanlı village, 27 decares)

Average farmer age encountered during sampling was observed to be above 50, while young farmers were purposefully included in the interview plan. One of the middle-aged farmers laid stress on the key role of seed market in food sovereignty discussion by indicating the seed supply as one of the major dependency channels for farmers. This same farmer used an interesting statement to explain the state of alienation for farmers, saying that:

> We are totally dependent to abroad. We use hybrid seeds. We do not know what we cultivate. There were 250 farmers in the village once upon a time, now it declined to 40. (Tomato Farmer, İlhanköy village, 52 years old, 10 decares)

This statement not only demonstrates the loss of control by farmers over seeds, the starting point of agricultural cycle and alienation of farmer to nature, but also the shrinking of village population, or peasants so to speak in the country.

Another striking statement I received from the respondents about the commodification of agriculture was from a poor farmer who is very much dependent to milk collectors, the middlemen to sell his tomatoes.

> Our food is expensive. We cannot buy tomatoes lower than 8 liras/kg as a consumer (from the grocery/supermarket), but we can only sell our own tomatoes for maximum 2 liras/kg. (Tomato Farmer, İlhanköy village, 52 years old, 10 decares)

This farmer and his wife had a very old tractor and were mostly using their household labour to cultivate tomatoes. They were sadly telling that the young generation hate labouring for agriculture, and they were acknowledging their sons' refusal to continue farming and stay in the village. As per their statement, there is a fourfold difference between the price the farmer receives from buyers and the price that he must pay when he is the customer in a supermarket. Level of self-exploitation was observed to be high in their statements claiming that they cannot even eat a proper lunch because of working. They were very much sad to say that there is not a fair return to this extraordinary labour.

Another interesting point was stated by a female farmer who defined food sufficiency as managing to feed oneself. When asked what she means by “oneself” she explained it as “the whole country” and consequently took nation as the unit of analysis for food sovereignty.

Predicting the difficulty of getting clear answers to such a conceptual question, I also asked farmers to identify some elements of food sovereignty and local food-system control to get them a more concrete understanding of the concept. In response, farmers brought following propositions as required components of a food sovereign local food system:

1. There is need for state support including financial support, agricultural consultancy, and marketing.
2. Peasants should not sell their lands for easy money.
3. Peasants should stay in villages; they should not migrate to cities. Peasants will stay in villages if they earn enough. Ministry should control the price of animal feed just as it controls the price of milk.
4. Input prices should be reduced, and so farmers should make profit. We do not produce the inputs on our own, then they are all cost items.
5. Seed dependency should be overcome. Seed dependency makes our food sovereignty vulnerable to international political conflicts.
6. Farmers’ labour should be rewarded.
7. You ought to have the capacity to sell/market what you produce.

As per these responses, there is a clear expectation from state to take active role in safeguarding food sovereignty whereas peasants are positioned as critical actors to be supported. It was interesting to hear that peasants’ own responsibility in erosion of local food system control was acknowledged by peasant respondents themselves.

While I was not expecting to get complex definitions for food sovereignty by the farmers, I had expected a more informed answer by the head of district chamber of agriculture. However, what I heard was quite different than what I hoped. It was the first time the head of the chamber heard the concept of food sovereignty. When I asked him

if he follows up global farmer movements, he proudly stated that the global movements are followed up by the Turkish Union of Chambers of Agriculture. It was apparent that the Union level awareness was not sufficiently transferred to the chamber level. After confusing food sovereignty with food safety for some time, the head could finally make some relevant associations to the concept after I asked disaggregated questions on components of food sovereignty such as food democracy, and power of farmers versus corporations. What he finally came up with was even interesting. He sarcastically expressed that:

> They cannot promote it under this name. They should use concepts like "local production. (Head of the Chamber of Agriculture, Ayaş)

Not only the farmers but also the head of chamber emphasized the disruptive role of *commercial intermediaries or the middlemen* so to speak in the loss of income for famers and access to safe, healthy, and affordable food for consumers, which are the main concerns of food sovereignty in a sense. Commercial intermediaries, middlemen and traders are perceived as the winners of an unfair food system. The unregulated operation of an abundance of middlemen not only decreases the producer prices but also prevents traceability of food supply chains. As a result, interest of the traders rather than the primary producers and the consumers of food is secured in this system. This is what food sovereignty movement is marching against. As per the explanations provided by the head of chamber, the middlemen coming from İstanbul purchase local agricultural products, take it to İstanbul wholesale markets, and get them tagged on their own name. Middlemen also pay farmers' dues with post-dated checks for three-five months terms. Putting all these together, producers are shouldering financial risks of production whereas they hand the product of their labour with very low prices to the middlemen who are positioned as the registered actors in the market.

As part of the scrutiny over positioning of food between a subject of trade and subject of rights, respondents were asked a specific question to assess whether they perceived food as something primarily produced to feed people, and they themselves as producers and consumers of their products have right to healthy and sufficient food. In response to the question "Do people in your community pay a fair price for healthy foods?", the common reaction was "No". Farmers community do not pay fair prices to healthy and sufficient food. Food is too expensive, unlike industrial food, consumers have to pay up

to 4-5 times for healthy and organic food. Farmers on the other hand underlined the fact that consumers are still reaching fair prices despite the high costs of producers.

6.2.1.2. Valuing Seed Sovereignty

Control over seeds has been considered as the starting point for food sovereignty in this study. Commodification of seed sources and transformation of seeds from being common goods developed and preserved by farmers' community into being commodities and subjects of private property secured by patents and intellectual property rights regimes are problematized as threats to food sovereignty of any given community at diverse scales from a village to a nation or global community of small producers and consumers. Legal institutional structures and processes restructuring the state as the guardian of global corporate capital is already analysed in the new constitutionalism analysis in Chapter 3 and 4. As a complementary step to this macro analysis, reflections of the pro-capital transformation of agricultural policies in the daily lives of small farmers and their perceptions were scrutinized through interviews with the farmers. Experience and perceptions on seeds, in this respect, constituted a significant portion of the interviews conducted.

Within this context, respondents were asked about their seed sources, cost of seeds, perception on supply security for seeds, perception on seed ownership, experience and knowledge in breeding and registration of seeds, and support provided by the state.

Agricultural input dealers rank at the top of seed sourcing channels for respondents. There was no single respondent who did not buy seeds from commercial input dealers. In terms of tomatoes, hybrid seeds developed by global agri-food corporations as well as national seed companies were stated to be used by all respondents. Three of the respondents pointed that they also allocate seeds from their own crops and use them together with hybrid seeds. Only one of the respondents who is the unique registered heirloom tomato seed breeder of the district stated that he reproduces his own tomato seeds without any mixture with other seed sources.

Expansion of commercial hybrid seed market and declined agricultural labour supply push farmers to stop reproducing their own seeds and to obtain seeds from formal seed

market. Farmers mentioned that they used to allocate seeds from their own crops in the past, some of them noting 30 years ago. However, legal regulations prohibiting the exchange of unregistered seeds in local markets are said to lead farmers to use hybrid tomato seeds sold by input dealers. Expansion of commercial seed market changed the way farmers obtain seeds on multiple grounds. While on the one hand farmers found themselves as permanent customers of input dealers and started undertaking an extra cost item in their production costs by this commodification process, on the other hand due to labour-saving technologies offered by grown up seedlings of hybrid seed providers, farmers even stopped practicing germination of seeds on their own land. Grown-up seedlings bought from input dealers provided cost minimisation by cutting down labour input required for this delicate germination process but need for procurement of hybrid seeds each and every year imposed another cost item to the farmers. In addition to this, there was an interesting dimension noted by a female respondent. Grown up seedlings have lower adaptation capacity and resilience compared to the seeds germinated in the local soil. Regardless of the seed variety, whether it is local heirloom or hybrid, germination of seeds in local soil and development of seedlings in local conditions are said to have a positive impact on local adaptability and resilience of the products. So, this reminds us of how important it is to keep agricultural production process autonomous from the market as Van der Ploeg (2013) argues for food sovereignty.

Declined rural population and narrowed agricultural labour supply push farmers to apply market-based solutions and external inputs, and this results in decreased resilience and increased dependency to market**.**

Six out of eight respondents consider commercial hybrid seeds either as very expensive or expensive while the remaining two find them affordable but add fertilizers and fuel costs as the biggest cost items challenging their production processes. Majority of respondents also stated that they use credits to buy seeds/seedlings. This leads us to think about the relation between commodification of seeds, financialization of agriculture, increased farmers' debts and disrupted food sovereignty.

In addition to these, farmers were asked if they felt themselves secure in terms of their future seed supplies. Majority of respondents expressed a critical and pessimist perception about their seed supplies.

One of the respondents expressed the sense of insecurity that he feels with the following statement, coining international trade dealers as a big threat to seed sovereignty:

> There is no guarantee for seeds not to become like fertilizers. Dishonest persons dealing with international trade are responsible for this. (Tomato farmer, 42 years old, Ilıca village, 5 decares)

Only the respondent who is a registered tomato seed breeder presented the broadest perception of seed security stating that he does not feel himself secure in terms of seed supplies considering climatic changes, changes in precipitation and average temperatures, and global economic problems.

Nevertheless, three of the respondents did not get the "security" concept as a broad one but came up with a limited interpretation of security based on financial capability to purchase seeds from market suppliers. This recalls us to think about the concept of sovereignty, which is somehow used interchangeably with autonomy in food sovereignty framework. The respondent farmers' perception of farming seems to have been distorted as they do not take dissolution of an autonomous resource base as a security threat. Having financial access to seeds should not be enough to guarantee seed supplies in a market where suppliers are few private entities and there are plenty of uncertainties stemming from profit-oriented operations of market actors as well as environmental changes.

In relation to farmers' perception on ownership of seeds, farmers' awareness on power of global agri-food corporations and threat of vertical integration of seed and agrochemical production under giant TNCs was observed to be high. One of the respondents expressed her concerns about potential monopolisation of national seed companies which she currently supports just for they are "national" companies. Farmers rhetorically asked why they cannot produce seeds. Another poor farmer emphasized that farmers do not have alternatives to input dealers. Lack of a state policy to safeguard heirloom seeds and small farmers as producers of their own seeds, and state's taking

side with seed companies against the interest of farmers were the major complaints among all responses.

It takes 15 years to revive an abandoned local variety and get it ready to be used in the formal seed market. Full commodification of breeding is a threat to biological diversity and resource autonomy in a food system. The unique heirloom tomato seed breeder of Ayaş was deplored when he was explaining how a hybrid seed variety marketed by a French company eliminated endemic Ayaş tomato seeds and how long and challenging it was to revive this local variety from the chest of an old lady, get it registered and make ready for use again in a 15-year period. This breeder mentioned dangers of full commodification of breeding. He instead suggested that seed breeding should be carefully regulated by the state and voluntary contributions of farmers and non-profit organizations should be included in the breeding process in order to preserve the biological richness and common good contained in seeds. Another old farmer touched on the myth of Israel in seed market, stating:

> Hybrid seeds are costly. Israel is the master of this seed issue. They are producing terminator seeds. Decline of productivity in hybrid seeds after first harvest year is a serious challenge for us. However, you can still make profit by the extra productivity you catch in the first year. The seed firms first sell the disease and then the remedy. (Tomato farmer, 65 years old, Sinanlı village, 10 decares)

Use of hybrid seeds is very common in vegetable production including the tomatoes all over the world. The productivity gains offered by hybrid seeds and complementary promotion of hybrid seed market and limitations on breeding and marketing of heirloom seeds by legal-institutional mechanisms as well as burdensome labour processes lead farmers to use hybrid seeds. However, hybrid seed use requires renewal of seeds each and every year in order to prevent dramatic productivity losses in the consecutive harvests. Despite the great productivity gains, hybrid seed use constitutes a threat to resource-based autonomy of farmers.

As a follow up question to the one on ownership of seeds issue, farmers were asked if they know the formal seed breeding and registration system in the country, and if they practice breeding. Not surprisingly, only two of the respondents stated that they knew how the system works and they were aware of the rights of breeders. Current legislation and procedures on breeding and registration very much favours corporate farming and

excludes small farmers from being advantageous agents in formal seed market. Validating the analysis in legal-institutional assessment chapter, respondents either showed no interest or complained about the system for its being beyond capacity of small farmers. Bureaucratic procedures as well as financial costs of getting involved in formal breeding system were stated as barriers for small farmers. Small farmers are pushed to the margins of the formal seed market, allowed to produce their own seeds, and exchange it in a narrow informal seed market while big corporations enjoy the well protected property rights and market shares secured in the formal seed market.

In terms of the support provided by state for seed production and provision, the seed grant scheme of the Ankara Metropolitan Municipality was mentioned by majority of respondents as a well-intended initiative despite failures, while there was no positive reference to supports for seed provision from the central government. On the contrary, centrally implemented National Agriculture Project which is based on support payments for certified seed use for 21 plant varieties prioritized in certain agricultural water basins was criticized to have mismatched the water basins with crops and ignore vegetable production in Ayaş. Farmers' discontent about this mismatch was also confirmed by the Head of Chamber of Agriculture.

Replacement of standard seeds with hybrid seeds following the liberalisation of seed trade in 1980s were pointed by the unique registered seed breeder among respondents as a milestone in terms of transformation of seed sovereignty status of Turkey. This transformation was featured as a process that damages self-sufficient, healthy, and accessible food profile of the country. Seed Law was mentioned to bring about certain positive results. However, weak and unstable agricultural policies or even non-existence of a state policy for heirloom seeds was pointed to stay short of preserving local varieties and causing mixture of local heirloom seeds with hybrid seeds and a consequent deformation of local genetic resources.

6.2.1.3. Valuing Food Providers, Protection of Livelihoods of Food Providers

This dimension of food sovereignty focuses on the fact that food production is a source of livelihood for millions of people. So, food policies should consider protection of livelihoods for these people including mainly the peasants and small-scale farmers.

Couple of questions scrutinizing source of income, income level, asset control and ownership status with regard to means of production including seeds, and local food procurements were raised in this context to see if the respondents perceive that livelihood of peasants and small agricultural producers are safeguarded.

All of the respondents' main source of income was plant production and few of them had also income from livestock production and only one of them was receiving retirement pension among the interviewees in Ayaş. When they were asked if they can save any amount of their incomes after expenses, three among seven farmers responded as "Yes". The remaining four responded this question in a remonstrant manner. One of the few female respondents who is also the head of the Akkaya Agricultural Development Cooperative's stated the level of frustration on farmers' size as follows:

> We cannot earn proportional to our labour. Sometimes, I ask my husband if we are foolish for feeding the public…The ones who build concrete should eat concrete first. (Tomato producer and Head of Akkaya Agricultural Cooperative, Akkaya village, 43 years old, 30 decares)

This statement is laying out the anger of farmers against the urban population and the construction centred development policies in the country. Livelihoods of millions of farmers as well as the right to food for citizens are left in the mercy of extensive construction projects including housing and infrastructure, and the farmers' income levels are dramatically declined. Farmers earn too little incomes that they cannot save, and they reproachfully talk about urban bias against the livelihoods of farmers.

What makes the difference between the ones who stated that they can save and the ones that cannot, is worth to have a closer look. The respondents who gave positive answers to this saving question had one or more of the following distinctive features:

1. Having a roadside stand in a favourable spot where many cars can stop by for shopping. (Although there are plenty of roadside stands by the Ankara-Ayaş highway, not all of them had sufficient parking space in front and this declines the possibility of charming the potential customers. One of the better off farmers who had one of the biggest parking space by the highway honestly stated that he bribed someone in the respective public authority to get more parking space)

2. Selling directly to the final consumer without any middlemen and getting better prices, sufficient to save some.
3. Cultivating comparatively large sizes of land, dealing with livestock sales and covering risks in plant production with income from livestock production.

Lack of autonomous resource base, high input prices and low incomes push farmers into a debt cycle that is sustained over years. Credit payments and high input prices were emphasized by the farmers as the main threats to their livelihoods. It was apparent in respondents' statements that farmers are not fully autonomous in terms of the inputs they use for production. There is high dependency to external markets for agricultural inputs. Fertilizers, pesticides, electricity, diesel fuel, and hybrid seeds were listed as the uppermost inputs supplied mainly by imports and constitute the greatest cost items for small farmers. Due to these external inputs, farmers were observed to experience such a great financial deficit that one of the respondents bitterly emphasized that she had to sell her diary cattle, her productive asset, to pay for hays she bought to feed her cows. Incomes generated in the current year do not cover the cost of inputs for the next year's harvest. This pushes farmers into a vicious cycle of indebtedness. High levels of financialization of farming was observed in answers to questions on input supplies and credit use. *Ziraat Bankası* (Agriculture Bank of Turkey), *Tarım ve Kredi Kooperatifleri* (Agriculture and Credit Cooperatives), Denizbank, Şekerbank and *Esnaf Kefalet Kooperatifleri* (Craftsmen Cooperatives) were listed at the top of credit institutions that the respondents benefit.

Public incentives for agricultural production are too low, they are not responsive to farmers' production calendar, they privilege landowners and corporate and entrepreneurial farmers, and they crowd out peasants and small farmers. Agricultural support payments were found to be too low, and criteria for application and relevant procedures for public incentives were found to be either very difficult or impossible by the majority of respondents. State paying below the declared support amounts later than declared payment calendar was mentioned as a serious discrepancy between what political figures declare in public and what farmers receive in fact. The two respondents who stated that benefiting from public incentives is easy were either highly educated or operating at a larger scale holding size. The rest of the respondents stated that the incentive schemes were designed for big farmers and the procedures were complex for

small farmers to follow and comply with. One of the respondents raised an interesting point on this issue of public incentives saying that the incentives were paid to the landowner who does not have to cultivate the land himself/herself. As per the current regulation, agricultural incentives and support payments are provided on the basis of land ownership or a valid rent agreement between the landowner and the user/farmer. However, as the Head of the Chamber also elaborated in detail, land titles and succession are serious challenges before the efficient, fair and sustainable farming in Turkey. Farmers who cannot solve succession of land titles among the legal inheritors cannot register to the Farmer Registry System (ÇKS) and consequently cannot be eligible to apply public incentives for agricultural production. Production on family lands without legal succession is a common practice in the region and the real producers frequently stumble at this ownership issue. It is interesting that the previously fired Central Bank Governor, Naci Ağbal once delivered a press release stating that three ministries are working on this land titles and succession issue to enable real producers to benefit from public schemes, when he was the minister of finance in 2018 (Tarımdanhaber 2018). However, it seems that this plan has not come true so far.

One of the striking quotes about the benefits of public incentive schemes from the respondents is as follows:

> No. It is not possible for the family enterprises. It is burdensome in IPARD[22] schemes, as well. 75 pages of procedures, 12 items per page, and 50-60% grant in return. The officer recommends finding a consultant, and the first three questions of the commercial consultants are "What is your name, surname and how much will you pay me? (Tomato farmer, 46 years old, Ilıca village, 5 decares)

This shows the incompatibility of the public incentive schemes with the capacities of small farmers in the country. Bureaucratic procedures were found to be far beyond farmers' literacy and the farmers frequently mentioned that they had obstacles in meeting the application criteria. This is an indirect way of promoting corporate and entrepreneurial farming in the expense of livelihoods of small family farmers and peasants.

[22] IPARD is the abbrevation for the Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance for Rural Development which is a financial support scheme provided by the EU and managed by the Agriculture and Rural Development Support Institution of Turkey.

One of the respondents coined the banks as *"the institutional usurers of the State*" and expressed that agricultural credit system was not designed in a way to let the farmer sustain his/her business, earn money, and pay his/her dues back on a reasonable time plan. Instead, the credit system obliges farmers to pay back their debts in a short timespan with disproportionate instalments to their incomes by selling their productive assets in conditions of market uncertainty. This process again deepens dispossession of peasant farmers in the country.

Farmlands that belong to farmers in debt repayment difficulty are put up for sale by commercial banks, and these lands are transferred to investors for non-agricultural purposes. Commercial banks put farmlands, fields, and realty of the farmers in pledge to provide farmers mortgage loans. However, in conditions of high input prices and market uncertainties, Turkish farmers are suffering to pay back their credit debts. The Agriculture Bank, which was founded by Atatürk to provide low-cost credits to the farmers owns a long list of farmlands, gardens, fields, and realty that used to belong to the farmers but then appropriated by the bank in return of unpaid debts.[23] A special website serves for this sales purpose, and as per the relevant media coverage, there are concerns of transfer of productive agricultural lands from farmers to persons without any agricultural background or purpose. (*Sözcü Gazetesi* 2021) It would not be a groundless narrative to say that farmers of Turkey are dispossessed and ironically the Agriculture Bank mediates this process. The head of the Akkaya ADC complained that the Agriculture Bank as a public bank offers no favourable conditions for the farmers. Farmers' debts have been such a rising concern for political opposition that there are plenty of written questions asked to the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry about the amount of farmers' debts and policy interventions by the ministry.

A closer look at the labour processes in agricultural production is important to see whose labour is included in production process and how this labour is rewarded in the selected research fields. Tomato production is a fairly labour-intensive production category which requires more human labour than machines to get done properly and less costly. Food regimes theory argues that production of vegetables and fruits are concentrated in countries where labour is cheaper. Vegetable and fruits production

[23] E-sales website of the Agriculture Bank for seized property of farmers, Retrieved from: https://e-satis.ziraatbank.com.tr/gm-index.intengo?activeTab=allItems

require an indispensable amount of human labour because of precise manoeuvrability skills of humans that agricultural machines lack for the time being and the comparatively lower cost of human labour. Verifying this argument, it is observed in the research field that the seasonal agricultural workers who are the cheapest labour force of the country replace peasants in production processes. Tomato production in Ayaş is not exempt from this situation. While respondents who cultivate 10 decares or less stated that family workers undertake production tasks and limited number of neighbouring peasants work in the field only for a very few days during hoeing and collecting of products, the ones with bigger holding size stated that seasonal agricultural workers are employed during high seasons. Working age children of farmers prefer non-agricultural wage labour in the city. One of the ironic examples of this choice was the story of one of the respondents' son who started working as a gatekeeper in the city just because he finds farming too tiring. His mother said, *"He is getting even more tired in this paid job."*

In the market of comparative advantages, trade-offs, and marginal costs, peasants turn to urban wage labour, and agriculture stops being a real source of livelihoods for majority of local population. Seasonal agricultural workers mostly come from Şanlıurfa and Mardin provinces and stay in temporary shelters. It was interesting to hear that the seasonal agricultural workers are employed for "hard works". Apparently, the local peasants work in paid agricultural work for light tasks either for a few days in a year or for permanent employment by the local employer, while on the other hand, seasonal agricultural workers are employed on temporary basis for hard tasks. Rural populations of the South-Eastern Turkey and the refugees who went through distinct trajectories of dispossession fill this labour demand under very unfavourable conditions of work and remuneration. Responses were diverse about the question on how much the employers pay for seasonal agricultural workers. 90 to 140 TRY per person were referred as per diems of these workers while there was even an answer saying that 100 TRY per family is paid to seasonal agricultural workers. 100 TRY per family means an unknown number of men, women and even children work for a whole day and receive 100 TRY in total which is most probably handed and controlled by the senior male in the household. Considering that the gross daily minimum wage is 120 TRY in 2021, the relevant regulation on Agricultural Intermediation Services requires employers not to pay workers below the gross minimum daily wage, and child labour is prohibited in the

country, it becomes clear that tomato agriculture is providing livelihoods for seasonal agricultural workers under unfair terms of payment and sustaining child labour.[24] Not the local peasants but the seasonal agricultural workers supply the necessary labour required for hard works.

"Hobby gardens" which have been rising as new commercial products are marketed to urban settlers who look for outlets to befriend with nature, far from the city at the periphery of metropoles. The Head of the Agriculture Chamber of Ayaş listed hobby gardens at the top of the problems when he was asked what the three major threats to future of agricultural production in the region are.

Transfer of productive lands to urban consumers on the basis of commercial interests and without any concerns for sociological, economic and agricultural integrity of the land exterminates agricultural land over a night. It became a common practice to fence 100 decares of land, use excessive municipal water just for the owner has enough money to pay for water bills, and reduce real agricultural producers' share of mains water that they also need to use in their fields and gardens where they also have houses and shelters. The Metropolitan Municipality of Ankara is said to stop providing water to gardens in the district just because of the uncontrolled water use of hobby gardens. Another problem raised by the Head of Chamber about hobby gardens was the conflicts between the local producer/peasant residents and the owners of hobby gardens/urban settlers who owned villas in the recent years. Urban settlers frequently complain about smell of the animal manure that is widely stored near village houses and used as natural fertilizers in the gardens and fields. Urban settlers even carry their complaints to the Central Information and Complaint Centre of the Presidency, CİMER which turned to be the one and only channel for the citizens to claim justice in the last three years. The very centralized presidential system brought about this kind of all-inclusive institutions to the daily lives of citizens as centuries-old institutions of law became dysfunctional in the new system. The Head of Chamber gives examples of producer/peasants who were fined up to pay 2000 TRY by "Ministry of Environment and Urbanization" officers upon complaints to CİMER.

[24] See "Regulation on Agricultural Intermediation Services" for wage related legislation for agricultural workers: https://www.resmigazete.gov.tr/eskiler/2010/05/20100527-4.htm

In addition to hobby-gardens, urban entrepreneurs with sufficient assets to get credits from banks use advantage of their urban realties to get agricultural credits and decrease chances of small farmers and peasants to benefit from these credits. The credit system is already criticized to be biased against peasants who have nothing but their productive lands to pledge. As a result of weakly grounded entrepreneurial greed of this urban class who neither have the tacit knowledge of farming nor the patience to deal with nature's time bring down the enterprise in a short time and leave the sector with great harm to local agricultural economy. Peasant farmers are dispossessed and degraded by the influx of urban settlers and their half residential and half entrepreneurial scramble of land in the urban periphery. The point to note in this part is that livelihoods of small agricultural producers and public good are threatened by adventurous purposes of wealthy urban settlers and the state somehow takes side against the peasant farmers.

Now that conflict between urban and rural population has been touched upon in the flourishing of hobby gardens, another dimension of this conflict is also coming to the forefront in respondents' complaints. Peasant-producers identify mushrooming of middleclass urban professionals who purchase land in the villages and start operating agricultural production with commercial terms as a threat to livelihoods of peasants. Below is one of the brief complaints about this issue:

> A doctor purchased 10 decares of land, another lawyer started farming…Not the rich persons should take all. (Tomato farmer, 42 years old, Ilıca village, 5 decares)

Another respondent complained about handover of land from peasants to urban middle class with following statements, pointing this process as a major threat to food sovereignty:

> Most importantly, this country cannot feed itself if the farmers who are the real persons that deal with farming and cultivate the soil, do not receive the price of their labour. I have been a farmer for 25 years; our parents spent their lives by farming. We would hear it when we were young that governor of that place or director of this institution planted 50 decares of tomatoes…The small ones started to disappear. It is considered as a greed for commercial profit. (Tomato farmer and Head of Akkaya ADC, Akkaya village, 43 years old, 30 decares)

Considering the statements of respondents, it is apparent that agriculture is considered by peasant producers as more than an economic activity that is performed just for

profits. It is a way of existence; it is a social relation as well as a way of communicating with nature. Entrepreneurial farming and corporate farming in Van der Ploeg's (2008) typology are considered as threats to peasant family farming in the research field.

In terms of the promotion of livelihoods of small producers, the new seed support scheme of the Ankara Metropolitan Municipality is referred by all respondents with diverse perceptions. The municipality provides 75% grants if the producers use seeds and seedlings provided by the municipality. Three of the respondents expressed this initiative with great thankfulness and underlined following positive impacts of this municipal programme on food sovereignty and producer's welfare:

1. Cost of inputs is declined for small producers as the seeds were granted.
2. National self-sufficiency is increased in terms of seed provision as hybrid tomato seeds developed by national agri-food companies rather than the most preferred varieties developed by global agri-food companies were distributed in this scheme
3. Number of middlemen was reduced as the municipality purchased certain crops such as chickpeas and lentils produced out of granted seeds in order to use in the municipal food banks.

However, there were also critiques. Two of the respondents pointed out that the selection of seed varieties was not handled with care, and local differences in soil and climatic conditions were ignored. Lack of transparency in selection process left question marks in producers' minds, particularly the ones who are more concerned about the seed varieties they use. This caused serious productivity losses. The respondent who is a registered tomato seed breeder complained that he suggested distribution of 2-3 local heirloom tomato seeds per 1000 hybrid seeds for promotion of local varieties. However, his suggestion was not taken into consideration.

Although the municipal scheme that grants seeds and purchases certain crops out of these seeds directly from farmers seems like a promising initiative to get good results for rural-urban linkages, local food sovereignty and resilience of metropole settlements, there is need for further assessment of the points of criticism and develop the programme based on farmers' feedbacks. Involvement of the municipalities in local

food system as input suppliers and marketing channels may create positive prospects for food sovereignty as long as a careful and democratic policy process is operated.

After the major amendments in the Metropolitan Municipality Law No 5216 of Turkey in 2012, settlements with a population over 750 thousand were transformed into metropolitan municipalities, and villages and towns in those settlements were administratively transformed into "neighbourhoods" (*mahalle*), and certain services that peasants would receive free of charge turned into being municipal services that require tax and fee payments. This commodification process brought about certain income losses and consequent problems for peasant communities. One of the old respondents notes the losses they faced after this legal change in the administrative status of his village by the additional explanations of his young daughter as follows:

> Before 2012, this place was a town, there was a population who lived and farmed here and went to the city centre for wage labour. Municipal public buses were operating in line with working hours of that population. After the legal amendment, those buses are not serving anymore. There happened a mass outmigration. Closure of town and village schools also triggered this migration. Assets of the town municipality were transferred to metropolitan municipality, including the grassland. The metropolitan municipality now rents these grasslands. We have to apply to metropolitan municipality for all bureaucratic procedures, this causes slower solution of problems. (Tomato farmer, 65 years old, Sinanlı village, 10 decares, and his 30-year-old daughter)

Head of the Chamber of Agriculture links this migration problem to another issue with regard to farmers' debts, productivity and sustainability of farming. Although the head acknowledges there are external factors pushing farmers into an indebted and dependent position in the market such as input prices and the current credit system, he also indicates the role of peasant communities' choices in this transformation. Farmers' life standards changed dramatically, and productive capacity of peasants is eroded in this process. By the easing of individual transportation between the villages and the city centres through proliferation of ownership of motor vehicles and development of motorways, dual residence became a common practice by farmers, especially by the ones with children at school. Farmers prefer to live in the city centre in houses with higher comfort and proximity to schools, commute to the village on daily basis after leaving their children to school, get on their tractors parked in front of the village houses, go to the field and turn back to the city residence in the evening. This creates significant time and concentration losses in farmer's daily practice, and consequent

productivity losses. The head hold those farmers responsible to get mesmerized by city comfort and get indebted for unproductive purposes. He blames those farmers for purchasing cheese, yoghurt, and eggs like typical farm products from the market rather than implementing a circular and integrated farming process and reducing their dependency to market. These suggestions by the Head leads us to think about slogans on "peasant way" of living and producing by the global food sovereignty movement. What we face in Ayaş is not a community of peasants earning decent livelihoods out of soil but a disrupted peasantry in Jansen's (2015) terms. In other words, we observe a peasantry that is not detached from capitalist modes and relations of production.

In addition to these indicators on protection of livelihoods, respondents stated that they spend around 40-50% of household income for food, which is a fairly high portion leaving too little for other consumption and saving needs. Turkish society suffers from very high food price inflation and producers of food, the farmers are suffering from high food prices at an unexpectedly high level. High share of food costs within farmers' income shows the extent of commodification in farmers' lives. Rather than consuming mainly the product of their own labour, farmer community seems to resort market and exchange their limited incomes for food products. Farming as such does not seem to provide decent livelihoods for producers of tomato in Ayaş.

6.2.1.4. Localising Food Systems, Reducing Food Miles

This third dimension attaches importance to reducing food miles between producers and consumers. Food sovereignty movement claim that distance that is very much promoted by global corporate food system decreases accountability and sustainability at social, economic and environmental terms, and creates dependency relations. In this respect, to see if the respondent farmers value and experience localization of food system in their daily practices, a set of questions were raised on sources of foods consumed by agricultural producers, destinations of trade where their agricultural products traded, distance between the producers and consumers of the product of selected crops, and existence of any local market that brings local demand and supply together.

With respect to this category, respondents were initially asked if they knew where the food consumed in their community comes from and how long the food travels until it

arrives to their dining table. Answers to this question were diverse, but there were some striking commonalities. Majority of farmers did not have an informed assessment on the long food supply chains. Only one of them made an exact estimation and stated that food he buys from the market travels around 600 km on average, referring this travel as a zigzag route passing through factories and storehouses. Origin of the legumes caught respondents' attention more than any other crops, as imported legumes are dominating the market shelves in the country. There was an obvious reaction against imported foods and a preference on local products.

The respondents were also asked what the remotest trade destinations of their own products were. One of the common responses by the old respondents was that the tomatoes of Ayaş would be carried as far as Adana, Gaziantep, Kahramanmaraş, and İstanbul wholesale markets 30 years ago. Flourishing of tomato production in locations that did not used to be known for tomato such as Konya increased the competition in the national market. On the other hand, declines in tomato exports affected tomato producers of Ayaş. Because of its delicate shell, local tomato variety of Ayaş have low durability and this makes them disadvantaged in exports markets. For that reason, farmers prefer to cultivate certain hybrid varieties which are more marketable than the local variety. Tomatoes produced in Ayaş are sold mainly in the regional and national markets. Any declines in the tomato exports directly affect tomato producers of Ayaş because the tomatoes that could not be exported are released to national market and this causes excess supply and consequent price reductions in the domestic market. Respondents were clearly making a connection between their livelihoods and international trade of agricultural products.

When they were asked another relevant question on what they think about the international food trade, there was a consensus in answers about the benefits of international trade only if it is regulated by state to offer good terms for producers. Farmers were well aware of the fact that international trade increases demand and prices for their products. However, they were also complaining about the unfulfilled role of the state as the mediator to balance the interests of producers, traders, and consumers. Tomato farmers expect state to guarantee sustained tomato exports to preserve their shares in national market. Some of the catchy statements by respondents were as follows:

> It is a problem if you prevent production of potatoes in this country and import potatoes from Iran. (Tomato Seed Breeder and Farmer, 60 years old, Sinanlı village, 27 decares)

> I do not think very good things about international trade of agricultural products. There are important roles that fall on state. State exports our own products more than it should be and tries to meet the domestic demand for the same products with imports, and this disturbs the market. I went to Japan for a training in 2011. I saw the regulatory power of state there. As you know, primary agricultural product of Japan is rice. State makes an assessment if domestic rice production is enough for national demand and then gives permits for exports. State limits imports and also warns the consumers about their consumption levels based on the available amounts. In this way, it protects producers as well as consumers. State eliminates intermediaries between the producer and consumer. (Tomato farmer and Head of Akkaya ADC, 43 years old, Akkaya village, 30 decares)

> It is beyond any doubt that we do not have an agricultural policy. Onion producers were declared to be terrorist sometime. How much onion production do you need in Turkey? (Tomato farmer, 42 years old, Ilıca village, 5 decares)

Another question asked to the respondents was whether any of the stores/institutions nearby such as grocery stores, elder services/homes, convenience stores, hotels, schools, municipality, or government food programmes supply food from their community. This question was aiming to identify if there was a local market that matches local supply and demand. There were three respondents referring to local groceries, one to *Atatürk Orman Çiftliği* (State economic enterprise specialized in farming) which bought tomatoes for juice once in last year and another one to Ankara Metropolitan Municipality which started buying chickpeas and lentils to be served in its own food banks in the last two years. However, none of the examples were given as long-lasting practices, but instead one-off procurement relations were observed between these local actors and the farmers. Realizing how gainful it would be if there was a live local market demanding their products when I was listing some of the potential local customer categories, wife of one of the respondents, who had access to market only through milk collectors and stallholders, sighed and said, *"Wish those bought our products!"*

Farmers' position as food consumers were also questioned in the interviews throughout questions on their choices as customers. Not surprisingly, supermarket chains dominating the national food retails sector were at the forefront of farmers' shopping destinations because of the low prices they offer and accessibility they offer even to the smallest settlements. While farmers expressed rage against monopolistic power of these chains, they also confessed that they themselves could not refrain from shopping from

these markets despite the long-term harm these markets leave to the food producers. It was also interesting to hear that the delicate but distinctively delicious local tomato variety of Ayaş is mainly traded in the niche markets of İstanbul and locals of Ayaş do not consume their own delicious crops as much as the consumers in İstanbul. Experiences of farmers as food consumers tells us the story of cheap food regime in the world. While the farmers sell their best products with very low prices for the consumption of consumers living miles away, these same farmers consume the cheapest food sold by giant market chains. Extended food miles carry good food to the wealthy urban consumers and bring back cheap and low-quality food to the poor farmers.

6.2.1.5. Putting Control Locally, Bringing Food Democracy into Action

The fourth dimension of food sovereignty emphasizes local food producers' participation to decision making on food and promotes local mechanisms of collective control over food. Food sovereignty movement claims that local food providers should have decision-making power over food policy. In order to assess the quality of participation and food democracy in farmers' individual experiences, certain questions were raised on existence of individual and organized actions for solutions of the problems the respondents encounter as agricultural producers such as cooperative organizations and membership statuses. In addition to this, relations with local and national policy processes and politicians, and awareness level on who decides what is harvested in the community were scrutinized through targeted questions.

Chamber of Agriculture, Irrigation Cooperatives, Beet Producers' Cooperatives, Agriculture and Credit Cooperatives and Agricultural Development Cooperatives (ADCs) were the primary farmers' organizations to which the respondents stated membership. As per the answers, farmers have membership to these organizations for following reasons:

1. Agricultural supports are delivered through registration to the Chamber.
2. Access to certain inputs such as seeds, fertilizers, irrigation water and credits are secured through cooperatives. Certain cooperatives have monopoly over certain inputs in the district. i.e., sugar beet seeds

3. Cooperatives provide marketing channel for small producers. Agriculture and Credit Cooperatives offer the most extensive market access for producers.

However, there was no reference to any of the seven principles of cooperative organizations in farmers' responses. It was clear that farmers perceive these organizations as state institutions rather than voluntary organizations for collective interests. Farmers were observed to get membership to those farmer organizations either as it is a legal obligation or there is the monopoly of the cooperative for certain inputs. Only the ADCs stay out of this generalization and there were not many strong ADCs referred by the respondents. Although Ilıca ADC, which has 75 members, 13 being women, was pointed out as a successful one, its members are milk producers only. While the head of the Ilıca ADC stated their initial motivation was "acting as a single punch", the interviewed farmers expressed the lack of democratic cooperation environment and leadership to speak for the interest of farmers under an organized movement. One of the respondents complained about assignment of a person who does not cultivate even one decare of land as the head of the Chamber of Agriculture for only political purposes. Chambers of Agriculture were observed to function like a state registration office for farmers rather than a professional cooperation association of farmers themselves. Legal status of the Chambers of Agriculture also reinforces this state-centric positioning. On the other hand, another respondent complained about lack of courage and solidarity among local farmers as they never show up when there is an opportunity to meet politicians to voice farmers' problems. One of the most notable quotes was from an old farmer who complained about the agricultural policies throughout the interview and finally started with listing his membership to the Mosque Solidarity Association first when he was asked if he was part of any organized activity to solve these problems.[25] Initially stating that there were six mosques and one Quran Training Class which are funded by the association in the village, the respondent farmer added that he was also a member of irrigation cooperative, beet producers' cooperative, and Chamber of Agriculture. Tomato farmers in Ayaş do not have strong voluntary

[25] Mosque Solidarity Associations are among the most prevalent civil society organization category in Turkey. As per the recent Ministry of Interior data, 15% of all associations are operating for religious services, ranking third among all categories after professional solidarity and sports associations. On the other hand, associations established in the category of food, agriculture and livestock production corresponds to only 0,67% of all associations in the country. For further official statistics, see: https://www.siviltoplum.gov.tr/derneklerin-faaliyet-alanlarina-gore-dagilimi for further details.

organizations for local food democracy. Their memberships and affiliations are more based on compulsory and passive terms.

In response to the questions on farmers' relations with cooperative organizations, another interesting answer came from a poor farmer who referred sarcastically to Gübretaş fertilizer production corporation, as "the institution of the double-waged" and noted that he buys fertilizers of Gübretaş through Agriculture and Credit Cooperatives. 75% of the Gübretaş shares belong to the Agricultural Credit Cooperatives and in response to skyrocketing fertilizer prices in the country, Gübretaş came to the fore by the extreme attendance fees paid to the Board members who are at the same time serving as bureaucrats in other state institutions and receiving wages from these institutions, as well.

Sense of fear and disbelief in organized movement lead farmers to refrain from collective action and rely on momentary and individual actions to get in direct contact with politically powerful figures. A common disbelief in local food democracy and power of organized movement dominated the responses under this category. There was even a clear sense of fear against getting involved in organized movements. *"Onion producers were declared terrorists in this country."* was one of the notable statements that barely expressed this fear. Owner of this statement complained also about the social pressure against opposition voices during encounters with political figures. Remonstrative and critical speech in front of government representatives was said to be disgraced by local community with the fear of being collectively punished for their "disloyal" stance. However, there were few individual acts of rights claim stated by the respondents. While one of the farmers with high education level mentioned his individual participation to conferences, seminars, TV programmes and journals as speaker and writer as part of an advocacy effort for farmers of heirloom seeds, the youngest of respondents indicated his individual struggle in collaboration with the Ilıca ADC and the village head to voice problems on prices of fertilizers, diesel fuel, animal feed, and electricity for irrigation to the Ministry and the Presidency. This young farmer explained with proud how they got positive results after hosting representatives from the Ministry and the Presidency in the village. Attributing great power to getting into contact with the President, he pointed this one-off movement as a success moment. Rather than collective and institutionalized channels of democratic participation, this

way of momentary actions to get in direct personal contact with the certain persons in power was found to be a more effective way of participation for the farmers.

As part of the assessment on local food control, one final question was raised to the farmers on who decides what is grown or harvested in his/her community? Majority of farmers used the same words to answer this question, stating that "farmers themselves" decide what to produce individually. However, there were three interesting perceptions delivered by three different respondents. While the poorest farmer used "necessity and market conditions" as the main determinants of production planning, the farmer with the highest education level touched upon lack of state production planning and guidance to farmers. This farmer also criticized fellow farmers for taking only the profitability rates of previous year to decide what to plant this year. This was claimed to be a narrow analysis ignoring various economic, environmental and social factors to be taken into account in production planning. On the other hand, the respondent with the biggest roadside sales stall mentioned the uncontrolled population change in villages by entrepreneurial and residential influx of urban middle class to villages among which he especially stated lawyers and judges who purchase land in villages. This farmer complained about this rapid transformation as something that prevents locals to get to know each other, behave with mutual responsibility, and consequently spoils local acquaintance and social communication for common interests. Considering all these statements, it is permissible to say that lack of long-term and effective public planning, and rapid influx of urban middle-class migration to villages prevent farmers from planning their production in conformity with a reliable public strategy while at the same time taking action for local democratic communication on the basis of common interest. Isolated and unorganized peasants and small farmers make their individual production decisions under market pressures.

6.2.1.6. Building on Local Knowledge and Skills

The fifth dimension of food sovereignty promotes appreciating and building on local knowledge and skills of the food producers and use of technology to transfer this knowledge to next generations. In this respect, another set of questions was raised to the respondents to see if they had a special concern for preservation of agricultural production and food traditions, and awareness on value and state of local knowledge,

and how the relationship between farmers and the agricultural extension services was going on, if there was a passive acceptance of new techniques or a fair collaboration between local, authentic knowledge of farmers and scientific knowledge marketed by the extension officers.

As per the answers to the question on source of agricultural knowledge, it was obvious that farmers get farming knowledge mainly through learning by doing accompanied by their elders and neighbouring farmers. Rather than a structured formal training delivered by state or private companies, in-family and in-community non-formal training based on practical exchanges constitute the core of farming knowledge. Agricultural extension services of state and private agri-food corporations were not pointed as main sources of knowledge in this respect. Only two of the respondents referred state extension services as something helpful especially pointing out a specific period when Development of Agricultural Extension Services Project (TAR-GEL) of the Ministry was in practice between 2007-2016. Farmers remember this period as times when they had very easy access to agricultural engineers since one engineer in charge of extension services was assigned for each village covered by the project. One of the female respondents approached this issue with a gender dimension with her following statements:

> There were female engineers assigned to villages by the TAR-GEL Project. We learned a lot of things at that time. We leaned harmful insects. I was almost at a stage to identify the diseases on my own. These extension officers were withdrawn after the project was ended and assigned as public servants in district directorate of agriculture. Engineers' stay in the villages and presence of women among these engineers were very helpful for us. When there was a male engineer in the field, my husband would not want me to accompany. Agriculture is an art of details, and female producers have good grasp of details, and so women's observations are valuable in agriculture. (Tomato farmer and Head of Akkaya ADC, 43 years old, Akkaya village, 30 decares)

Underestimation of the role of women in agricultural production processes and transfer of agricultural knowledge was identified as an unfair practice reinforced by the state extension services.

On the one hand, farmers do not have access to quality public extension services, on the other hand they do not trust engineers of private agricultural companies that approach them with marketing purposes. A common distrust against the extension officers of agricultural input companies was explicit in statements of all respondents. Not the

farmers' and soils' need but the profit-making purposes of the companies were said to dominate the content of private extension services. Recommendations on excessive use of fertilizers and pesticides, and marketing of equivalently dysfunctional pesticides were at the top of complaints on private extension officers. On the other hand, state extension officers were claimed to be inaccessible and useless as the hundreds of engineers were withdrawn from active field service to passive office duties in 2016, detaching expert knowledge from reality of farmers and land. End of TAR-GEL Project in 2016, in this respect, was referred with regret.

As per the answers to the question on why and how the traditional local farming knowledge of peasants disappear, introduction of new and mostly labour-saving agricultural technologies, change of market preferences from taste and health towards "durability" and "productivity", changes in climatic conditions, and changes in education system which endorses rural to urban migration and degrades peasant skills and way of living were listed as the main factors of change affecting loss of traditional farming knowledge.

One of the respondents who practices breeding of local heirloom tomato varieties explained in detail why local knowledge disappears and how important it was to resort to traditional knowledge in his breeding journey:

> This question concerns me very much. The first reason is economic. Local varieties turned to be uncompetitive against other varieties. If you cannot sell a product, then you do not share the knowledge of this product. I traced and found the seeds of local Ayaş tomatoes in chest of an old lady. I planted a pouch of seeds that I found in the old lady's chest and asked a group of 70–80-year-old peasant ladies to identify the original heirloom variety of Ayaş among the grown tomatoes. (Tomato Seed Breeder and Farmer, 60 years old, Sinanlı village, 27 decares)

This small story of a seed breeder implies why food sovereignty movement is concerned about the traditional knowledge. Not only seeds but also a long list of agricultural inputs and methods are developed and marketed after commercial processes led by corporate science and technology, and the whole process brings about mono-typical crops registered as private property of corporations. Complex agricultural knowledge distilled out of collective labour of farmers in the long history of agriculture is appropriated by giant TNCs and is reduced to corporate knowledge to be exchanged in market.

6.2.1.7. Working with Nature, Preserving Natural Resources

The last dimension of food sovereignty aims preserving the natural resources and increasing the resilience so as to minimize environmental damage and global warming. In order to assess to what extent farmers are working with nature, a final set of questions were raised to the respondents about awareness on effects of environmental changes on food systems and vice versa. Existence of any milestones in agricultural practices and consequent environmental changes were particularly scrutinized by asking a historical assessment of local food system by the respondents.

Given the compelling conditions of extreme weather events from floods to drought in 2020-2021 period, farmers exhibited very high awareness on climate change and its impact on farming as well as role of human activity in environmental disasters. Changes in precipitation regime, moisture balance, floods and hail, drought, air pollution caused by thermal power plant nearby Ayaş, soil pollution, extreme hot and cold weather waves, cloudbursts, and emergence of new pests were listed at the top of the environmental changes that affect farming. All these changes seem to increase uncertainty and a consequent need for agricultural insurance protection for crops. Three of the respondents referred the need for well-functioning agricultural insurance systems in conditions of climate change and uncertainty. However, complaints about the current Agricultural Insurances Pool (TARSİM) administered by the state were also present in the responses.[26] Insurance firms were claimed to refrain from covering real loss of farmers through delays in damage assessment processes as well as bias in the assessment process operated against the interest of farmers.

Farmer-nature relation was scrutinized in the question forms in a two-way assessment. Farmers were initially asked if they observe any negative impact of their own farming practices to the nature. In response to this question, following answers came to the fore:

1. Due to increased use of pesticides, some of the insect types disappeared such as ladybirds.
2. Increased use of hybrid seeds for tomatoes and GMO seeds for maize reduced resilience of local varieties.

[26] See TARSİM via https://www.tarsim.gov.tr/

3. Unconscious irrigation just because there is free water available, threats water resources and decreases the quality of tomatoes produced. (One of the respondents referred to the traditional advice of his elders, "*Hoe twice and irrigate once*" for good tomato production which is currently ignored by misuse of water)
4. Fertilizers increase productivity but they also render soil addicted to chemicals.
5. Farmers skip fallowing just not to interrupt their supplies to the market and this decreases fertility of soil.
6. Excessive use of chemicals causes emergence of new plant diseases and pesticides which require even more excessive use of pest control materials.
7. Water resources including groundwaters and streams are contaminated by agricultural chemicals, and this declines the biological diversity
8. Drip irrigation technologies which entered in common use provided some water saving compared to traditional flood irrigation.

From youngest to the oldest respondent, there was an obvious awareness on the impact of current farming practices on environment. Resonating with the sixth principle of food sovereignty movement, farmers were aware of the fact that they have to preserve nature. However, small farmers blame market pressure for their environmentally unsustainable farming practices and point out the state and big corporations as the prime actors responsible and capable of corrective intervention.

When the farmers were asked a specific question on the impact of the changes in their seed use on environment, they noted their suspicion on hybrid seeds bringing about new diseases and pests which increase the dependency to new inputs produced by corporate science. This kind of an intensive farming was found to be destructive to nature by the farmers. On the other hand, there was not a deliberate, systematic, and collective will against these destructive farming practices. Farmers seemed to prioritize securing their short-term livelihoods rather than long term food sovereignty. Market pressure was strongly felt in their non-optimal choices and few of them pointed out the state and big corporations as the prime actors responsible and capable of corrective intervention. There were also weak references to consumers' choice as a determining factor behind environmental degradation. Farmers did not consider themselves as prime determinant and responsible actors in this process. This is very much in line with the state of

organized farmer movement in the field area. Farmers expect other market actors to take positive steps and position themselves as dependent variables in this transformation rather than active agents to drive the change.

6.2.2. Wheat Producers in Polatlı

Interviews in Polatlı were conducted in September-October 2021. Respondents were purposefully selected among different age and education cohorts. Experience and perceptions of an 18-year-old farmer were observed to have significant differences from a 62 year-old respondent. Average holding size was fairly bigger than the ones in Ayaş. Farmers' experiences were diverse in line with their holding sizes changing from 100 decares to 1450 decares. Mechanisation and use of latest agricultural technologies were observed to be much higher among wheat producers in Polatlı compared to tomato producers in Ayaş. Respondent farmers were applying more complex and expensive technologies in their production processes. Entrepreneurial family farming features were more common among young wheat farmers. This has implications on labour processes, farmer-nature relationship, and resource autonomy which are all determinant in food sovereignty perceptions and experiences of producer communities. Wheat producers in Polatlı were also observed to have higher engagement with international trade markets which make them more informed about the trade processes. Almost all the respondents were cultivating more than one crop, including mainly wheat, barley, sugar beet and onion. Respondent farmers were from Yeniköseler, Yağcıoğlu and Müslümköy villages of Polatlı. Majority of interviews were conducted in the village houses of the respondents but two of the farmers were met in the district centre. Considering development of responses in Ayaş, the question form was slightly revised to make certain questions clearer and exclude the ones which did not resonate well on farmers' understanding. Wheat farmers experience and perceptions on seed sovereignty were also distinctive in terms of their dependency to external markets.

Eight wheat producers, one seed company owner and one breeder of wheat seed are interviewed in Polatlı. In addition to this, head of the first peasant syndicate of the country, TÜMKÖYSEN is also interviewed upon referral by a respondent, as a complementary step to get a nation-wide picture on organized power of small

agricultural producers in the country. Only one woman could be reached among the total number of interviewees in Polatlı. List of interviewees is presented in Table 13:

Table 13: *List of Interviewees for Wheat Producers/ Polatlı*

Interviewee no.	**Gender**	**Age**	**Land size**	**Education Level**	**Who is the first buyer of the product**
1	Male	52	10 decares	Secondary Education	Milk collectors-middleman
2	Male	54	10 decares	Primary education	Direct selling to the urban customers from his own mobile vehicle.
3	Male	65	10 decares	Primary education	Direct selling to the customers from his own stall in front of his house by the road.
4	Male	26	900 decares	Secondary education	Direct selling to the urban customers from the family stalls by motorway.
5	Female (widow)	46	5 decares	Primary education	Direct selling to the urban customers from the family stalls by motorway.
6	Male (only for seedling)	60	27 decares	Higher Education	Seed sellers, farmers and home-based customers through e-marketing.
7	Male	43	30 decares (owning 13 decares, renting the rest)	Secondary education	Ankara Wholesale Market and Akkaya Agricultural Development Cooperative
8	Male	42	5 decares	Secondary Education	Direct selling to the urban customers from the family stalls by motorway.
9	Head of Ayaş Chamber of Agriculture				

6.2.2.1. Focusing on Food for People

Experiences and perceptions of the wheat farmers were questioned initially in terms of their general understanding of the concept of food sovereignty. In a similar manner with the farmers in Ayaş, respondents in Polatlı also did not provide exhaustive definitions of food sovereignty but came up with associations that resonate in their minds in relation to this new concept. Respondents were not familiar with the concept, but sovereignty component led them take nation as the unit and define the concept on the ground of a dependency relation among nations. Import dependency for agricultural inputs and consequent high input prices, unfair gains of intermediaries and brokers transferred from the farmers, lack of national R&D capacity to replace imported inputs including seeds and pesticides, farmers' debts, high rates of value added tax collected from agricultural inputs were the main impediments that they mentioned as factors preventing a food sovereign Turkey.

There was a common rage against uncontrolled imports, international trade policy of the state and international trade brokers as actors making great profits by taking the share of real producers and the state itself. The youngest of the respondents who was an 18-year-old heir of a farmer family could identify individual autonomy and freedom dimension of the concept and stated with twinkling eyes that farmers would be able to cultivate everything if there was food sovereignty.

Global pandemic of COVID-19 is a milestone that made it evident that food should be first and foremost feeding the humanity rather than enriching the trades people. One of the striking confessions came from the young respondent with the biggest holding size:

> We were not aware of the fact that food is so valuable. Everybody realized it but the producers had the greatest awakening. We used to think that there would always be somebody to produce, even if I stop producing someone else would continue producing and food supplies would never be interrupted, and food would always be sufficient. But the pandemic showed that there might be crisis in food supplies if someone stops producing. Many countries stopped exports despite the contracts just because of the uncertainty in production during pandemic. World population is growing, arable lands are getting narrower, urbanization is increasing. We have to feed more people per unit area every year. Wheat is sacred for us. (Wheat farmer, 31 years old, Polatlı, 1450 decares)

Apart from the answers received for purposive questions, it was observed that dining tables of the farmers in Polatlı were also modest like the ones in Ayaş. Although they have to use heavy labour in their daily work, a limited number of dairy products, bread

and vegetables were mainly available on their dining tables. Unlike the diets of urban consumers to which respondents provide food, excess consumption of meat and calory accounts were not determinant in their diets as they somehow showcased their domestic lives during the interviews.

6.2.2.2. Valuing Seed Sovereignty

Seed sovereignty can be defined as having autonomy over saving, using, breeding, bartering and/or exchanging seeds, and enjoying these practices as a right. Subject can be taken as either individual farmer, community, or state in the context of seed sovereignty. In line with the question set raised to tomato farmers, wheat farmers in Polatlı were also asked about their seed sources, cost of seeds, perception on supply security for seeds, perception on seed ownership, experience and knowledge in breeding and registration of seeds, and support provided by the state.

Compared to farmers in Ayaş, seed sources for wheat farmers exhibit a greater diversity and share of informal seed market within their seed suppliers is much higher than it is featured in national media. As per the answers, wheat farmers' main seed source was found to be Commodity Exchange Market of Polatlı, their own wheat crop allocated as seeds, Agriculture and Credit Cooperatives, private input dealers, informal exchange between fellow farmers and finally seed support scheme of Ankara Metropolitan Municipality.

It was observed that informal seed exchange market was still live in the villages and farmers were claiming that state was somehow tolerating this exchange in conditions of loose auditing. Despite the latest legal regulations that prohibits selling of seeds among farmers and grants breeders the exclusive rights, all the respondents pointed out the existence of an informal seed market in the district. However, one of the old and highly educated farmers was talking with prudence and claiming that this was just a temporary process, political election concerns were preventing strict enforcement, one day in the future the law would be applied in full force and state would not overlook the informal seed market functioning against the corporate interests.

All farmers voiced up the expensiveness of seeds that they buy from market. They were complaining that they can purchase wheat seeds at a price twice the amount that they can sell their wheat crops. This is a similar pattern with the tomato producers of Ayaş. On the other hand, they were mentioning the need to buy certified seed varieties in order prevent high productivity losses. From youngest to the oldest farmer, there was a consensus on the need for certified seeds to preserve a certain quality and productivity. It was interesting to hear from the oldest farmer the following statements:

> Allocating wheat from your own granary every year, getting them sorted out by selectors and using them as seeds was the common practice in the old days, but our elders were illiterate in this aspect. Now, if you say that we should get knowledge from abroad, I am OK with this. (Wheat farmer, 62 years old, Müslümköy village, 500 decares)

This old farmer was reconciled with the formal seed market and the share of foreign intellectual property rights in this system. Farmers were observed to benefit from certified seed use incentives of the state and use those certified seeds as foundation stock in their production. Private ownership of the seeds was internalized by the biggest farmer among respondents so much that he tagged farmers' exchange of seeds reproduced out of breeders' certified seeds as something unethical. He had a naïve perception that seed breeder persons and companies do not condition farmers not to exchange their seeds. Instead, he had a belief in a common respect for intellectual and financial resources employed by breeder companies and persons for development of certified seeds.

In addition to these, majority of respondents did not know formal breeding and variety registration system in the country. Few of them mentioned that it is beyond the capacity of farmers. Small wheat farmers lack required capital to get involved in formal breeding system. Experienced agricultural engineers and corporations were pointed as capable parties with necessary capital. On the other hand, there was a clear sense of envy in the single agricultural engineer among respondents. This young farmer was sighing if he had a laboratory to conduct breeding and earn millions of dollars someday. Small farmers were observed to lack the necessary capital to get involved in formal breeding system. On the other hand, this young farmer was also pointing Israel as a good example. Seed industry in Israel was said to catch its international success by early and generous state incentives for seed production. Involvement of public investment in seed

industry was in this context perceived as something good. Nevertheless, there was only one old respondent who referred to Seed Law as a threat to farmers' independence. Growing certified seeds for a private seed company himself, he touched upon the chain of dependency starting from himself as a small farmer and reaching to the national seed company who pays royalty to the multinational seed company which owns the most exclusive breeder rights in this chain.

In response to the question on whether they feel themselves secure in terms of their seed supplies for the next harvest year, there was only one farmer who reflected a sense of insecurity. Majority of respondents were confident about accessibility of seed, either from formal market or informal market, and they did not consider commodification of seeds or environmental challenges as a source of insecurity, exhibiting similarities with the farmers in Ayaş. However, the young farmer with the biggest holding size mentioned rising exchange rate as a source for insecurity for his seed supplies. He was concerned about the import dependency for active materials of most of the agricultural inputs including seeds and perceiving exchange rate increases as a threat. His concerns were not groundless indeed. While exchange rate was around 7-8 liras per dollar during the interviews, it reached over 15 liras per dollar by the time this dissertation was being reviewed.

As a final remark on financialization of agriculture, it was observed that farmers who apply Agriculture and Credit cooperatives to buy seeds enter into a debt cycle, paying the cost of current year's seed by the revenue of next year under very high interest rates. While the smallest farmer among respondents was complaining about the debt dependency he was in with the Cooperative, the biggest farmer was also talking about the Cooperative with discontent and claiming that farmers with cash money would not prefer them, the Cooperative prefers farmers that they can sell on credit and applies very high prices.

Farmers' perceptions and experiences about seed sovereignty were complemented by two key interviews. One of them was the Head of the Plant Breeders' Union and a wheat breeder himself, and the other one was the owner and manager of a seed breeding and trade company, Aseed-Alkan Tohum located in Polatlı.

Taking into account that these two interviewees represent the private supplier side of the formal seed market, different question sets were used to get the most relevant data with the experiences of the respondents. General perception about the concept of food sovereignty was asked to these respondents like it was raised to the farmers. The breeder came up with the following definition:

> It means every country and every nation can produce its own food, get access to food and be free from food threat by other nations. By food threat I mean facing sanctions by another country's use of food as a threat, in other words food security. Self-sufficiency and managing to feed your own community… (Wheat breeder and Head of the Plant Breeders' Union)

On the other hand, the company owner started definition by directly stating that *"We are dependent!"*. Separating national investors from global agri-food corporations, this young seed investor identified two main factors behind Turkey's dependency in the context of food sovereignty. On the one hand, breeding requires very high human capital, well-educated and experienced breeders but Turkey lacks this human resource. It takes 25 years in average for one breeder to get to the point of breeding. On the other hand, more than 490 out of 550 registered varieties in Turkey are imported varieties which are developed by foreign seed companies. Majority of local seed companies distribute the certified varieties of foreign companies, and they must pay royalties to owners of seed certificates. These royalty payments paid for intellectual property rights of global companies are creating a big current deficit in the country's accounts. Building on this, he used an assertive statement that "*National seed companies who develop their own cross-breeding programme are the key to independence."* This respondent considered informal seed market as the biggest threat to seed sector. He was complaining about state policy that allows and/or tolerates informal seed market by weak enforcement on the exchange of unregistered seeds.

There was an interesting commonality in the perceptions of these two seed producers' perceptions towards stakeholders of seed development process. When they were asked to list the main stakeholders within breeding, registration and certification process and evaluate if gains of this process were fairly distributed among stakeholders, both of the respondents confidently stated that there are not too many stakeholders. The old breeder frankly told that there were not any contributions of industrialists, or producers or farmers in this process. Both respondents had a narrow perception of stakeholders

ignoring diversity of positions in breeding process in terms of their power, interest, and damages they would face due to breeding process. Both focused on the key players with the highest power and interest, counting breeder and industrialists first. Farmers, peasants, consumers, communities affected by environmental effects of breeding process were all ignored in their stakeholder analyses. Consumers were referred only with reference to their choices of taste regardless of health and accessibility implications.

Another common point of concern for these seed developers were their common expectation for further public funds to be transferred to private seed companies. Cost of R&D processes were said to go beyond capacities of small national companies, and this was pointed as an impediment before national seed sector to catch up with global agri-business corporations. While the young company owner was in an open discontent with state's promoting an unfair competition between Turkish General Directorate of Agricultural Enterprises (TİGEM) as the public breeder and private seed companies and tolerating informal seed sector; the older breeder was acknowledging the regulatory role of state in seed sector to prevent negative results of a fully liberalized seed market. The young company owner was in a greater discomfort with state bureaucracy and pointing legislative processes as slow and restraining for private seed companies. He explained clearly that private seed companies prefer to import seeds rather than selling domestic seeds produced by TİGEM since state determines the price of TİGEM seeds whereas companies can determine the price of imported seeds. He was justifying this ill-advised choice with the higher productivity gains brought by imported varieties compared to domestic varieties offered by TİGEM. This case shows us how profit motivation of private seed companies in conditions of a lack of smart public regulation and planning increases seed cost for small farmers. Market extension for global seed corporations becomes easier under these conditions.

In terms of the national breeders' position on intellectual property rights regime and relevant know-how transfers between global seed companies and national companies, there was another shared perception on the limited and even non-existent know-how transfer between global and national companies. They both mentioned that their foreign partners keep communication at a strategic level, exchange minimum knowledge to sustain the dependency relation and enhance market expansion in the partnered country.

National companies cannot get critical know-how in breeding process but get into long-term dependency relations and position as customers and distributers of global products owned by TNCs.

Intellectual property regimes governing seed sector are perceived by national breeders both as a threat to national food security and an opportunity to ensure sufficient food for growing population in conditions of climate change. Both of the breeders had a strong belief in merits of intellectual property rights regime governing seed sector. The old breeder was acknowledging the threats of this property regime in seed sector to national food security and independence of the country, but he was also strongly supporting to play this global game with its rules, develop your own varieties and join the winners' club. He was comparing seeds with other technologies like smartphones and perceiving it both economically rational and legitimate to award the efforts behind technology development processes. He was frequently referring the concept of "seed technology" and advocating investment in these technologies to secure enough food for growing world population and mitigate the negative impacts of climate change.

The old breeder who is also the Head of Plant Breeders Union defined Turkish seed market as a developing market that has grown 5-6 times in the last 15 years, increased its competitiveness in international markets with a comparative advantage in cleistogamic varieties which are native to Turkey such as wheat, chickpeas, lentils, and barley, and started exporting seeds and breeding abroad in more than 20 countries by national vegetable seed companies. National companies were said to extend their breeding programmes into countries with doing business and marketing advantages such as Pakistan, Malaysia, and far eastern counties. On the other hand, the young company owner underlined the fact that hybrid seed market in Turkey was dominated by global seed companies, corresponding 95% of the market. There is a fierce competition in hybrid vegetable seed market. High R&D processes and profit margins in hybrid vegetable seeds bring global corporations to the fore, and this explains why there are few domestic vegetable seed companies investing in lower income countries with doing business advantages. Apart from these, the old breeder mentions increase of productivity in wheat harvest from 34 kg/decare in 1926 when state breeding was first launched to 234 kg/decare as a national success story, acknowledging the complementary impact of initial statist policies and gradual privatization of seed production since 1980s, and

current regulatory role of the state as positive milestones in development of seed market in the country.

Apart from these economic assessments, both respondents had criticism against small farmers and peasants. When they were asked what the place of small farmers for provision of healthy, sufficient, and sustainable food for all should be, they both criticized the current unorganized state of small farmers that prevents cooperative production organizations and brings about a fragmented, low productivity, low income, low educated and self-exploitative farmer profile. Both farmers and consumers are pointed as negatively affected sides in this process. The old breeder was particularly criticizing the typology of peasant who works for 12 months in return of very small incomes and cannot earn enough to spend for cultural, educational and leisure needs. He was instead arguing that peasants and small farmers should be supported by high-productivity seeds and cooperative organizations so that they can receive a bigger share in national welfare and consumers also get access to affordable and health food. He was strongly speaking for extension of formal seed market to small farmers as a positive support to productivity and incomes.

After all these exchanges, the most striking remark that exhibits a very concrete footprint of new constitutionalism in Turkish agriculture was made by the old breeder. When he was asked to assess the functionality of the Union of Plant Breeders, which is the organized body of formal breeder persons and companies in Turkey established by the Seed Law, for agriculture and food policies in Turkey, he proudly talked about the Arbitration Board of the Union. Arbitration Board is authorized as the supreme conflict resolution body of the Union. Seed Law defines mission of the Board as follows:

> Solving conflicts between the union and the sub-unions, sub-unions and members, and members of the sub-unions and third persons through reconciliation, arbitration and mediation (Seed Law of Turkey, 2006).

This article somehow positions the Arbitration Board of TÜRKTOB as a juridical authority, a specialized court to judge cases not only within the Union members but also the Union members and third persons including farmers who are in contract farming relation for seed production or farmers who use the seeds developed and/or sold by members. The respondent in the capacity of the Head of Plant Breeders' Union was so

confident saying that decisions of the Board have the force of court and they cannot be appealed in principle. This gives the Board a serious jurisdiction authority and Altınok (2011) who is an ecologist lawyer and member of the Ecology Collective in Turkey criticizes this on the ground that judicial power should only be used by independent courts on behalf of Turkish nation. This is what the Constitution of Turkish Republic requires. Seed Law with this regulation is criticized to violate the fundamental principles of judiciary power defined in the Constitution and give the Union a disproportionate and illegitimate judicial power. Since its declaration to public opinion, Seed Law has been at close public scrutiny on the ground that the Law is a big threat to national sovereignty. Judicial power granted to the sectorial union of seed breeders, producers and traders operating in Turkey regardless of the origin constitutes one of the critical dimensions of this sovereignty debate. Conversation with a representative of one of the sub-unions of TÜRKTOB during this study revealed the relevance of new constitutionalism debate within seed and food sovereignty analysis. This example presents that judicial power is transferred indirectly from national courts to umbrella organization of private parties in seed sector, in which global agri-food corporations are strongly represented.

6.2.2.3. Valuing Food Providers, Protection of Livelihoods of Food Providers

Respondent farmers' livelihoods were observed to be threatened by several factors. First of all, use of international trade as a disciplinary tool was at the top of all items that respondents mentioned as threats to their livelihoods. One of the respondents gave an example from his personal experience in wheat sales. Price of a ton of his own wheat declined from TRY 1.394 to TRY 1.090 in 15 days in summer 2021 just because government imported wheat. Import decision of the government caused 21% loss in farmer's income in this case and as per the common complaints of the farmers this is not an individual case but the common story of wheat farmers. One of the respondents mentioned disciplinary state power with this statement *"I will import, huh!"* State was claimed to use imports as a stick over farmers' heads. Economic rationality of excessive resort to imports was questioned by farmers who were informed about certain cases where state imports wheat from Canada, Russia and Ukraine and sells it to domestic market with a lower price than the importation cost. Chamber of Agricultural Engineers (ZMO) and Turkish Agriculturalists Association also voiced this claim criticizing Turkish Grain Board for importing expensive wheats mainly from Russia at a more

expensive price than the one offered by the Board to Turkish farmers (Chamber of Agricultural Engineers 2021). Neither the state nor the farmers gain from imports of wheat, and farmers collectively point out international trade brokers as the winners of this deal.

Pandemic and following restrictions and disruptions in international trade in this respect were welcomed by the farmers just because this process showed how unsustainable it was to rely on imports for food supply and discipline farmers of the nation by imports. Certainly, import-oriented policies create disincentives for farmers to continue producing. Even the official statistics of TurkStat (2021d) estimated that wheat production will decline by 15% from 2020 to 2021 and considering the latest public debate on reliability of TurkStat data, there are strong reasons to assume that the real decline should be far more than the official estimation. Wheat exports of Turkey is reported to increase from 3,9 million tons to 7,5 million tons whereas imports increased from 4,8 million tons to 9,8 million tons from 2011 to 2020 (Turkish Grain Board 2020). Doubling of imports of wheat in the last ten years is accompanied by a 4,8% decline in wheat production fields and 7% decline in production amount just in the last five-year period (Tarım ve Orman Bakanlığı 2021). These factual data and real-life experiences of farmers enable us to trace footsteps of new constitutionalism in agricultural policies of Turkey.

Farmers are left vulnerable in a free trade regime privileging the interest of trade brokers before producers. Not only international but also domestic trade brokers were addressed as winners of a long and unfair food supply chain starting from the farmer and reaching to the consumer. The oldest respondent expressed his complaint with the following statements:

> We are the ones who undertake the expenses of farming, deal with the soil and produce, but unfortunately people above us earn more than us. What do they do indeed? They just transport our crops from here to there. We are the one who hoe and fertilize the soil and we cannot earn. (Wheat farmer, 62 years old, Müslümköy village, 500 decares)

Farmers frequently referred to elimination of brokers as the primary step to realize food sovereignty. Brokers were portrayed as actors crushing down farmers and appropriating the lion’s share of revenue.

Another subject of common concern was the input prices and high tax rates on agricultural inputs. Extreme prices of major agricultural inputs which are supplied from abroad create disincentives for farmers to continue production. Farmers touched upon skyrocketing prices of fertilizers, electricity, diesel fuel, replacement parts for their machines, and seeds, and underlined the share of 18% VAT collected from these inputs. It was interesting to witness that high tax rates for production inputs were at the top of the agenda for the youngest respondent who was also aware that state determines these rates and state is the prime party to solve this problem for farmers. The single female respondent had a distinctive story in terms of the impact of input prices to farmers' livelihoods. That young woman stopped producing wheat and barley just because she could not catch up with the animal fodder prices and stopped feeding cows. She started raising goats instead as she can graze her small herd in the meadows without paying for expensive fodders sold in the market. Resource based autonomy seems to push this farmer to switch to a low-input production category. The respondent with the biggest holding size pointed out that small farmers will be eliminated in next ten years if they are not protected and added that bigger farmers practicing intensive farming like himself earn good money, but their input costs are tremendous. Price of diammonium phosphate (DAP) which is referred as an indispensable fertilizer by the farmers increased from TRY 389 (277 USD) in 2002 to TRY 14.600 (1053 USD) in 2021.[27] Almost all active ingredients of these fertilizers are imported, and this renders farmers of Turkey dependent to external supplies and relevant price increases in line with the exchange rate increases. Turkish government started implementing a fierce low-interest and low currency policy pushing Turkish lira to all-time low levels against other currencies in the late 2021 and this is posing a serious threat to food sovereignty in the country as farmers are dependent to imported inputs to sustain their production. Agriculture, food security, food inflation and farmers' debts have turned to be regular agenda items in national news bulletins in 2021. One of the young respondents sarcastically compared fertilize prices as follows:

> Fertilizers turned to be more valuable than bitcoins, it is better not to produce! (Wheat farmer, 31 years old, Polatlı, 1450 decares)

[27] See https://ziraatodasi.gen.tr/haberler/tarim-ekonomisi/yillara-gore-gubre-ve-mazot-fiyatlari/ for a broader comparison of fertilizer prices. (1 USD=TRY 1,4 in 2002 whereas 1 USD= TRY 13,86 as of 10 Dec 2021.)

This statement ironically summarizes the extent of disincentives on farmers and risk of replacement of real productive investments with speculative financial markets.

There was also a shared perception on the continuity of state policies against the interest of farmers' welfare regardless of the government in charge. Respondents claimed that state either ignored farmers or exploited them on a continuous basis. The oldest farmer was so much impressed by questioning farmers welfare, he reversed Atatürk's famous motto "Peasants are the masters of the nation" into "*Peasants have turned to be the miserables of the nation"*.

Peasants and small farmers have nothing but their inherited land to sell and pay back their debts. Handover of agricultural lands from farmers to investors was one of the significant threats to livelihoods of peasants and farmers that majority of respondents touched upon. While farmers criticized their fellow peasants for selling and renting land to external investors for the sake of hot money, they also emphasized the despair of peasants and small farmers who have nothing but their inherited land to sell to pay their debts. Respondents pointed out last ten years as the term when handover of land from peasants accelerated. Extensive land pieces as big as 200-300 hectares are being rented to external investors to be used for entrepreneurial farming. Land sales is also very widespread. However, these sales are not most of the time for agricultural purposes. As per the farmers' notes, investors from outside purchase land either for high rents expected after speculations on prospective inter-city highway projects to pass through the district or to pledge for their credit applications to the banks. This adds a second layer to dispossession process of small farmers. While on the one hand they sell their productive assets, lands to pay their debts to banks, on the other hand they are left without any assets to pledge for future credit applications for productive purposes. One of the old respondents sadly stated that *"Land is out of our hands, it is in the hands of big people, title is theirs, labour is ours."* Those "big people" are also referred as persons with close relations with the state. They are claimed to be in a position to get insider information and get favourable access to rent capital.

Nonrecoverable levels of debts were another common concern for the respondents in terms of their livelihoods. Farmers who register their spouses to Farmer Registry System

just to escape from tracking of the bank system and continue benefiting state agricultural support payments constituted a distinct typology in this context. Interest rates of the agricultural credits were found to be too high for farmers to pay back. One of the respondents noted that there is a significant discrepancy between the interest rates that the government declare in national TVs and the actual interest rates implemented by the Agriculture Bank. Agricultural supports and credits are usually used as populist propaganda items by the government, but the reality seems to be quite different than the misleading media coverage. The actual transfers made to farmers is far less than they are voiced up by politicians.

Farmers tagged agricultural support payments as ridiculously low and dysfunctional. TRY 19 per decare declines to TRY 14 after all commission and tax deductions by commissioning public banks. Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry was criticized in the Supreme Court of Audit Report 2019 for transferring the %0,02 of support payments as service commission to the Agriculture Bank and reducing the amount of payment planned to be transferred directly to the farmers (Supreme Court of Audit 2019). As if this deduction was not declining farmers' incomes enough, another tax deduction was used to be made in the farmers' support payments amounting 4% of payment amount by the Bank on behalf of the state. However, this practice was also found to be unlawful by the Council of State in July 2021 which judged the objection application by a farmer from Şanlıurfa province.[28] Millions of farmers will be paid back for these deductions made between 2016-2021 period. These two cases which illustrate the impact of judiciary organs on state's redistributive role show us the importance of still functioning judicial apparatus of state despite all neoliberal structuring processes in the country. Judiciary organs of the Turkish state still have a positive impact on protection of livelihoods for farmers.

One of the well-educated farmers compared support payments to wheat farmers in Turkey with the ones in the EU claiming it is only 2 euros for Turkish farmers and 25 euros for farmers in the EU and pointed out the impossibility of competition under these unfair conditions. Although these amounts need verification, it is already a common knowledge that Common Agricultural Policy of the EU is criticized by the WTO for its

[28] See Resmi Gazete (Official Gazette). Decision Text 29/07/2021. Retrieved from: https://www.resmigazete.gov.tr/eskiler/2021/07/20210729-10.pdf

protective mechanisms for the Union farmers, disrupting trade competition. At this point, we face the different levels of pressures applied through processes of new constitutionalism to different political entities. And this difference is well reflected in daily practices and perceptions of a wheat farmer in Turkey. Another respondent laid his actual costs for diesel fuel and fertilizer per decare as TRY 150 and compared it with TRY 19 per decare that the state pays as a subsidy. The same farmer tagged conditions of state incentive schemes as silly and impossible. Very high costs for pledges and guarantee letters are expected from the farmers for application to state incentives.

Moreover, vertical and horizontal integration of the agri-food market was identified as another threat to farmers' livelihoods. Respondents referred certain big corporations that enter into agricultural production and expand contract farming practices against the interest of small farmers. One of the young respondents expressed his discontent about transformation of agricultural production into a sole commercial activity with the following statement:

> There are more planters than farmers. Marketeers, retailers, supermarket chains, they all plant. Or they partner with the farmers and decline incomes of farmers. (Wheat farmer, 31 years old, Polatlı, 1450 decares)

Wheat production is highly mechanized, and this brings about limited job creation and labour demand in wheat farming. However, almost all of the respondent farmers were also producing labour intensive vegetables and industrial crops such as onions and sugar beets. While local male labour force was said to be employed with mostly permanent contracts in few machine use and disinfection works available in wheat production, seasonal agricultural labour composed of men, women and sadly children provided by agricultural intermediaries from Diyarbakır, Şanlıurfa, Adıyaman and Mardin provinces were mentioned as the main labour force in onion and sugar beet production. Machines and local males handle wheat harvest in general, but seasonal agricultural workers replace machines and locals in heavy tasks in the farms. Respondents took mechanisation as something indispensable and useful that increase productivity and income levels. On the other hand, similar with the farmers in Ayaş, there was again a common perception that seasonal agricultural workers can make their living better than the small farmers who are indebted and have to undertake serious production costs every year. Respondents reflected some kind of an envy towards incomes of proletarianized

farm workers. Although they were admitting that seasonal workers were working like machines in very heavy tasks, they were also finding worker per diems too high. One of the respondents even claimed that seasonal workers were “sharing his onion sack” and earning 150-200 thousand TRY per year. However, when the details of this labour process were questioned, child labour, underpayment, heavy work, and undeclared work emerged as the defining characteristics of this “lucrative” sector. Small hands of children were said to be employed in separation of onions in different sizes and placement in the sacks.

Although sugar beet production was not at the centre of the inquiry, wheat farmers did not end their assessments without touching upon privatization of sugar factories in the country in the last years. These privatization series were subject to fierce public criticism and the privatisation of 13 state sugar factories were completed in 2018 despite political opposition and workers’ protests. Currently Turkish Sugar Factories operate 15 factories while private companies operate another 15 factories privatized in the last years. Majority of companies lacked experience in the sector, and this caused significant inefficiencies. Farmers complained about delays in price declarations both in private and public factories after this latest privatization phase. This uncertainty affects the livelihoods of farmers in Polatlı. Not knowing the price, farmers get in a difficult position to plan their production. One of the young respondents mentioned that even the supply of sugar beet seeds was gradually transferred from Sugar Beet Producer Cooperatives Union to private companies. Sugar beet production was said to have got so costly that there were respondents who stopped producing sugar beets as the income generated after high input costs turned to be too low to sustain production. Prices offered by the state were said to discourage farmers continue producing. Starch based sugar production in Turkey is dominated by TNCs like Cargill and Archers Daniels Midland Company, and impact of global corporate capital on agricultural development policies of Turkey has long been a matter of public debate. Witnessing the individual withdrawal stories of farmers from sugar beet production made it clear how livelihoods of sugar beet producers and as well as right to access to health food for consumers in Turkey are being threatened by neo-liberal restructuring of the state and economy in the country.

Apart from these threats to livelihoods of farmers, current agricultural insurance system in the country was also pointed as a threat to farmers' revenues. Agricultural credits are conditioned to a valid insurance policy paid by the farmer. However, in line with the complaints of farmers in Ayaş, wheat producers were also remonstrant about difficulty of getting paid for their losses mainly caused by environmental disasters and diseases since the insurance contracts are very well designed to protect insurance company. Farmers are obliged to get insurance, undertake extra financial costs for these insurances, and they receive nothing in most of the cases. Damage reports of the insurance companies were claimed to be biased to protect insurance company's profits. This insurance issue is just another dimension of financialization of agriculture and farmers' debts.

In addition to all these items, respondents were also asked about the historical milestones that disrupted and changed their local food system. The following is an illustration of milestones that were identified by farmers.

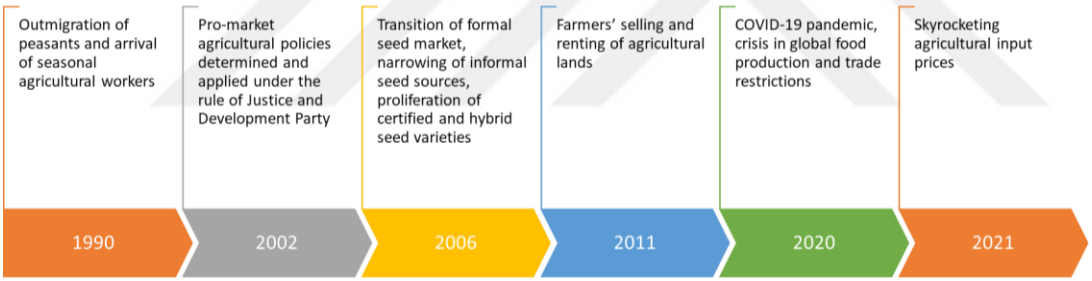

***Figure 10**: Historical Milestones Disturbing Local Food System, Identified by Farmers in Polatlı*

Outmigration of peasants to cities and arrival of seasonal agricultural workers in 1990s; pro-market agricultural policies determined and applied by the rule of Justice and Development Party in the last 20 years; transition from standard seeds to hybrid seeds following enactment of Seed Law; farmers' selling and renting of their lands in the last ten years; COVID-19 pandemic, crisis in global food production and trade restrictions since 2020; and finally skyrocketing input prices in 2020-2021 period were listed by respondents as the historical milestones that disrupt farming and push farmers out of agriculture. Each milestone brought another challenge to farmers' livelihoods and was combined with new ones in the last thirty years. Climate change and drought was said to accompany all these historical milestones with an increasing impact. On the other hand,

it was interesting to hear from the young agricultural engineer and farmer among respondents that it will be only the input prices and cost of production for farmers that determine continuity of production. Even if other factors turn towards a positive direction, this young farmer bitterly stated that young generation would not continue farming knowing that they will earn very little at the end of great efforts. This respondent was differentiating young entrepreneurial farmers from old peasant farmers in terms of their psycho-social attachment to soil. Young generation of farmers act on the basis of economic rationality rather than emotional attachments in their decisions to continue farming.

After all, farmers in Polatlı presented a more industrial and entrepreneurial profile who practice intensive agriculture with rich external inputs and who have good engagement with high technology and more complex relations with national and international markets. They were all selling their wheats through the District Commodity Exchange Market. *"A good farmer ought to be a good economist and a good marketer*", said the respondent with the biggest holding size, illustrating an entrepreneurial farmer profile.

6.2.2.4. Localising Food Systems, Reducing Food Miles

Localisation of food system and reduction of food miles were observed to be a far less possible ideal for the wheat producers of Polatlı compared to the tomato producers of Ayaş. Products of the respondents in Polatlı are sold more in international markets than tomatoes of Ayaş, via longer supply chains that include marketing operations of commodity exchange markets and the Grain Board as well as food processing and trade companies. Wheat farmers, most of whom also produce barley, onions and sugar beets, have to get involved in longer food supply chains because of the position of their crops in international trade market.

When the farmers were asked if they knew the longest destination their wheat arrives at, Russia, Ukraine, Bulgaria, Romania and Hungary were mentioned as the main international trade destinations for the respondents' wheat. The youngest respondent shared his confusion and questioned the logic behind bilateral trade of the same crop between Turkey and these countries, not knowing the comparative advantages trade brokers get during these bilateral trade relations. He was having difficulty in

understanding why two wheat producer countries trade wheat when they can easily choose to consume their own farmers' products.

As part of the interviews, farmers were positioned also as consumers of food and were asked about their awareness on their food sources. While farmers operating bigger holding sizes brought forward the deceptive use of "good agricultural practices" (GAP) kind of traceability and certification systems by supermarket chains, smaller farmers with lower income levels stated that they would not check any other information than the brand and the expiry date in the products they buy from stores. Bigger farmers were critical about fallacious information presented to the consumer about the production place and producer, and claiming that those information are mostly wrong, consumers were deceived by retailers, their consciousness were manipulated by supermarket chains as a marketing strategy. An illusion of connecting the consumer and the producer was claimed to be created by such traceability and certification systems. Those respondents argued that real producers earn nothing after such deceptive practices, but their names are used for more profit for the supermarket chains.

One of the young respondents summarized the long food miles by stating that there is too much logistics and half of the product's life cycle passes on the road, and storehouses undertake an essential role in this journey. This statement summarizes the strange logic of food trade today. While I was conducting preparatory field visits in June 2021, I personally faced the absurd reality of international food trade on my way back to home. While price of cherry which is a native crop of Turkey was 49 TRY/kg in its regular harvest season, June, pineapple which was imported from Costa Rica, a poor country in Central America, 7279 miles away from Turkish consumers was sold only for 9,9 TRY/kg. If this case was presented to someone from a precapitalist society, s/he would definitely find it ridiculous to transfer a not-so-fundamental food product from thousands of miles away and sell it far cheaper than similar food products produced by the locals. Parties who demand, supply, and regulate in this system must have some stake in this ridiculous story. It was also interesting to hear from respondents that the best of their products was allocated for quality and safety tests and exported while domestic consumers can reach the second quality products at best. This reminds us of a moral problem in international agricultural trade. Neither the Costa Rican farmers and

consumers nor Turkish farmers and consumers benefit from international agricultural trade as much as they deserve. Instead, traders reap the fruits of this unfair exchange.

In terms of the source of food, one of the old and well-educated respondents explained the current state in his village with the following statements:

> Production in the village is broken down. There is livestock in few peasants, milk is provided by them. Eggs are from the supermarket chain downtown, even bread is from the market. Peasants have legitimate reasons for this. Feeding animals is difficult and costly, it is cheaper to buy. (Wheat farmer, 62 years old, Müslümköy village, 800 decares)

Chain markets were observed to compete with local bazaars and came first or second in farmers' shopping destination list in Polatlı. Considering these findings, we again face a disrupted peasantry in Polatlı, like we did in Ayaş. In terms of presence of any local market that brings local supply and demand together, onions procured by Ankara Metropolitan Municipality for convenience stores operated by the Municipality to provide affordable food for city residents was the sole example shared by wheat producers.

6.2.2.5. Putting Control Locally, Bringing Food Democracy into Action

In order to see the extent and quality of participation and food democracy in daily experiences and perceptions of wheat farmers in Polatlı, certain questions raised to respondents in Ayaş were used with some revisions to improve the depth of answers. Respondents who complained about a long list of problems were invited to think about the role of their political agency in emergence and persistence of those problems.

Majority of respondents portrayed a very similar profile in terms of their perceptions on the relation between their political agency and the problems they face. Rather than attributing political power to their individual and collective movement, farmers were complaining about the lack of local leadership to represent farmers' interests and occupation of leadership positions by corrupt political figures who do not have organic relations with farming. Chamber of Agriculture was on the firing line as farmers were frustrated for not seeing a representative and accountable Chamber that leads the advocacy of farmers' rights and expectations against government and other social actors.

Corruption, lack of merit, accountability and representation were frequently used by respondents in their references to the Chamber, cooperative managers, and District Directorate of Agriculture in charge of representing and/or working for farmers. The oldest of respondents was wrathfully telling that the chamber only collects membership fees and speaks for the government:

> Managers and officers make personal visits only in election periods, we see them only in this period, and they do not say any single word but just show their faces in dark and go away. Where can we find those advisory people?! When you ask then, Turkey is a transparent country…They just know how to collect money. (Wheat farmer, 62 years old, Müslümköy village, 500 decares)

This same old farmer identified farmers as a pessimist and confused community that follows others. He pointed out indebted and dependent position of farmers as the main reason behind their political inactivity. Sharing the common distrust among all respondents against any political organization, he mentioned that none of the political figures approach farmers for farmers' interest, they seek their personal interest instead. When he was asked if he had to wait for some external leadership to activate his rights claims or was it not really possible to rely on farmers' internal political agency, he regretfully mentioned the poverty and declined incomes of farmers as the reason behind farmers' distance to solidarity and collaboration. A behavioural transformation in farmer and peasant identity from acts of solidarity to individual survival in response to market pressure was underlined in this respect.

There was a clear feeling of fear, isolation, and political abstention in farmers' responses. Young or old, high or low educated, farming small or bigger sizes, all farmers expressed their fear to be economically and forensically punished in response to their involvement in any individual or collective rights claims. An anecdote by the 42-year-old farmer tells a lot about the level and source of this fear. As per his words, the Minister of Agriculture and Forestry rebuked a farmer who asked a critical question in public in a recent visit to the district. However, the event did not end up at this point. Bodyguard of the minister created a fictive turmoil and slapped the farmer out of the sight of cameras. This example was given just as one of the cases where farmers and political authority meet, and farmers get no chance to voice up their demands. This same farmer complained about suppression and antidemocratic approach of the central and local government representatives. He pointed his individual questions to political figures

as his sole political activity. However, his discouraging experiences were never-ending. He was also telling how municipal police manager warns the farmers before any visit of the District Mayor saying "*Never talk offensive to the major. Never ask irrelevant questions, whatever the mayor asks, say OK Mr Mayor."* This same municipal officer should also be in charge of publishing mayor's visit to farmers in multiple media and showing how accountable and representative the municipality works for farmers.

The youngest respondent pointed out organized movement of farmers were proven to be dysfunctional in other regions and this becomes discouraging for farmers in Polatlı. He was telling that he saw on TV news bulletins how farmers in Konya (neighbouring province with the highest wheat production in the country) blocked highways with their tracks and nothing changed after this organized action. This same young farmer reflected a high distrust against benefits of cooperative organizations for farmers saying that nothing changes in lives of cooperative members including his father.

Another young respondent, aged 26 was also giving highway blockage as a protest idea that they discussed with fellow farmers, approached district administrators including the governor and mayor, got an intimidating warning, and gave up organizing. He was so sure about the repressive law enforcement power of state that he stated that *"They would take all 1000 farmers into custody even if we blocked roads with 1000 tracks."*

Farmers expect some external leadership to organize them around common interests. Establishment of cooperative organizations were also expected from the state. One of the respondents had a belief in capacity of cooperative organizations but he did not find himself and fellow farmers as the eligible actors to initiate cooperation. He pointed out Chamber of Agriculture and District Directorate of Agriculture and Forestry as the potential leaders of such movements. Ironically, he mentioned that "*If the State wants, it may give directives and get anything it wants done, but unfortunately"* giving away his subconscious filled with Presidential directives ruling the state without any legal limitations and merging of the state in the personal identity of the President after the country moved into "Presidential Government System" in 2018. This same respondent was also complaining how farmers' complaints and demands put into request boxes in the Governorate and other relevant local institutions are being ignored.

Another young respondent was complaining about bad management and business models dominating cooperatives. Despite potential advantages of cooperative organizations for farmers to get access to finance and market via legal identity of the cooperatives, he tagged current cooperatives as corrupt and badly managed organizations and noted that farmers keep their encounters with cooperatives at a minimum level to do their business. This young respondent claimed that Agriculture and Credit Cooperatives were not actually cooperative organizations but business organizations targeting to increase their assets. Those cooperatives were claimed to be more costly than private sector suppliers for the farmers, and to have a serious responsibility in increasing farmers' debts. Nation-wide march of farmers, whose productive assets including tracks were confiscated by Agriculture and Credit Cooperatives, to Turkish Grand National Assembly and police blockage before their movement stayed in national news bulletins for long days in the late 2020 presenting how common this young farmer's complaint among the farmers in Turkey.

This young farmer was producing the largest amount of wheat among other respondents with the most intensive agricultural technologies and had deeper engagement with agricultural policies and international trade processes. He was critical about the way agricultural strategies and policies are determined. He was annoyed with exclusion of farmers and peasants from policy networks saying that he does not know what state officials and political power discuss behind the doors without farmers. He had an extraordinary personality in terms of his pro-active approach to get access to latest techniques and knowledge as well as represent farmers in respective strategic platforms. Complaining about difficulty of finding suitable local platforms to discuss with fellow farmers except the commercial briefings of agri-food companies to big farmers, he mentioned how difficult it was for him to participate in Plant Protection Congress organized by Konya Selçuk University Faculty of Agriculture. Farmers were purposefully excluded from eligible participant categories in the application page to the Congress and he pushed a lot to participate, having several telephone calls and paying expensive participation fees. He was the sole actual farmer attending this congress and he found the event useless in the absence of real farmers. What he observed was more like an academic tourism activity, far from declared objectives of the event. This is just one of the cases showing the loneliness and exclusion of farmers from local and national

policy networks. He was regretful for smaller farmers for they experience a bigger exclusion as they are ignored by agri-food companies as well.

Apart from the common experiences of these male respondents, gender dimension voiced by the single female farmer in the sample carries importance. The young woman had a very sharp position against the government which she had supported in previous elections. She was planning to be an abstentionist in the next elections remonstrating about ignorance of small farmers by the state and worsening of this ignorance gradually against women and women with headscarves in farming. She was annoyed with gender-based discrimination in public offices as well as profiling based on her appearance in a way to degrade her outfit as symbols of illiteracy and insufficiency. She had a university degree on business administration, chose to use headscarf after graduation and returned to her village due to family issues after ten years of professional experience as an accountant. However, she said she felt a very discriminatory profiling in public offices and even in her village as if she was not qualified to find a better job in urban centres and so turned back to village, and she was not eligible to speak for her demands as a farmer. All these systematic and community-based pressures were observed to make farmer women less empowered and excluded from democratic channels to participate in local food control.

Among all the distrust against political agency of farmers, there was an old farmer who was also a retired teacher as the single example of politically active farmer among the respondents. He was one of the founders of the Syndicate All Producer Peasants (TÜMKÖYSEN) which was established as the first syndicate of farmers in Turkey in 2004-2005 despite all the legal barriers they encountered. He had belief in organized political agency of peasants and farmers, but he was also aware of the stringent conditions that discourage farmers from getting together. He had a comparative approach to agricultural policies, frequently giving examples from other countries. He was giving farmers of Greece as a role model for Turkish farmers as they have a very high political organization capability, collectively gathering in the streets and resisting against international trade decisions against the interest of farmers. Upon his recommendation, a separate interview was conducted with the Head of TÜMKÖYSEN to get a broader idea about civil organization of farmers nationwide.

The head of TÜMKÖYSEN was met in Ankara after his travel to the capital for commemoration of the 10th of October events when 103 people gathered to protest involvement of Turkish state in war in Syria died of a suicide attack in 2015. The head was one of the survivors and he was perceiving building of a holistic oppositional front against "*the capitalists*" ,in his words, important, and so he was considering farmers and peasants as parts of a broad opposition bloc composed of workers, farmers, peasants and public officers. However, he was also dissociating peasant farmers from other components of anti-capitalist front with the following words:

> Peasants work on their own behalf, that is to say, they do not have a boss, a manager or anyone that they should account for. They are in a position to start and stop working whenever they want. They have such an advantage. However, if we consider peasants in our country, they have been living under fear of gendarmerie butt, they are left out of consciousness for organizing, they are afraid of getting organized. (Wheat Farmer and the Head of TÜMKÖYSEN, 58 years old, 500 decares)

He underlined cases of peasants' opposition to extractive capitalism in villages of Turkey such as the ones against gold mining, hydroelectric power plants, and massive deforestation and mentioned law-enforcement and juridical powers of state have been systematically and fiercely used against the will and interest of peasants and natural environment in these cases.

This 58-year-old peasant farmer had a strong belief in organization of peasant farmers around common interests, but he was also aware of the difficulties of organizing peasants in Turkey. It is difficult to get an aging and declining population of peasants living on the legacy of military coups organized. While there is a fear and reluctancy among peasant farmers against organized movements, there are also limitations of demographic and economic transformation that there are far less young peasant farmers than ever in Turkey due to youth leaving villages for wage employment in urban centres and landless seasonal agricultural workers replacing peasant population in agricultural production. He was pointing negative legacy of military coups in near history of the country as a discouraging and de-politicizing factor on political organization of peasants, and systematic use of religion as a pacifying force on rural population. Despite all these impediments, he was proudly explaining how a group of conscious peasant farmers managed to get organized around a syndicate since early 2000s against neoliberal restructuring of agriculture in Turkey right before and after 2001 economic

crisis. Initially organized under a different name (TÜRKÖYSEN) and closed by a court decision that claimed peasants were not entitled to organize like workers, the Syndicate was re-established under its current name in 2004 and faced another closure case, finally won this long-lasting case by carrying it to Constitutional Court by reference to international labour standards of the ILO and managed to sustain this organization since then. The head was not rejecting in principle the possibility of unification with Çiftçi-Sen, the representative organization of Turkish farmers in LVC, for a stronger organization as a response to my question on drawbacks of a fragmented peasant organization.

He was also criticizing negative impacts of the presidential governmental system on farmers in terms of consolidation of an overcentralized, arbitrary, one-person rule of the President; non-compliance of the President to international and national law; incompatibility between political commitments of the President to farmers in public and actual transfers made to farmers; delays in declaration of agricultural supports every year putting farmers in a state of uncertainty; unlawful transfer of valuable agricultural and forest resources to big contractors in close relation with the President; and elimination of democratic accountability of parliamentarians and ministers towards farmers.

After this final interview with the head of TÜMKÖYSEN, reasons behind individual statements of respondent farmers on their political agency both in Ayaş and Polatlı were better positioned within history and current state of nationwide political agency of peasants and farmers in Turkey. State-citizen relations have historically been built on sense of fear and being punished for peasants and small farmers in Turkey. Peasants and small farmers have historically positioned themselves as politically loyal subjects of governments regardless of the political party in rule. This historical legacy poses a serious barrier before organized movement of farmers at local and national level, and this is observed to be the major weakness before bringing food democracy into action in the country.

6.2.2.6. Building on Local Knowledge and Skills

Wheat farmers interviewed in Polatlı practiced intensive agriculture without support of any systematic public agricultural extension services. Full or semi-autonomous machines, GPS systems, supportive technologies and the like enable these farmers to cultivate large sizes of land without need for human labour and bring about dramatic increases in productivity. One of the biggest farmers in the sample pointed out that his father used to get 300 kg of wheats per decare whereas he now receives 900-1000 kg per decare from the same land. This definitely has an impact on position of local and authentic farming knowledge.

While the two respondents who cultivate more than 1000 decares stated that they almost abandoned traditional farming methods, they receive private consultancy services and extension officers of agricultural input supplier companies have a special interest in big farmers for marketing purposes, the rest of the respondents with smaller holding sizes stated that they still use a certain amount of traditional farming knowledge that they learned from their elders and they do not receive any public or private extension services. Introduction of new machines, new and diverse seed varieties developed mainly by private R&D processes, increase of productivity, and changes in climate were mentioned by respondents as factors behind dissolution of traditional farming knowledge.

There was an interesting point raised by the single respondent with an agricultural engineering diploma. He made a distinction between the companies focused on pesticides and companies focused on seeds. While the private extension officers who approach to farmers for pesticide promotion were said to follow a one-sided communication with the farmers, aiming to sell the company product, extension officers who visit farmers for promotion of company seeds follow a bilateral communication and listen the observations and experiences of farmers. This reminds us of the Marxist argument that capitalism needs non-capitalist societies and modes of production for its continuation. (Luxemburg 1913). While farmers community is treated as only a market for pesticide companies, they are treated as a source of knowledge supply for seed development companies. This is one of the typical commodification processes experienced in agriculture. Farmers' authentic knowledge distilled out of intergenerational and practical experiences are used to develop private R&D processes.

Common knowledge of farmers is appropriated as products of companies and sold back to farmers as “productive” inputs.

Despite differences of communication between bigger and small farmers among respondents and the private extension services, there was again a common distrust against private company engineers. One of the small farmers cultivating 150 decares of land criticized small farmers for getting easily manipulated by input dealers and use excessive fertilizers without reading the prescriptions on packages. He was also sceptical to private extension services as they only provide this service for a certain fee and their service does not bring any use as they do not know the soil structure in the region. This calls us to think about the value of free public extension services for aggregation of farmers’ authentic knowledge and experience with latest scientific knowledge for food sovereignty results.

6.2.2.7. Working with Nature, Preserving Natural Resources

Farmers in Polatlı exhibited high awareness about the impact of climate change and environmental degradation to their farming and impact of their farming practices to environment in return. Interviews were conducted in summer-autumn 2021 when Turkey experienced the most arid months in the last 50 years. Drought was affecting farmers’ lives so drastically that mains water and stream water supplies in Müslüm village were totally cut and the peasants were bringing well water from their neighbours with available water extraction technology. Amount of easily accessible ground waters were said to decline so much that there was need for extracting water from 200 meters and more from the ground. This increases the risk of contamination of water with heavy metals as well as total dry out of groundwaters. One of the old respondents mentioned that they approached the state for purification of well water that they frequently have to use but they were rejected for reasons of scale. Bringing healthy water to few peasants was considered economically irrational by the state.

Lack of sufficient water resources, fading fountains and rivers, rapid temperature changes and rainfalls, extreme weather events and average temperature changes were all listed as aspects of climate change in farmers’ lives. These changes increase uncertainty

and decrease predictability for the farmers. Significant productivity losses as a result of these environmental changes were noted by the respondents.

As wheat farmers were practicing a more intensive farming compared to small tomato farmers in Ayaş, they were observed to use pesticides, herbicides and fertilizers in larger scales and frequencies. Almost all the respondents reflected a sense of guilt in their explanations over their pesticide and fertilizer use. One of the young respondents compared farmers to murderers. Desertification of arable lands, depletion of fertile grasslands, and extinction of certain animal and plant varieties, ladybird being at the top, were mentioned as direct results of extreme use of pesticides and fertilizers. While respondents mentioned irresponsible and unconscious use of pesticides by fellow farmers, they also pointed out state and input dealers as responsible parties in this contamination process. Pesticides and herbicides prohibited in Europe and the USA were said to be still allowed by the state and sold by input dealers. There were references to some exact products which are either legally allowed or still available in black market and preferred by farmers for short-cut solutions. While 35FVP as a terminator pesticide that kills all live environment that it reaches was reported to be available in black market until the last three years, Bayer's infamous and cancerogenic herbicide Round up which was subject to big lawsuits and public discussion in the USA and caused Bayer to pay billions of compensations to farmers in USA was reported to be still allowed and available in input dealers in Polatlı. This shows the relative sovereignty of two different juridico-political structures visa vis corporate capital and proves how effective the state restructuring processes of new constitutionalism are in Turkey.

Small farmers can neither stick with their traditional low-polluting techniques nor can use the current green technologies. The young respondent with the biggest holding size explained worryingly how smaller farmers with low education and financial capital miss green technologies. He told he uses AdBlue technology to keep his farm's carbon emission levels low and refrain from using excess chemicals. However smaller farmers were claimed to lack necessary knowledge and financial resources to follow these environmentally friendly practices. Neither following their traditional, lower-input farming practices nor the latest green technologies, small farmers were observed to act with a motivation to survive in a global market.

The single respondent with an agricultural engineering diploma underlined the relation between the type of seed used and the fertilizer, pesticides and herbicides amount needed. While wheat seeds were said to demand less of agricultural chemicals, onion, the second crop of all respondents required use of these chemicals much. On the other hand, among the older farmers, there was a common perception on desertification in soil due to change of seeds they used. All the imported wheat seeds which are preferred by farmers as a stimulating agent to increase productivity in their wheat fields by mixing with standard seeds were reported to come with certain fungicides for preservation on the trade roads. This starts the chemical contamination from the very beginning of agricultural process and reminds us once again of the damage of long food miles on environment. Seeds supplied through long global supply chains come with environmental costs.

As a final remark, there happened an interesting dialogue with the youngest respondent on the relation between labour processes and use of excess chemicals in agriculture. This 18-year-old farmer was aware of the harm that pesticides and herbicides give to nature and telling how long it would take in his grandfather's youth to weed the fields by hand. Now that there are strong herbicides, there is no need for such burdensome labouring by many people. When I asked him if it is because there are not so many hands left in the village to collect weeds, farmers use herbicides, he said there were people to labour but using herbicides was cheaper and easier. Agricultural labour costs were identified to push farmers to choose environmentally detrimental practices.

6.3. Linking Food Sovereignty Theory with the Field Findings from Turkey

This Farmer Survey aimed to lay out manifestations of food sovereignty in daily experiences and perceptions of tomato and wheat farmers in selected geographies of Turkey. This chapter presented evidence from lives of farmers with several on-the-spot references to food sovereignty theory. However, now it is the right time to present an overall elaboration on relevance of these real-life evidence with the theoretical propositions mainly of Sen (1990), Benhabib (2004), Balibar (2014), Kiopkiolis (2017), McMichael (2009, 2013), Van der Ploeg (2014), Jansen (2014) and Bernstein (2014) that were called upon in the second chapter to contribute to filling the gaps in food sovereignty theory. In this respect, we have now sufficient field input to answer the

questions of whether Turkish small farmers qualify anything like a “demos of farmers”, “diasporic citizens”, or “agrarian citizens” demonstrating attachments beyond their citizenship relation with Turkish state, ready to be part of the global food sovereignty movement on the basis of moral universalism; whether these farmers enjoy effective political participation methods and channels that make them active agents in the common democracy of food, whether they perceive the concept of food sovereignty as something to do with freedom and capabilities and how they position state within this imported concept of food sovereignty, and finally whether we encounter peasants who are detached from capitalist relations of production and awaiting to defeat corporate food regime.

First of all, it is not plausible to talk about a “demos of farmers” at local level with potentials of solidarity and collective political subjectivity for food democracy at national and/or global levels. The respondent farmers were found to be occupied by individual survival efforts in a global market with very weak features of personal or collective political agency. Attachments to the nation and the nation state were far stronger than any universal, cosmopolitan moral attachment for the sake of food sovereignty beyond borders. Unorganized mass of peasants and small farmers identified by political behaviours of fear, isolation and abstention are far from meeting the features of diasporic citizenship in Balibar’s (2014) conception or agrarian citizenship as promoted by McMichael (2013). Historical development of state-citizen relations in Turkey positioned farmers as loyal subjects of the state in fear of punishment for any political act. This legacy poses a serious barrier before organized movement of farmers at local and national level, and this is observed to be the major weakness before integration of Turkish farmers into the global opposition front of farmers under the umbrella of food sovereignty movement, and realization of food democracy in the country. Despite the cosmopolitan claims of the global food sovereignty movement and the theoretical efforts in this dissertation to push the boundaries of sovereignty beyond state sovereignty to open more political space for food democracy within the food sovereignty theory, farmers in the field perceived food sovereignty synonymously with state sovereignty.

Secondly, farmers reflect a significant lack of freedom in terms of Sen’s (1990) capabilities framework and request granting of their freedom to enjoy a fair food system

mainly from the state. As per the findings from the field, sovereign is the state; sovereignty is claimed against the traders, middlemen, global corporations, and the other states; sovereignty over means of production mainly including land, seed, labour, water and access to market is claimed; food sovereignty is perceived to exist under conditions of a sovereign state that has strong functions of regulation and redistribution.

Thirdly, findings from the field prove Bernstein (2014) and Jansen (2015) right in their proposition that there is no such a peasantry that is detached from capitalist relations of production, as romanticised by McMichael (2013) and Van der Ploeg (2014). In Turkey, there is instead a disrupted peasantry in Jansen's conceptualisation. Anti-capitalist stance of the global food sovereignty movement as well as the proponents of peasant farming within the movement weakly resonates in the experiences and perceptions of farmers in Turkey.

Finally, three processes of new constitutionalism that were identified to operate in Turkey in the last twenty years correspond with the experiences and perceptions of respondents. Small farmers correlate milestones of commodification and dispossession in the food system with the increasing power of the executive and narrowed down democratic participation channels as well as neoliberal reforms in agricultural law and policies. Bypassing of political accountability and legitimacy elements in agricultural policies as part of the total restructuring of the state towards a super powerful executive under the Presidential Government System generated repercussions in the lives of farmers. Small farmers complain about their interests not being represented in the state and blame state for acting in conformity with interests of global corporate capital. On the other hand, small farmers perceive remedy in the state, as well. They call the state for duty for realization of food sovereignty and autonomous farming. Among the three processes of new constitutionalism, the legitimation processes on the basis of use of a "domestic and national" policy discourse seems to face a backlash by farmers as they were frequent expressing their anger and suspicion against liberalisation policies of the government under the name of being national and domestic.

CHAPTER 7

CONCLUSION

Acknowledging that the state can never be totally excluded from relations of capital accumulation and absolute state sovereignty from the capital is beyond the realm of possibility, this dissertation considers sovereignty as something shared by states and other agents at various scales in the context of an interdependent and complex global agri-food system, and argues that Turkish state and farmers have been losing sovereignty against global agri-food capital by the help of legal-institutional reform processes introduced upon the country's neo-liberal integration to global market and respective governance mechanisms in the last twenty years, and this resulted in a deepened loss of food sovereignty for both the state and the farmers.

This dissertation aimed to lay out disciplinary processes of neoliberal rule of law on state restructuring as well as the consequent disruptions in food sovereignty in Turkey at state and farmer levels. Two key concepts were operationalized in this study to analyse neoliberal transformation of agriculture and its impact on state and farmers: "new constitutionalism" coined by Gill (1998) and "food sovereignty" declared and advocated by global food sovereignty movement under the roof of *La Via Campesina*. While macro level and micro level transformations are presented in separate chapters, interlinking legal-institutional transformations of state and changes in daily lives of farmers, and identifying knots between transformations at different levels are left to this concluding chapter.

Transfer of sovereignty from state and citizen-farmers to capital in the corporate food regime as referred by McMichael (2009) is traced in legal-institutional body of state and daily farming practices and perceptions of farmers. Food sovereignty, the alternative universe of a theory and practice against the mainstream food security paradigm dominating global food policy network is analysed in the context of Turkey.

Food sovereignty concept has a political charge against food security paradigm owned mainly by the FAO. Food sovereignty problematizes power relations and democracy in food systems. Food sovereignty envisages peasants and small agricultural producers as free and autonomous food producers and struggles against dispossession and proletarianization caused by corporate food regime. In this respect, this study analysed state of food sovereignty in Turkey through two separate assessments: one on legal-institutional transformation of state, and the other one on individual transformation of farmers.

Food sovereignty movement need an extended interpretation of sovereignty. This dissertation purposefully carried sovereignty concept beyond its Westphalian territorial and juridical origin. State-centric meaning of the concept is found to be insufficient in explaining the cosmopolitan contention of the global food sovereignty movement. Positioning of conflicting parties involved in the global food sovereignty movement and identification of locus of the political struggle in question have constituted a significant portion of theoretical propositions developed in this work. Food sovereignty concept is being used to define several confrontations that happen to take place on various grounds such as state versus other states, state versus certain international organizations, state versus TNCs, local farmers versus state, local farmers versus TNCs, local farmers versus certain international organisations, national, regional or global networks of farmers and agro-ecologists versus TNCs and certain international organizations, and farmers and agro-ecologists versus various combinations of state, TNCs, and certain international organizations. Mobile position of state among these combinations of confrontations is found to be the predicament of food sovereignty theory. Although farmers and TNCs constantly appear at opposite poles of the confrontation despite changing parties clustered in each pole, state is positioned on both sides in different times and spaces, Ecuadorian state under the rule of Rafael Carreo and Indian state under the rule of Narendra Modi demonstrate two different poles that state recently took position in food sovereignty confrontations. This calls for indispensable involvement of state and state sovereignty alongside other agents including farmers and farming communities in the formulae of a profound food sovereignty theory and practice.

Addressing both individual farmers and state as holders of sovereignty, capital is positioned as the contestant sovereignty claimer from both individual farmers and the

state, in this dissertation. Three processes of new constitutionalism that brought about loss of food sovereignty for Turkish state and farmers are identified as follows:

1. Power of executive is increased throughout transition to the Presidential Government System and this new system has opened up the era of augmented ne-liberalism for agriculture in Turkey.
2. Rights of global investors have been systematically instilled into the national law since 2002.
3. Consent and Legitimation for neoliberal agri-food policies are ensured by adoption of "domestic and national" policy discourse and invited policy spaces defined and controlled by the executive.

On the other hand, sovereignty as an individual condition of control and independence over food is rather defined on the bases of capabilities and rights. Building on the criticism concerning the incapacity of sovereignty concept to explain relations of individual farmers with their social and natural environment beyond state boundaries, theoretical and conceptual synergies between food sovereignty and Benhabib's (2004) "democratic sovereignty and demos", Balibar's (2014, 2015) "relative de-territorialization of citizenship and diasporic citizenship", and Kiopkiolis's (2017) "commoning political representation" are suggested in this study to expand the struggle for sovereignty beyond state boundaries and current institutional channels of representation. Such an interpretation of sovereignty would have more leverage for the global solidarity of peasants and small farmers that is advocated by the LVC. Throughout these synergies, theoretical contribution is provided for consolidation of an extended sovereignty concept within existing food sovereignty literature, despite weak resonation in the experiences and perceptions of Turkish farmers.

Alongside all these efforts to develop a multi-scalar and relational conception of sovereignty and define the scope of the individual farmer's food sovereignty, role of state and relative sovereignty that state holds are not excluded from the formulae of food sovereignty in this study. Farmers need a sovereign state to enjoy autonomous farming. State is found out to be a still relevant and inevitable actor that farmers and citizens expect certain redistributive and protective roles for further individual and social control over food. When we zoom into the Turkish experience, both the findings from legal-

institutional analysis and the farmer survey exhibit that state is transformed into an authoritarian neoliberal developmental state that privileges capital accumulation before rights of the citizens. In the course of this transformation, small agricultural producers and peasants were dispossessed from their means of production, mainly the land, labour and seeds. Marx's conception of overaccumulation has a strong explanatory power to interpret the interest of global capital on agriculture and seeds in the last decades. Commodification of seeds is offering new outlets to global capital for investment and serving to relieve accumulation crisis of capital. This commodification process goes hand in hand with dispossession of farmers from their means of production, including seeds, in addition to land and productive labour.

Turkish agricultural legislation has passed through a neoliberal reform assault right after 2001 economic crisis which transferred the rights of producer-citizens to global investors. Retreat of the state and rise of global agri-food capital as the prime suppliers of seeds in formal seed market have been consolidated through international agreements mainly under the roof of the WTO and UPOV, and market-oriented regulations in these international agreements are transferred into national law though significant legitimacy and accountability deficits. State as an institution acts with greater accountability to these international institutions than it does to the citizens. Liberalisation of seed market is accompanied by a broader liberalisation of agriculture pushed by the EU accession and Customs Union processes, and WB and IMF programmes applied right after 2001 economic crisis in Turkey. Neoliberal reform storm restructuring agriculture in Turkey coincides with the years that Turkey was subjected to close monitoring by WB and IMF due to loans used to recover from 2001 crisis, Turkey's acceptance to official candidature for full membership to the EU in 2005, and Turkey's approval of the UPOV Convention in 2007. Twelve major laws regulating agriculture that include the Agriculture Law No. 5488, Seed Law No.5553, Law No.5042 on Protection of Rights of Breeders of New Plant Varieties, and Biosecurity Law No. 5977 were enacted in 2004-2007 period. These laws were not liberalizing agriculture from the scratch, but were based on an ongoing process since early 1980s. Massive privatization of state agricultural enterprises, opening of seed market for private sector, curbing of traditional agricultural support schemes, introduction of legal guarantees for intellectual property rights of breeders and criminalization of informal seed market among farmers, declaration of principles of compliance with international commitments along the lines

of not disturbing the market through agricultural supports and increasing the role of private sector in agriculture within primary national legislation are some of the major liberalisation processes that have instilled the rights of global investors into national law in Turkey, in the last twenty years.

Apart from these legal reforms, power of executive is gradually increased in the country reaching up to a radical restructuring of state by transition to Presidential Government System in 2018, which is an idiosyncratic authoritarian government system. Gradual increase of the power of executive visa vis other social forces reached its zenith by this system and the national agriculture is opened for augmented liberalization and investor-friendliness in this new era. The President who also is the head of the ruling party is ascribed exclusive legal, judicial, and executive powers in this new system. Such a concentration of power in the hands of the President was promoted during public campaigns before the national referendum for system change as the short cut to rapid national development through an investor friendly and market-enabling state. In the last three years, presidential government system brought about augmented liberalization in agricultural policies of the country. Legislative and supervisory powers of the TGNA are dramatically weakened, power of purse is transferred to the President, and policy making processes are highly centralized in the personality of the President in this new system. Ministers are assigned by the President outside the TGNA and positioned functionally as CEOs of ministries restructured with public managerialism principles. Efficiency of ministerial bureaucracy with regard to political performance of the President has turned to be the single performance criteria for the ministries. Strategic policy decisions are taken by the President and the newly established Policy Councils, members of which are also assigned by the President. In the absence of relative bureaucratic autonomy, agricultural policies have turned to be strictly dependent to personality and momentary political decisions of the President in this new system. Agricultural policies are determined by closed, highly centralized political cadres, and limited political deliberation and consultation takes place within the TGNA. Chains of democratic accountability between farmers and the government is seriously damaged. Agricultural budget is determined outside parliamentary legislation. Agricultural supports are declared on irregular basis after a very centralized policymaking process that is dependent to the President, and this results in low responsiveness to farmers' needs. Agricultural resources of the country including genetic assets and labour power

are marketed to global investors by the Investment Office of the Presidency promising lucrative returns to low-cost investment in the country. In addition, commercial interests are prioritized over food sovereignty concerns of producers in existing presidential powers used for administration of international agricultural trade.

Following up Gill's three main processes of new constitutionalism, legitimation, and extension of consent for neo-liberal food and agricultural policies constitute the third main disciplinary process of neoliberalism over agriculture in Turkey. In this respect, adoption of "domestic and national" policy discourse in a way to shadow deep rooted liberalization schemes for agriculture is one of the main legitimation and consent-building mechanisms used by the government. The National Agriculture Project cutting state support for farmers not using certified seeds purchased from formal seed market and the controversial National Solidarity in Agriculture Project, that intended to consolidate all agricultural productive resources under one holding and open it to shareholding by transnational agri-food corporations but was suspended after fierce public criticism on national sovereignty grounds, are two major examples in this context. Government also utilizes top-down, invited policy spaces such as the Agricultural Council for agricultural stakeholders in a way to create an illusion of democratic participation to food policies while strictly controlling the participant profiles. Apart from these, informal seed market is not totally eliminated. Local heirloom varieties are declared to be preserved through special campaigns of the Ministry and seed exchange among farmers is tolerated through loose inspection the breeders' rights. Finally, small financial support schemes to dispossessed rural populations are used as another consent-building mechanism against structural liberalisation of agriculture in the country.

Individual experiences of small agricultural farmers with regard to six principles of food sovereignty and seed sovereignty reflect significant complementarities with the findings in macro-level legal-institutional transformations. Small agricultural producers of tomato and wheat in Ayaş and Polatlı districts, involved in the farmer survey portrayed features of a disrupted peasantry in Jansen's (2015) conception. Although farmers were complaining about bad terms of trade and limited protective policies by the state, they were found to be content with getting integrated into global food market. They were aware of the challenges of rising world population, climate change and resource

depletion as well as potentials of improved science and technology in service of agriculture. Under the conditions of high external input dependency and commodification of every aspect of rural life, peasants and farmers were found to have lost their resource autonomy and self-sufficiency. Exchange relations with external markets either for supply of their productive inputs or consumption goods surround the life of contemporary Turkish farmer so deeply that farmers perceive this market expansion as indispensable.

Farmers perceive food sovereignty as independence and self-sufficiency that is guaranteed by a sovereign state. Farmers' perception of food sovereignty has been determined by certain factors of dependency and income loss in their lives, and farmers interlink their autonomy and welfare with existence of a redistributive and sovereign state that is capable of balancing the interest of farmers with global capital. Import dependency for agricultural inputs and consequent high input prices, unfair gains of trade intermediaries and brokers transferred from the farmers, lack of national R&D capacity to replace imported inputs including seeds and pesticides, farmers' debts, and high rates of value added tax collected from agricultural inputs are the main aspects that farmers perceive as impediments to food sovereignty in Turkey.

Farmers perceive a well-regulated international trade as something good for their livelihoods. Among farmers' definition of food sovereignty, there is a common rage against uncontrolled and excessive agricultural imports, imports-oriented international trade policy of the state, and international trade brokers as actors making great profits by taking the share of real producers and the state itself. However, farmers are also making clear connections between their livelihoods and international trade of agricultural products. They are well aware of the fact that international trade increases demand and consequently prices for their products. On the other hand, they are also complaining about the "unfulfilled" role of the state as the mediator to balance the interests of producers, traders, and consumers. This reminds us of the ambiguous position of food sovereignty theory vis-a-vis international trade, and the inevitable need for a sovereign state to protect farmers' autonomy and livelihoods in a global market.

Replacement of farmers' own seeds by certified seeds brings about deskilling, indebtedness, dependency, consequent disruptions in food sovereignty for farmers. In

relation to farmers' perception on significance of seed sovereignty and ownership of seeds for the realization of food sovereignty, farmers' awareness about the power of global agri-food corporations and the threat of vertical integration of seed and agrochemical production under the giant TNCs is quite high. This perception has an objective ground considering the change of seed sources from informal seed market among farmers to formal seeds of private seed companies and state with declined portions. Alongside the legal-institutional regulations transferring ownership of seeds from farmers to companies and expanding influx of transnational agri-food companies as the main suppliers; increased expectation of speed by market actors including consumers and retailers, increased specialisation and division of labour in agri-food market challenging cyclical and integrated farming practices of small agricultural producers who used to produce their own inputs rather than purchasing them from the market are identified as some of the main factors pushing farmers to stop producing their own seeds. This transformation has significant implications on loss of resource autonomy, deskilling, and rise of debts on the side of farmers, and consequent disruptions in food sovereignty.

Private breeding may have prospects to feed a growing world population under pressures of climate change and increase incomes of small farmers only if they are balanced by state's role as a regulator and a breeder. Not only the small farmers but also the national private breeders acknowledge the dependency relations between national farmers, seed companies and global agri-food companies transferring property rights from farmers to global companies. Defining characteristics of this dependency relation are low know-how transfer from global to local, regular royalty payments from local to global, and fierce competition for development of new varieties and ownership of intellectual property rights among TNCs. On the other hand, breeders also recall importance of improved seed varieties by private investors as a solution to feeding the world under conditions of rising population and climate change as well as supporting small farmers for higher productivity and better income prospects in a global market. At this point, state's role as a regulator as well as a breeder in formal seed market becomes critical to balance food sovereignty concerns with pressures of climate change, population increase, and the interdependent global food market. After all, in contradiction with the major argument of seed sovereignty advocates, farmers of tomato and wheat are not found to be much concerned about ownership of seeds compared to

their preoccupation with immense cost of certain inputs such as fertilizers, electricity, and diesel oil; market access without dependency to intermediaries; and price threats by imported agricultural products.

Distance between farmers and consumers pose moral, economic, and environmental impacts that hamper food sovereignty. Disruptive role of commercial intermediaries in the loss of income for farmers and access to safe, healthy, and affordable food for consumers was observed to be a major point of concern for the farmers. The increased distance between farmers and consumers brings commercial features and actors to the fore and both farmers and consumers of the major agricultural producer countries are damaged in this system. Long global supply chains bring the best of agricultural products to the consumers in distant affluent societies and pays the lowest price to the primary producers in return. Leaving local consumers aside, there is a bigger moral problem posed by the current food system. While the farmers sell their best products for very low prices for the consumption of consumers living miles away, these same farmers consume the cheapest food sold by giant supermarket chains. Extended food miles carry good food to the wealthy urban consumers and bring back cheap and low-quality food to the poor farmers.

Transformation of labour processes is another important finding of the farmer survey in this dissertation. Not the local peasants but the seasonal agricultural workers supply the necessary labour required for hard works in agriculture. In the market conditions of comparative advantages, trade-offs, and marginal costs, peasants turn to urban wage labour, and agriculture stops being a real source of livelihoods for majority of local population and turns into being a sector that generates one of the most exploitative types of labour in this century The dispossessed and deskilled peasant population has been replaced by the most dispossessed labour reserve of the society, seasonal agricultural workers. This should have important political implications which is worth to analyse in future research.

The food sovereignty approach values local knowledge and skills of farmers. What is found in the field shows that introduction of new and mostly labour-saving agricultural technologies, change of market preferences from taste and health towards “durability” and “productivity”, changes in climatic conditions, and changes in education system

which endorse rural to urban migration and degrade peasant skills and way of living bring about loss of traditional farming knowledge. Not only seeds but also a long list of agricultural inputs and methods are developed and marketed after commercial processes led by corporate science and technology, and the whole process brings about mono-typical crops registered as private property of corporations. Complex and authentic agricultural knowledge distilled out of collective labour of peasants and farmers in the long history of agriculture is appropriated by giant TNCs and is reduced to corporate knowledge to be exchanged in market.

Farmers' perception of historical milestones that transform their farming and disrupt their livelihoods has been an important field of inquiry in this research. Below is a brief explanation of the milestones identified by the farmers:

- **The 1990s:** Massive outmigration of peasants and arrival of seasonal agricultural workers transformed agricultural labour processes.
- **2002:** Start of extensive pro-market agricultural policies determined and applied under the rule of Justice and Development Party disrupted livelihoods of small farmers.
- **2006:** Enactment of Seed Law and following promotion of formal seed market by public policies narrowed informal seed market of farmers, use of certified and hybrid seed varieties became prevalent.
- **The 2010s**: Farmers started selling and renting their agricultural lands on excessive amounts, and this damaged integrity of farming in rural areas. Significant portion of these lands are transferred to non-farm uses.
- **2012:** Enactment of Metropolitan Municipality Law No 5216, transformed villages into neighbourhoods, and certain services to villages were priced and taxed by the municipalities, this increased commodification of peasant life and caused significant income losses.
- **2020-2021:** COVID-19 pandemic and accompanying crisis in global food production and trade restrictions, recalled value of locally produced food and risks of long food miles.

- **2021:** Agricultural input prices mainly including fertilizers and diesel oil skyrocketed, and farmers were brought on the verge of quitting production.
- Gradually worsening impact of **climate change and drought**, increasing uncertainties, declining productivity accompanied all the milestones mentioned above.

These milestones resonate with the legal-institutional transformations in the body of Turkish state in the same period. Although farmers could not name this transformation as a neoliberal one, they had a consensus on discontent about the takeover of agricultural producers by traders and expectation for a redistributive and regulatory state to establish a fairer food system.

Tomato and wheat producers were purposefully selected for the sample for the field research considering different levels of commodification, market value and use value of these two crops starting from seeds to final product. As a general assessment on farmer-level food sovereignty of small tomato producers in Ayaş and wheat producers in Polatlı, both farmer groups were found to lack a full experience of six dimensions of food sovereignty. There are great commonalities in the experiences and perceptions of tomato and wheat farmers in this sense; however, there are also following major differences among these two farmer groups:

Table 14: *Major Differences in Food Sovereignty Experiences of Tomato and Wheat Farmers*

Defining Features	**Wheat Farmers in Polatlı**	**Tomato Farmers in Ayaş**
Capital and Labour Input	Higher level of mechanization that requires less human labour.	Resort to seasonal agricultural workers to fill the labour supply shortage due to declined peasant population in villages. Precarious working conditions and child labour is more prevalent.
Seed source	Vibrant informal seed market among peasant farmers.	Much extensive use of hybrid and certified seeds provided in formal seed market.

Table 14: *continued*

Perception on formal seed market and seed ownership	Consensus on need for mixing certified seeds of formal seed market with farmer seeds to preserve a certain level of quality and productivity.	Revenge against dependency to hybrid seed market and declined value of heirloom seeds of farmers.
Engagement with technology and international trade	Bigger scale of production, good engagement with high technology, and deeper relations with international trade.	Smaller scale of production, low engagement with technology, selling more for local markets and indirectly affected by international trade.
Farming Typology	Entrepreneurial family farming is more prevalent.	Peasant farming is more prevalent.
Agricultural Extension Services	Bigger scale wheat farmers benefit from private extension services, smaller ones do not benefit from neither public not private extension services	Do not benefit from neither public nor private extension services.

Small tomato farmers are more concerned about seed sovereignty validating lucrative hybrid seed sector dominated by global supplier firms and farmers' reliance on hybrid seeds supplied by private companies, whereas wheat farmers perceive seed sovereignty as a less significant issue since they can purchase standard seeds from a variety of suppliers including informal seed market. On the other hand, it is obvious that wheat farmers are subject to higher disciplinary power of international trade on their farming. Wheat imports pose a continuous threat against farmers' livelihoods. Since tomato producers in Ayaş produce for local markets and tomato imports of the country is relatively small, tomato farmers are less concerned about the impact of international trade on their farming. Their focus is more concentrated on input-dependency.

Isolated, fragmented, unorganized community of farmers lack collective political agency for their common interests. Farmers do not qualify for a demos at neither local, national nor global scale. In terms of political agency of the farmers as part of the struggle for food democracy, rather than collective and institutionalized channels of democratic participation, momentary actions to get in direct personal contact with the certain

powerful politicians is perceived by farmers as a more effective way of participation to food policy processes for the farmers. Lack of long-term and effective public planning, and rapid influx of urban middle-class migration to villages prevent farmers from planning their production in conformity with a reliable public strategy while at the same time taking collective action for local democratic communication on the basis of common interest. Isolated and unguided peasants and small farmers make their individual production decisions under market pressures. Rather than attributing political power to their individual and collective action, farmers complain about the lack of local leadership to represent farmers' interests and occupation of leadership positions by corrupt political figures who do not have organic relations with farming.

State-citizen relations have historically been built on sense of fear and being punished for peasants and small farmers in Turkey. Peasants and small farmers have positioned themselves as politically loyal subjects of governments regardless of the political party in rule. This historical legacy poses a serious barrier before organized movement of farmers at local and national level, and this is observed to be the major weakness before bringing food democracy into action in the country. It is difficult to identify features of a global demos of farmers or diasporic citizenship of farmers among the farmers involved in this dissertation. On the contrary, a fragmented and individualized typology of farmer disconnected from problems of fellow farmers beyond borders is explicit in the research field.

In terms of farmer-nature relations, intensive farming is found to be destructive to nature by all respondent farmers. On the other hand, it is difficult to talk about existence of a deliberate, systematic, and collective will shared by farmers against these destructive farming practices. The small farmers prioritize securing their short-term livelihoods rather than long term food sovereignty, and blame market pressure for their environmentally unsustainable farming practices. Market pressure pushes them to non-optimal choices, and the state and big corporations are perceived as the prime actors responsible and capable of corrective intervention. Consumers' choice is also perceived as another determining factor behind environmental damage caused by current food system. The farmers do not perceive themselves as prime determinant and responsible actors in this process and this is translated into lack of organized farmers' movement and political agency in the research field. The farmers expect other market actors to take

positive steps and position themselves as dependent variables in this transformation rather than active agents to drive the change.

After all, it is probably the most critical mission of this dissertation to interlink disruptions in farmers' experiences and transformation of the state towards a general loss of food sovereignty in the country. Following knots are identified, in this respect, linking macro-level transformation of state and micro-level transformation of farmers' experiences.

1. International trade is used as a disciplinary tool over farmers. Excessive resort to agricultural imports benefits international trade brokers rather than farmers or the state which are the bearers of the cost of this trade.
2. Liberalization and privatization steps taken in agriculture as part of international commitments made to the WTO, UPOV, EU, WB and IMF increased input dependency, narrowed public support to farmers, and consequently increased farmers' debts.
3. Judicial power is transferred indirectly from national courts to umbrella organization of private parties in seed sector, in which global agri-food corporations are strongly represented. Farmers are somehow repulsed from national courts to claim their rights against private seed companies.
4. National courts are answering rights claims of global-agri-food companies as seed breeders against national farmers, compensation for material and immaterial damages are claimed from farmers. On the other hand, judiciary organs of the Turkish state still have a positive impact on protection of livelihoods for farmers. Decisions by the national judiciary organs of Council of State and Supreme Court of Audit prove ongoing redistributive role of the judicial apparatus of the state on behalf of farmers' interests despite all neoliberal structuring processes in the country.
5. National regulations made for formalization of seed market in line with international commitments are loosely enforced and informal seed market is tolerated for now due to populist electoral strategies. However, farmers perceive state's strategic change towards strict compliance with legal regulation as a near threat to their livelihoods.

6. Bureaucratic procedures set to benefit from breeders' rights as well as financial costs of getting involved in formal breeding system are functioning as barriers for small farmers to enjoy property rights granted by law. Small farmers are pushed to the margins of the seed system, but they are allowed to produce their own seeds and exchange it in a narrow and criminalized informal seed market. On the other hand, big corporations enjoy the property rights and market shares secured in the formal seed market. Those private seed breeder companies resort to farmers' traditional knowledge and experience through their own extension services to develop their varieties and sell them back to the farmers.
7. After consecutive liberalization reforms and commitments made in international agreements (WTO being at the top), public incentives for agricultural production are too low, they are not responsive to farmers' production calendar and they privilege landowners, and corporate and entrepreneurial farmers, and they crowd out peasants and small farmers.
8. Agriculture is highly financialized, pushing farmers into vicious cycle of indebtedness and dispossession. While on the one hand, farmers sell their productive assets, the lands, to pay their credit loans back to banks, on the other hand they are left without any assets to pledge for future credit applications for productive purposes. Agricultural Credits Cooperatives and Agricultural Insurances Pool function to sustain this financialization process.

After all, this dissertation was a humble attempt to lay out neoliberal transformation of agriculture and resulting loss of food sovereignty at state and farmer levels in Turkey. New constitutionalism in this context is used as an explanatory tool to identify major processes of legal-institutional restructuring of state and consent building transferred from commitments made within the neoliberal global governance including the WTO, WB, UPOV and the EU into national law and policies. Isolation of economic policies from politics, and adoption of neoliberal agricultural policies have been going hand in hand through restructuring of the state governed by a super powerful and centralized executive in the last twenty years.

In addition to these, the farmer level food sovereignty assessment in this dissertation is suggested as a novel tool to be applied and adapted to identify manifestations of food sovereignty at several scales of subjects including community and nation. Sovereignty

like a contested abstraction is driven towards a concrete, operational realm that is conducive for supporters of global food sovereignty movement to find direction for every single step in their anti-capitalist march.

As a contribution to agrarian studies in Turkish academia, identification of a status of weak individual and collective subjectivity on the side of peasants and small farmers in Turkey points out difficulty of penetration of global food sovereignty movement into farmers of Turkey. Turkish peasants and small farmers historically positioned as loyal and passive subjects of the state receive sovereignty synonymous with state sovereignty, independence and national self-sufficiency. This hinders development of a demos of farmers or global agrarian citizenship or diasporic citizenship claiming food sovereignty beyond and within the borders of state and encompassing all cosmopolitan and sustainability-wise claims of food sovereignty movement.

However, food sovereignty is observed to have gained discursive power during the global COVID-19 pandemic and consequent disruptions in international trade, dramatic rise of input prices, and protectionist policy choices of states. There is a more conducive ground to boost political subjectivity of Turkish farmers around the concept of food sovereignty, as the concept have got into broader circulation together with "self sufficiency" in daily language and political language, climbing up to the status of a more hegemonic discourse in the policy declarations of states and international organizations. Food sovereignty can still serve extension of global opposition front in diverse geographies including Turkey against corporate, third food regime, and development of concrete alternative policy options. Smart and effective political participation channels and methods for involvement of small farmers and peasants in agricultural policy processes should be one of the initial steps in this struggle against the corporate food regime.

On the other hand, it has been a challenge to draw the limits of this extensive topic, though putting seed sovereignty issue at the centre helped a lot to get focused. There is still quite a list of unanswered questions that are worth to examine in the context of food sovereignty in Turkey in the future research studies.

Following is a brief list of main questions left to the interest of researchers in this field:

1. How does replacement of local peasant labour with seasonal migrant agricultural workers affect political agency of farmers and food democracy?
2. What is the significance of rural leadership and farmers' organization for food democracy?
3. What is the significance of gender in transfer of farmers' authentic knowledge to the future?
4. How does withdrawal of public agricultural extension services (training and consultancy) affect commodification of farming knowledge and exclusion of small-peasant farmers from the food system?
5. What is the role of changes in rural demography and increasing interest of urban middle class to settling in rural areas in disruptions in peasant farming and food sovereignty?
6. What are the generational gaps in farming approaches of young and elder farmers in terms of their relations with nature and market?
7. How does self-exploitative features of peasant farming decline the interest of young generations on farming?
8. What is the relationship between level of social security and autonomous farming for a farmer community?
9. How does increased level of uncertainties stemming from climate change necessitate publicly supported agricultural insurances for farmers?
10. What should be the role of local governments for food sovereignty?

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APPENDICES

A: FARMER INTERVIEW FORM FOR FOOD SOVEREIGNTY ASSESSMENT

This interview form is used for the farmer survey that will be implemented to analyse the reflections of the transformation of agricultural production in Turkey on daily experiences and perceptions of farmers with regard to food sovereignty. The Farmer Interview Form is composed of 54 questions under ten categories. Approximately 60 minutes is required to complete the interview.

A. DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE:

1. Name of respondent: (not to be entered into database)
2. Age: (years)
3. Gender (Sex): Male ❑ Female ❑
4. Relationship: ❑Household head ❑ Spouse ❑ Son/daughter ❑ others
5. Highest Education: ❑ No formal ❑ Primary school ❑Secondary ❑ Tertiary
6. Mobile:
7. Size of agricultural land owned and cultivated (decares)
8. Main crops produced:
9. Who is the prime purchaser of the crop:
10. Are there paid workers outside the family? If yes, how many days in a year do the workers work on average? Where do workers come from? What is the per diem?

B. INCOME AND FINANCIAL STATUS:

11. What was your Main source of income last year? Income source: ❑ Crop produce ❑Livestock sale ❑ On-farm daily labour ❑ Livestock products ❑ Non on-farm daily labor ❑ Remittances ❑ Petty trade ❑ Salary ❑ Pension ❑ Social Assistance Payments ❑ Others (specify)

12. Are you able to save some cash from the income you earned? ❑ No ❑ Yes
13. Are you able to access credit from any source? ❑ No ❑ Yes
    If yes, what was the source of credit?
14. Do you benefit any governmental incentives for production? If no, why?
15. Do you find government incentives accessible?

C. GENERAL AWARENESS ON FOOD SOVEREIGNTY:

16. What does the term food sovereignty mean to you personally, to your family, to your community? What do you understand from this concept? Do you find yourself independent in your decisions as a farmer?
17. Could you please identify some elements of food sovereignty and local food-system control?
18. Do you know where people in your community get their food?
19. Do people in your community pay a fair price for healthy and sufficient foods?
20. Are there specific periods or points in history that began to disrupt or transform the local food system in your village/district? What was it about this period or moment that impacted your community (positively or negatively)? Which persons and institutions were effective in these transformations?

D. ASSET CONTROL:

21. Who profits from natural resources (land, water, etc) in your community?
22. Who decides what is grown or harvested in your community?
23. What percentage of agriculture and food businesses in your community are locally owned and/or operated?

E. SEEDS and FOOD SOVEREIGNTY:

24. Could you please list the major suppliers of seed/seedling in your community? How long have these suppliers been active? Do you observe any change in their number and distribution?

25. What was/were your source(s) of seed last year? ❑ Own seed, ❑ Local Market, ❑ Social Network, ❑ Agro-input-Dealer , ❑ Seed aid, ❑ Other (please specify)
26. How did you acquire the seed? ❑ Cash; ❑ On credit; ❑ bartered; ❑ free (gift)
27. How was the price or terms of trade? ❑ affordable; ❑ expensive ; ❑ very expensive(ask only those who acquired by cash, on credit or bartered only)
28. Overall, if you consider the following seed sources; own production, local market, social network and agro-input dealers, will there be enough seed available for the major crops you produce in the upcoming year? Do you find yourself secure in terms of seed supply? ❑Yes ❑No
29. Do you practice seed breeding? If yes, do you know breeders' rights? Do you benefit from these rights?
30. Do you know how to register plant varieties?
31. Do you find plant variety registration processes affordable? ❑Yes ❑No
32. Can you identify any difficulty with regard to access and ownership of seeds?
33. Do you receive any support from the state for seed production and supply, if not do you need it?

F. LOCAL KNOWLEDGE, CULTURE AND FOOD SOVEREIGNTY:

34. How does agricultural production training happen in your community? How did you learn farming? ❑Knowledge sharing within the family and farmers' community, ❑ Farmer training provided by state, ❑Training provided by agri-food companies, ❑ Individual learning activities via internet, ❑ others ?
35. Do you know why and how agriculture and food traditions have been lost in your community?
36. Do you share traditional farming knowledge that you learned from your family and farmer community with the experts from state and private sector? Do these professionals have an interest in your traditional knowledge?

37. Do you ever receive any agricultural extension services?

❑ No ❑ Yes

38. If yes, who are the main providers?

❑ Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry ❑ Cooperatives ❑ Input Suppliers ❑ Other …

G. ENVIRONMENT AND FOOD SOVEREIGNTY:

39. Which environmental changes have affected the local food system during our active farming period? How?
40. How do you think your farming practices affect environment (soil, water, weather, animal and plant population, crops) ?
41. Do you observe any effects of changing seed use on your natural environment? Which parties among state, private sector, peasant/farmer do you think have an impact on this issue? How?

H. DISTANCE AND FOOD SOVEREIGNTY:

42. Do you know where your community's food supply comes from? How does it get to your community?
43. Do you know how far your food travels until it reaches you?
44. How would your community get food if a natural or other disaster (like a trucker strike) stopped transportation? Would they be self-sufficient?
45. Think of the last few meals you have eaten? How much of those food items could have been produced locally?
46. Do you know how far the agricultural products you produce travels to the final consumer? List the provinces and/or countries.
47. What do you think about the international food trade?

I. LOCAL ECONOMY AND FOOD SOVEREIGNTY:

48. Do you know the amount of money spent on food in your community? (as a share of household income)

49. How much do you sell one unit of your main crop in the market and how much do you have to pay if you buy the same unit of crop from the market?
50. How many agricultural jobs exist in your community? Who holds those jobs mostly? (locals, seasonal workers, elder farmers, young farmers, women, men) Do you think these people can make a living out of the money they earn from these jobs?
51. Do any of the following institutions or programs in your community or region buy food locally – that is, from local community farmers, gardeners, food processors, or the peasants? Check all that apply.

    ❑ Grocery stores ❑ Elder services/homes ❑ Convenience stores ❑ Hotels ❑ Schools

    ❑ Municipality ❑ Government food programs (please list which ones)

J. POLITICAL AGENCY AND LOCAL COOPERATIVE ORGANIZATION:

52. Are you involved in any individual or organized movement for solution of the problems you encounter during agricultural production? If no, why?
53. Are there any agricultural cooperatives organized in your community?

    ❑ No ❑ Yes
54. Are you a member of any of these cooperatives?

    ❑ No ❑ Yes

    If yes, please describe the services received.

    If no, why?

B: HUMAN SUBJECTS ETHICS COMMITTEE PERMISSION

UYGULAMALI ETİK ARAŞTIRMA MERKEZİ
APPLIED ETHICS RESEARCH CENTER

ORTA DOĞU TEKNİK ÜNİVERSİTESİ
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Sayı: 28620816 / 393

29 EYLÜL 2021

Konu : Değerlendirme Sonucu

Gönderen: ODTÜ İnsan Araştırmaları Etik Kurulu (İAEK)

İlgi : İnsan Araştırmaları Etik Kurulu Başvurusu

Sayın Doç. Dr. Aylin Topal

Danışmanlığını yürüttüğünüz Nuran Torun ATIŞ'ın "Haklar ve egemenliklerin kesişiminde gıda: Türkiye'de gıdanın üzerindeki yeni anayasalcı süreçlerin izini sürmek" başlıklı araştırması İnsan Araştırmaları Etik Kurulu tarafından uygun görülmüş ve **393-ODTU-2021** protokol numarası ile onaylanmıştır.

Saygılarımızla bilgilerinize sunarız.

Dr.Öğretim Üyesi Şerife SEVİNÇ
İAEK Başkan Vekili

C: CURRICULUM VITAE

Personal Information:

Surname-Name: Torun Atış, Nuran

Email:

Education:

Degree	Institution/Programme	Year of Graduation
Master of Arts	The University of Manchester, Social Policy and Social Development	2010
Bachelor of Science	METU, Department of International Relations	2009

Work Experience:

Institution	Position	Years of Service
International Labour Organization, Office for Turkey	National officer for employment and education	2018 to the present
Turkish Employment Agency (İŞKUR)	Employment Expert	2014-2018
Northern Blacksea Development Agency (DOKA)	Expert	2010-2014

Languages:

English (proficient user), Turkish (mother language)

Areas of professional interest:

Labour policy, child labour, migration, rural development, and social policy

D: TURKISH SUMMARY/ TÜRKÇE ÖZET

Küresel gıda egemenliği hareketi, tarım-gıda sistemleri içinde küçük çiftçiler, çiftçi toplulukları ve devletler için bağımsız bir varoluş hali talep etmektedir. Türkiye devleti ve toplumu, 1980'lerden bu yana, son yirmi yılda da artan bir hızla neoliberal bir dönüşümden geçmiştir. Ekonomi politikalarının siyasetten yalıtılması ve neoliberal tarım politikalarının benimsenmesi, küresel neoliberal yönetişimin şart koyduğu ve desteklediği yasal-kurumsal düzenlemelerle ve devletin merkezi, otoriter bir yürütmenin kontrolüne doğru yeniden yapılandırılmasıyla birlikte işlemiştir. Bu süreç, devlet ve vatandaştan küresel şirket sermayesine doğru bir egemenlik devrine sebep olmuştur. Bu dönüşüm esnasında küçük tarımsal üreticiler ve köylüler mülksüzleşmiş; başta toprak, emek ve tohum olmak üzere üretim araçlarının kontrolünü kaybetmişlerdir. Gıda egemenliği teorisi içindeki egemenliğin sınırlarını sorgulayarak ve bu bağlamda çok ölçekli bir egemenlik kavramsallaştırması önererek, bu tez şu iki araştırma sorusunu cevaplamayı amaçlamaktadır. i) Devleti yeniden yapılandıran ve gıda egemenliğine zarar verecek şekilde tarımın neoliberal dönüşümüne yön veren yenianayasalcılığın disiplin süreçleri nelerdir? ve ii) Küçük tarımsal üreticinin gündelik pratikleri ve tutumlarında gıda egemenliği tezahürleri nelerdir? Bu itibarla, devletin tarımdan çekilmesiyle alakalı olarak çiftçilerin hayatında yer alan belirli bağımlılık, metalaşma ve mülksüzleşme etkenleri tespit edilmiştir. Sonuç olarak, bu tezde gıda egemenliği teorisinin Türkiye dahil çeşitli coğrafyalarda şirket gıda rejimine karşı bir muhalif cephenin yaygınlaştırılmasına hizmet etme kapasitesi ele alınmıştır.

Gıda, yaşamın devamlılığı için elzemdir. Gıda için emek verilir, gıda süslenir, sunulur, gıdaya şükredilir, gıda için kavga edilir, gıda dağıtılır, israf edilir, vesaire, vesaire. Gıda burada, orada, insanlığın sayısız eylemini kesen her yerdedir. Gıdanın değerine dair biyolojik, kültürel, ekonomik, siyasal ve sosyolojik anlamda çeşitli belirleyiciler ve yansımalar vardır. Birçok anlam ve değer taşıyan böylesi bir kavrama sadece üretilen, satılan ve tüketilen bir meta olarak bakmak, sığ bir yaklaşımın ürünü olsa gerek. Ancak, metaların değişim değeri kapitalizmin sürükleyici gücüdür ve bu değer piyasada belirlenir. Kapitalizmin en son teorik ve pratik tezahürü olarak addedebileceğimiz neoliberalizm, metaların karşılaştırmalı üstünlüklere göre üretildiği, sınırlar arasında alış-verişinin yapıldığı ve değerin bu sürecin bir sonucu olarak belirlendiği serbest

küresel piyasayı yüceltir. Ayakkabıdan müziğe, satılmak için üretildiği sürece somut ve soyut şeylerden oluşan geniş bir evren, neoliberal piyasa toplumunda meta olarak kabul edilir. Gıda da bu evrenin dışında değildir. Gıda da bu düzen içinde arz ve talep yasalarına tabi bir meta olarak görülmektedir. İşte bu bakış açısı, gıdayı haklar, sosyal adalet ve siyasetin alanından alıp değişim değeri, kâr ve neoliberal iktisadın alanına çekmektedir.

"Gıda rejimleri", analitik bir çerçeve olarak gıdayı kapitalizmin gelişimi bağlamında tarihselleştirir ve siyasallaştırır. Başlangıçta metodolojik milliyetçiliği benimseyerek milletler arasında gıda, sermaye ve güç akışlarını ve bunlara bağlı olarak ortaya çıkan bağımlılık ilişkilerini ortaya koyan gıda rejimleri, zamanla devlet, şirketler, sosyal hareketler ve bireyler/vatandaşları da içeren çeşitli toplumsal birimlerin göreceli güçlerini inceler şekilde evrilmiştir. Friedman ve McMichael (1989) Tarım ve Devlet Sistemi: Ulusal Tarımın Yükseliş ve Düşüşü, 1870'ten Günümüze" başlıklı öncü makalelerinde iki tarihsel gıda rejimi sınıflandırmışlardır. Birinci gıda rejimi, kolonilerden gelen ucuz tarım ürünlerinin Avrupa'da imal edildiği, 19. Yüzyıl sonlarının Britanya hegemonyasını kastetmektedir. McMichael (2009)'un gıda rejimlerinin şeceresine dair kapsamlı analizinde bahsettiği üzere; birinci gıda rejimi döneminde kolonilerin şeker, çay, kahve, muz, palmiye yağı, fıstık gibi egzotik mahsulleri ile yerleşimci kolonilerin (Amerika Birleşik Devletleri, Avustralya, Kanada, Uruguay, Arjantin ve Güney Afrika) hububat ve et gibi temel gıda ürünleri serbest ticaret emperyalizmiyle Avrupa ve Britanya'ya getirilmiş ve bu ucuz gıdalar Britanya ev Avrupa'da sermaye birikimini sağlamıştır. Bu dönemde serbest ticaret söylemi Büyük Britanya tarafından kendi sömürü projesini desteklemek için stratejik olarak kullanılmıştır (Friedman 2005).

Öte yandan, ikinci gıda rejimi 1945-1973 döneminde ABD'deki yoğun tarımla üretilen gıda fazlasının komünist yayılmayı çevrelemek ve ABD hegemonyasını güçlendirmek için "Üçüncü Dünyada Kalkınma Projesi"ni inşa etmek amacıyla kullanıldığı ABD hegemonyası dönemini ifade etmektedir (McMichael 2009, s.141). Bu bağlamda, Yeşil Devrim ve gıda yardımları temel gıda arzını arttırmak ve kırsalın politikayla ilgisini kesmek için kullanılmıştır (McMichael 2009, s.145). Bu dönemde de ABD, "kalkınma" söylemini Üçüncü Dünya'da hegemonyasını tesis etmek için stratejik olarak kullanmıştır. Bu dönem, ABD'nin kapsamlı kalkınma yardımlarıyla, bu jeopolitik

bölgede ulusal kalkınma politikalarının desteklendiği bir dönem olmuştur. Bu dönem, açıkça ilan edilen ulusal kalkınma söylemine rağmen Kuzey ve Güney arasında ithalat bağımlılığı ilişkilerinin inşa edilmesine etkisi bakımından önem arz etmektedir.

Bu tarihsel ve teorik öncüllere dayanarak, McMichael (2009) "üçüncü gıda rejimi" kavramını gıda ekonomisinin son fazı olarak ortaya atmıştır ki aynı zamanda şirket gıda rejimi olarak da adlandırılmaktadır bu son dönem. McMichael (2009, s.148) üçüncü gıda rejimini şu şekilde tanımlar:

> ...Güney'in pahalı ürünlerine (et, meyve ve sebze) karşılık Kuzey'in hububatının ticaretinin yapıldığı, siyaseten inşa edilmiş bir iş bölümü etrafında örgütlenmiştir. Dünya Ticaret Örgütü'nün (devletler eliyle) küresel yönetimiyle özdeşleştirilen serbest ticaret retoriği, bu düzende bir serbest ticaret rejiminin geliştiğini ifade etmekte, fakat bir yandan da tarım ihracatına ilişkin örtük kurallar, Güneyli devletleri tarımsal korumacılığı azaltmaya, temel gıdayı ithal etmeye, pahalı gıdayı ihraç etmeye zorlarken; Kuzeyli güçlerin tarım teşviklerini muhafaza etmektedir.

McMichael (2009, s.142) 1980lerin sonunda ortaya çıkan bu yeni gıda rejiminde Dünya Ticaret Örgütü'nün Güney'deki tarımsal sübvansiyonları ortadan kaldırmak ve tarımı serbest ticarete açmak için konumlandığını belirtir. Ortak bir analitik çerçeveye dayanmakla birlikte zamanla McMichael'in odak noktası şirket gıda rejiminin bir sonucu olarak mülksüzleşme ve köylü tarımının ortadan kalkmasına, Friedman'ınki (2005, ss.227-228) ise gıda standartları, çeşitli toplumsal güçlerin çevresel talepleri ve şirketlerin konumlanması bağlamında "şirket-çevresel rejimi" ne yönelmiştir.

Üçüncü gıda rejimi, gıda rejimleri analizini devlet merkezli zeminden ulus-ötesi zemine taşımış ve gıda rejimlerinin inşasında çeşitli toplumsal hareketler ve aktörlerin etkisini kabul etmiştir. Bernstein (2016, s.638), McMichael'in (2009) köylü hareketlerinin gücüne büyük önem vermesini ve köylüleri kapitalizmin anti-tezi olarak konumlandırılmasını, bu konumlandırmanın yanlılıklar taşıdığını ve köylü tarımını endüstriyel şirket tarımına karşı nesnel olarak test etmeyi engellediğini iddia ederek eleştirilmiştir. Bununla birlikte, yanlılıklarına rağmen bu tartışma zemini bizi ilişkisel bir egemenlik yaklaşımına yakınlaştırmakta, gıda egemenliği tartışmaları içinde birden fazla egemenin varlığına dayalı bir kavramsallaştırmaya alan açmaktadır. Bu son gıda rejiminde devlet egemenliği şirketlerin mülkiyet hakları ve yatırım haklarını korumanın bir aracı olarak görülmekte, devletin AR-GE işlevleri çoğunlukla özel sektöre devredilmekte, bitki ıslahı gibi stratejik tarımsal faaliyetler şirketlere bırakılmakta ve

küresel gıda tedariği, ekseriyetle kalabalık bir yoksul tüketici nüfusunun gıda ihtiyaçlarından ziyade zengin tüketiciye pahalı gıdanın sağlanmasını önceliklendiren çokuluslu şirketlerin yönettiği tedarik zinciri operasyonlarıyla sağlanmaktadır (McMichael 1992, 2009; Pistorius and van Wyk 1999, s. 51).

Üçüncü gıda rejimi tartışmaları bağlamında, Türkiye'de de küçük tarımsal üreticilerin son kırk yılda ulusal ekonominin serbestleşmesi sürecinde yasalar, ekonomi ve ticaret politikaları aracılığıyla üretim kararları üzerindeki otonomilerine karşı küresel tarım-gıda sermayesi tarafından yükselen bir baskıya maruz kaldığı söylenebilir. Küresel neoliberal yönetişim tarafından şart koşulan veya teşvik edilen yasal ve kurumsal düzenlemeler aracılığıyla üreticiler ve vatandaşların hakları tarımsal şirket sermayesine devredilmiş, küçük tarımsal üreticiler ve köylüler mülksüzleşmiştir. Bu bağlamda, gıda hakkı ve gıda egemenliği, çeşitli serbestleşme adımlarıyla tehdit altında kalan üretim ve tüketime dair geniş bir haklar dizisini daha iyi anlamak için kullanışlı bir çerçeve olarak karşımıza çıkmaktadır.

Başlangıçta dünya kamuoyuna La Via Campesina (LVC) tarafından 1996 yılındaki Dünya Gıda Zirvesi'nde duyurulan gıda egemenliği kavramı, köylülerin ve küçük çiftçilerin küresel hareketi LVC (2007) tarafından şu şekilde tanımlanmıştır: "halkların sağlıklı ve ekolojik olarak güvenilir ve sürdürülebilir yöntemlerle üretilmiş, kültürel olarak uygun gıda hakkı ve onların kendi gıda ve tarım sistemlerini belirleme hakkı". Bu kavram, gıdanın nerede, kim tarafından, nasıl üretildiğine karşı kayıtsız olan ve FAO tarafından benimsenen "gıda güvenliği" söylemine karşı olarak büyüyen bir sivil toplum hareketleri ağı tarafından sahiplenilmiştir. Bu kavram, gıda güvenliğine kıyasla yeni bir politik çerçeve sunmakta olup küresel şemsiye örgüt LVC öncülüğünde teori ve pratik olarak dünya genelinde gelişimini sürdürmektedir.

Gıda egemenliğini tartışmaya başlarken tohum egemenliği meselesini açıklamak elzemdir. Gıda, uzun bir tarımsal üretim yolculuğunun ürünüdür ki bu, çoğunlukla tohumun toprağa ekilmesiyle başlar. Tohum, bitkinin tüm genetik zenginliğinin saklandığı ve sonraki kuşaklara aktarıldığı bir sandıktır. Tohumu tasarruf etmek, kullanmak, ıslah etmek, takas etmek veya satmak üzerinde otonomi ve bağımsızlığa sahip olmak, geniş kapsamlı bir gıda egemenliği tecrübesinin ön koşullarındandır diyebiliriz. Tohum mülkiyeti, gıda egemenliği teorisi ve pratiği içinde merkezi bir yere

sahiptir. Türkiye'de de tarımsal üreticiler ve tüketiciler 2006 yılında 5553 sayılı Tohumculuk Kanunu'nun yürürlüğe girmesinden bu yana, son 16 yılda kademeli olarak kurumsallaşan ve yaygınlaştırılan bitki çeşidi koruma rejimleri ve sertifikalı tohum kullanımı ile birlikte gıda egemenlikleri üzerinde yükselen bir baskıya maruz kalmışlardır. Fikri mülkiyet hakları rejiminin tarım ve tohuma doğru yayılması, uluslararası sözleşmelerle güvence altında alınan mülkiyet haklarının ulusal hukuka da aşılanması, çiftçinin hayatında yeni bir mülksüzleşme tehdidi teşkil etmiştir. Bu bağlamda Türkiye'de de tarım ve gıda üretimine ilişkin ulusal mevzuat, tohumdan başlamak üzere metalaşmanın yaygınlaşmasına ve ülkede köylülüğün ve küçük tarımsal üreticiliğin yok olması pahasına özel sermayenin haklarına hizmet etmiştir.

Gıda egemenliğini gıda sistemleri içinde çiftçiler, topluluklar ve devletler için belirli bir otonom varoluş hali olarak kabul edersek, Stephan Gill'in (1998) kavramsallaştırdığı "Yeni Anayasalcılık" Türkiye'de tarımın piyasa yönelimli dönüşümünün arkasındaki süreçleri ve sonuç itibariyle gıda egemenliğindeki aksaklıkları anlamamıza yardımcı olabilecek kullanışlı bir analitik çerçeve sunmaktadır. Tarım ve gıdanın piyasa yanlı dönüşümü tohumum metalaşmasıyla sınırlı kalmamış, Dünya Ticaret Örgütü, Dünya Bankası, Uluslararası Para Fonu ve Avrupa Birliği gibi uluslararası özel ve kamu hukuku araçlarıyla şart koşulup, teşvik edilip Türkiye çiftçisi ve vatandaşlarına dayatılan geniş bir serbestleşme reformu silsilesini kapsamıştır. İşte yeni anayasalcılık tam olarak burada, uluslararası hukuk ve yönetişim kanalları aracılığıyla ulusal hukukun ve devletin sermaye yanlı olarak yeniden yapılandırılması süreçlerini incelemeye yönelik analitik bir çerçeve sunmaktadır.

Vatandaşların, üreticilerin ve tüketicilerin haklarıyla şirket sermayesi arasındaki çatışmalar bağlamında neoliberal küresel kapitalizm ve gıda egemenliği ilişkisini inceleyen, genişleyen bir alan yazını mevcuttur. Mesele, kır sosyologları, tarım ekonomistleri ve siyaset bilimciler tarafından yakından takip edilmektedir. Philip Mc Michael (2009), Henry Bernstein (2014), Jan Douwe van der Ploeg (2014, 2015, 2017), Hannah Wittman (2011), Raj Patel (2009), Amy Trauger (2015), Eric-Hold Gimenez (2009, 2019), Mark Edelman (2015), ve Kim Burnett ve Sophia Murphy (2014), öncü çalışmalarıyla, kendi başına bir gıda egemenliği teorisi için yapı taşlarını ortaya koymuşlardır. Öte yandan, neo-Gramşiyan uluslararası politik ekonomi yazının içinde gerçekleşen "yeni anayasalcılık" tartışması, başta Gill (1998, 2000, 2007, 2014), Cutler

(2014), Brenner, Peck & Theodore (2014), Schneiderman (2014), ve Elver'in (2014) katkılarıyla milyonlarca üreticinin gıda egemenliğinin aleyhine işleyen küresel süreçlere kapsayıcı açıklamalar sağlama potansiyeline sahiptir.

Yeni anayasalcılık, Stephan Gill (1998) tarafından neoliberal reformlar ve özel mülkiyet haklarının ulusal hukuka, düzenlemelere, prosedürlere ve kurumlara yerleştirilmesini sağlayan üç ana süreci ifade etmek için geliştirilen şemsiye kavramdır. Gill (1998), bu üç sürecin devletin piyasanın kolaylaştırıcısı olarak yeniden yapılandırılmasına, hayali emtialar için piyasanın genişlemesine ve neoliberal hukukun meşrulaştırılıp neoliberal yeniden yapılandırmaya karşı olan muhalif güçlerin çevrelenmesine hizmet ettiğini iddia etmektedir. Gill (2000, 11-15; 2014, 29-44) bu süreçleri aynı zamanda "yeni anayasalcılığın üç boyutu" olarak da adlandırmakta ve bu süreçleri şu şekilde sıralamaktadır: devlet aygıtlarının yeniden yapılandırılması ve ekonomik ve politik olanın çeşitli mekanizmalarla ayrıştırılması ve böylelikle ekonomi politikaları üzerindeki demokratik politik kontrolün ortadan kaldırılmasına yönelik tedbirler; sermaye birikimi için yasal ve kurumsal teminatlarla kapitalist piyasaların kurulması ve genişlemesine yönelik tedbirler; ve neoliberal küreselleşmenin meşrulaştırılması ve siyasal muhalefetin belirlenmesi, atanması yoluyla bozulma ve çatışmalara yönelik tedbirler.

Meseleye Türkiye akademisi içinden bakıldığında, küresel kapitalizm, ulusal tarım ve köylülük arasındaki ilişkileri inceleyerek bu tartışmaları Türkiye bağlamına yerleştirmeye çalışan çalışmalar da mevcuttur. Boratav ve Erdost (1969) arasındaki Türkiye'de tarımsal üreticilerin yapısına dair tarihi tartışmayı bir yana bırakırsak), Murat Öztürk (2012), Çağlar Keyder ve Zafer Yenal (2013) ve Zülküf Aydın (2010,2017) kapitalizm ve Türkiye'de tarımsal üreticiler arasındaki ilişkiye dair güncel yaklaşımlar sunmaktadırlar. Öte yandan, Türkiye'de sivil girişimlerin gıda egemenliği üzerine etkisine dair Gürel (2018) ve Kara (2020) tarafından yazılmış iki vaka çalışması bulunmaktadır. Ancak, bu iki çalışmanın kıymetli katkılarına rağmen, Türkiye'de gıda egemenliğinin pratik yansımalarına dair daha fazla araştırmaya ihtiyaç vardır.

Neliberalizmin Türkiye'de devlet ve küçük tarımsal üreticiler üzerindeki başlıca disipline edici süreçleriyle birlikte bunların gıda egemenliğine ilişkin sonuçlarını sorgulamayı amaçlayan bu tez çalışması, hem devletin gıda egemenliğinin aleyhine

olacak şekilde yeniden yapılandırılmasına dair makro düzey bir analiz hem de küçük tarımsal üreticilerin hayatlarında değişen unsurlara dair mikro-düzey bir analiz içermektedir. Çok ölçekli bir egemenlik kavramsallaştırması benimseyen bu çalışmada, tarımın neoliberal dönüşümü ve sebep olduğu gıda egemenliği sonuçları devletin kurumsal kimliğine dair olgusal kanıtlar ve çiftçinin bireysel kimliğine dair öznel tecrübe ve tutumlara başvurularak ortaya konulmuştur.

Devletin sermaye birikiminin tamamıyla dışında kalmasının ve sermayeye karşı mutlak devlet egemenliğinin mümkün olmadığını kabul ederek, bu tez çalışmasında egemenlik, karşılıklı bağımlılıklar ve karmaşıklıklar içeren bir küresel tarım-gıda sisteminde devlet ve farklı ölçeklerde başka amillerce paylaşılan bir şey olarak anlamlandırılmış, son yirmi yılda ülkenin küresel piyasalara ve ilgili yönetişim mekanizmalarına doğru hızlanan neoliberal eklemlenme sürecinde ortaya konulan yasal-kurumsal reform süreçleri yoluyla, Türkiye devleti ve çiftçisinin küresel tarım-gıda sermayesine karşı egemenlik kaybına uğradığı, bunun da hem devlet hem de çiftçi için derin bir gıda egemenliği kaybı sonucu doğurduğu savunulmuştur.

Türkiye'de tarımın neoliberal dönüşümü ve sebep olduğu gıda egemenliği kayıpları şu iki farklı teorik çerçeve analitik olarak birbirine bağlanarak ele alınmıştır: yeni anaysalcılık ve gıda egemenliği. Gill'e (1998, 2000) ait yeni anayasalcılığın üç süreci Türkiye'de gıda egemenliği bağlamında devletin yeniden yapılandırılmasına ilişkin makro düzey yasal-kurumsal analizler için kullanılmış, bu teze özel olarak geliştirilmiş olup yarı-yapılandırılmış, derinlemesine mülakatlar içeren "Gıda Egemenliği Değerlendirmesi için Çiftçi Araştırması" da çiftçi düzeyinde gıda egemenliği tecrübesi ve tutumlarının analizi için kullanılmıştır. Bu amaçla Ayaş'ta domates, Polatlı'da da buğday üreten küçük tarımsal üreticilerle görüşmeler gerçekleştirilmiştir.

Domates ve buğday, Çiftçi Araştırması örneklemine hem vatandaşların beslenmesi için kritik öneme sahip temel bir gıdayı hem de uluslararası ticarete konu olup çiftçilerin gelirleri için büyük önem taşıyan bir sebzeyi kapsamak adına dahil edilmiştir. Her iki ürünün de küresel tohum piyasasında kayda değer bir yere sahip olması, bu ürünleri gıda egemenliği tartışmalarında kıymetli hale getirmektedir. Tarım ve Orman Bakanlığı'na bağlı olarak Farklılık, Yeknesaklık ve Durulmuşluk Testlerini yapmakla

yetkilendirilmişi olan Tohumluk Tescil ve Sertifikasyon Merkezi'ne başvurular arasında buğday, mısır ve domates ilk üç sırada yer almaktadır.

Çifti Araştırması kapsamında, Haziran-Ekim 2022 döneminde farklı yaş gruplarından, farklı eğitim seviyelerinden ve ektikleri alan bakımından 5 dekardan 1450 dekara kadar toprak eken 16 çiftçi ve tamamlayıcı olarak tohum endüstrisi ve çiftçi örgütlerinden 4 temsilciyle olmak üzere toplam 20 mülakat gerçekleştirilmiştir. Saha araştırması tasarımı, ziraat mühendisliği alanından kamu, akademi ve özel sektör tecrübesi olan uzmanların görüşleri alınarak ve Haziran ayında gerçekleştirilen pilot saha gezisi ve mülakatlardan edinilen geribildirim dikkate alınarak sonuçlandırılmış, çiftçilerin cevaplarındaki derinlik ve ilişkiselliğe göre soru kompozisyonunda belirli revizyonlara gidilmiştir. Katılımcı gözlemi, saha günlüğü ve mülakatlar yoluyla toplanan veri, her bir saha ziyaretinden sonra düzenli olarak deşifre edilmiş, gıda egemenliğinin altı boyutu ve tohum egemenliği başlıkları itibariyle yedi grup altında tasnif edilmiş, cevaplar arasındaki ortak konular ve örüntü ortaya çıkarılmıştır.

Bu çalışma, yedi bölümden oluşmaktadır. İlk bölüm, araştırma sorularını, tezin yapısını ve saha araştırması tasarımını ortaya koymaktadır. Çiftçi Araştırması için araştırma biriminin nasıl tespit edildiği, örnekleme ve veri toplama yöntemi ve verinin nasıl analiz edildiği bu bölümde takdim edilmiştir.

İkinci bölüm, tarımın ve gıdanın neoliberal dönüşümünü ve küresel gıda egemenliğinin bir teori ve pratik alanı olarak yükselişini anlamak için teorik ve kavramsal bir çerçeve ortaya koymakta. Bu amaçla, üçüncü gıda rejimi bağlamında küresel gıda egemenliği hareketinin gelişimi ele alınmıştır. Daha sonra küresel gıda egemenliği hareketi bağlamında egemenliğin sınırlarına dair önemli bir tartışma ortaya konuşmuştur. Egemenlik kavramı, devlet merkezli hukuki ve ülkesel anlamının ötesine taşınmış ve devletin yasal-kurumsal kimliği ve çiftçinin bireysel kimliğine ilişkin otonomi ve bağımsızlığı birbirine bağlar şekilde bir anlam genişlemesine uğratılmıştır. Bu bağlamda; kastedilen egemenin kim olduğu, egemenliğin kime karşı iddia edildiği gibi eleştiriler üzerinden teorik zayıflıkları vurgulanan gıda egemenliği teorisini "egemenlik" kavramı etrafında güçlendirmeye yönelik olarak bir takım teorik bağlantılar önerilmiştir. Amartya Sen'in (1990) kalkınmayı özgürlük olarak telakki ederek önerdiği "yapabilirlikler" yaklaşımı, Seyla Benhabib'in (2004) hak taleplerini ulus-devletin

ötesine taşıyan demokrasi tartışmasındaki "demos" kavramı, Balibar'ın (2014) vatandaşlık bağının dışında ortak direnç eylemleri geliştirilebilmesi için gerekli olan aidiyetler için önerdiği "yersizyurtsuzlaşmış vatandaşlık" veya "diaspora vatandaşlığı" kavramları, Kiopkiolis'in (2017) demokrasi deneyimini sınırlandıran, baskılayan "devlet tarafından hegemonik temsil" uygulamamaları ile herkesin sürekli hazır bulunması üzerine inşa edilmiş mutlak demokrasi yanılsamasına alternatif olarak önerdiği "demokrasiyi halka açma/halka açık demokrasi" kavamsallaştırması, McMichael'in (2013) küresel köylü hareketine güç atfeder şekilde önerdiği "zirai vatandaşlık" kavramı ve Raj Patel'in (2009) küresel gıda egemenliği hareketi kapsamında farklı ölçeklerde demokratik bağlar kurabilme kabiliyeti için başlangıç noktası olarak önerdiği "ahlaki evrensellik" ilkesi, başvurulan başlıca harici teorik ve kavramsal kaynaklar olmuştur. Tohum egemenliğinin gıda egemenliği içindeki önemine de bu bölümde değinilmiştir. Gıda egemenliği hareketinin kapitalizm karşıtı duruşu açıklığa kavuşturulduktan sonra, tartışmayı devletin yeniden yapılandırılması ve neoliberalizme bağlamak için "yeni anayasalcılık" ele alınmıştır.

Bu teorik ve kavramsal incelemeden sonra, üçüncü bölümde Türkiye'de tarımsal üretimin durumu, tüketimin durumu, üretici profili, gıda güvenliği ne ilişkin ulaşılabilen istatistiki göstergeler ve 1980lerden bu yana tohumun metalaşması yönündeki gidişat olgusal veriye dayanarak sunulmuştur.

Dördüncü bölüm, Türkiye'de devletin yeniden yapılandırılması ve tarımın dönüşümünü irdelemek üzere Gill'in (1998) yeni anayasalcılık tartışması kapsamında önerdiği üç temel sürece değinmektedir. Bu bağlamda, bu üç sürecin her biri için belirli boyutlar ve göstergeler önerilmiş ve Türkiye bağlamına uygulanmıştır. Bu kapsamda sermayeye fırsat veren bir devlet için yürütmenin gücünü arttırmak, küresel yatırımcının "kutsal" haklarını ulusal hukuka aşılamak ve meşrulaştırma ve neoliberal gıda ve tarım politikaları için rızanın genişletilmesi şeklinde üç ana başlık (boyut/süreç) altında Türkiye'ye özel olarak önerilen göstergeler irdelenerek son yirmi yılda gerçekleştirilen yasal ve kurumsal reformlar gözden geçirilmiştir. Kullanılan analitik çerçeve aşağıdaki tabloda özetlenmiştir:

Gill'in "Yeni Anayasalcılığın Üç Süreci" ve Türkiye'de Aksayan Gıda Egemenliğine ilişkin Göstergeler

Boyutlar/Süreçler	**Gıda Egemenliğinin Bozulması Sürecinde Yeni Anayasalcılık Göstergeleri**
1. Sermayeye fırsat veren bir devlet için yürütmenin gücünü arttırmak	Cumhurbaşkanlığı Hükümet Sistemi ve Tarım Politikaları için Çıkarımlar: ▪ Meclisin yasama yetkisi zayıflatıldı ▪ Meclisin denetim yetkisi zayıflatıldı ▪ Bütçe hakkı yasamadan yürütmeye devroldu. Tarım bütçesi (Bütçe Kanunu) mecliste müzakere edilmeksizin, Yürütme'nin başı tarafından hazırlanıp onaylanmakta. ▪ Bakanlar Meclis dışından atanmakta, vatandaş/üretici ile Bakanlar arasındaki hesap verebilirlik zinciri koptu. ▪ Yatırımcı dostu politika söylemi üreticilerin siyasal özneliğini ve haklarını zayıflatıp ticareti önceliklendirdi. ▪ Tarım politikaları kapalı ve oldukça merkezi siyasal kadrolar tarafından belirlenmekte. Cumhurbaşkanlığına bağlı Politika Kurulları Bakanlık bürokrasisi ve Meclis'e üstün gelmekte. ▪ Cumhurbaşkanının şahsiyeti etrafında aşırı merkezileşmiş karar alma süreçleri tahkim edildi. ▪ Tüm ulusal ve uluslararası yasal taahhütlerde Cumhurbaşkanının keyfi ve kişisel kararları, küresel sermaye ile "hızlı ve etkin" ilişkiler için alan açmakta.
2. Küresel yatırımcının "kutsal" haklarını ulusal hukuka aşılamak	Gıda, tarım ve tohum alanında belirli uluslararası anlaşmalardaki taahhütlerle uyumlu olarak ulusal mevzuatın yeniden yapılandırılması. 2000lerin başında IMF, Dünya Bankası ve AB tarafından verilen politika tavsiyeleri, Dünya Ticaret Örgütü'nün Tarım Anlaşması (1995), Ticaretle ilgili Fikri Mülkiyet Hakları Anlaşması

	(1995) ve UPOV 1991 Sözleşmesine dayalıydı. Bahsi geçen uluslararası reçeteler ve taahhütlerle uyumlu olarak, öncelikle ülkedeki bitki çeşidi koruma rejiminin yeniden yapılandırılması, tohumun metalaşması ve bitki ıslahçıları ve tohum üreticilerine yasal güvenceler ve patentler sunulmasına hizmet eden bir dizi sermaye yanlı değişiklik getirildi. Bu bağlamda aşağıdaki yasal düzenlemeler ve reformlar incelenmiştir: ▪ 5042 Sayılı Yeni Bitki Çeşitlerine Ait Islahçı Haklarının Korunmasına Dair Kanun (2004) ▪ 5553 Sayılı Tohumculuk Kanunu (2006) ▪ 5488 Sayılı Tarım Kanunu (2006) ▪ 5977 Sayılı Biyogüvenlik Kanunu (2010) ▪ Dünya Bankası tarafından finanse edilen Tarım Reformu Uygulama Projesi (ARIP)* **Dünya Bankası'nın ARIP Projesi, tarımsal üreticilere "yapay teşvikler ve sübvansiyonlar"ın kaldırılması ve Çiftçi Kayıt Sistemi'nin kurulmasıyla sonuçlanmıştır. (Küresel raporlama için gözetim, bilhassa AB ve Dünya Ticaret Örgütü'ne taahhütler için)*
3. Meşrulaştırma ve neoliberal gıda ve tarım politikaları için rızanın genişletilmesi	▪ Tarım politikaları ve projelerini de içerecek şekilde zengin bir kamu politikası seti için meşruiyet sağlamak üzere "yerli ve milli" olma, yerli ve milli olanı arama ve destekleme söylemi kullanılıyor. ▪ Kontrollü bir katılımı sağlayacak şekilde tarımsal paydaşlara "davet edilmiş bir politika alanı" açılıyor. ▪ Nihayetinde formal tohum piyasasının genişlemesi amacıyla informal tohum piyasası ve yerel çeşitlere sınırlı mevcudiyet alanı sağlanıyor. ▪ Mülksüzleşen kırsal nüfusa küçük finansal destek programları sağlanıyor.

"Gıda egemenliğini Türkçe'ye çevirmek ve Çiftçi Araştırması'nı operasyoneleştirmek" başlığıyla sunulan beşinci bölümde, gıda egemenliği kavramının Türkiye'de insanların

zihinlerine ve deneyimlerine ulaşana kadar dilsel bir seyahatten geçtiği, gıda egemenliği ve gıda bağımsızlığı gibi aslında "egemenlik" ve "bağımsızlık" gibi iki farklı kavramla ilişkili olarak Türkçe'ye yerleştiği, dolayısıyla Türkiye sivil toplumu ve akademisinde çeşitli yankılar uyandırdığına vurgu yapılarak, alanyazındaki eksiklikler tespit edilmiş, bu tezin potansiyel katkısı belirginleştirilmeye çalışılmış ve Ayaş ve Polatlı'da uygulanan Çiftçi Araştırması için gıda egemenliğinin altı ilkesinin nasıl operasyonelleştirildiği açıklanmıştır. Domates ve buğday çiftçilerinin gıda egemenliğini nasıl algıladıkları ve tecrübe ettiklerine dair genel bir görünüm sunabilmek için şu temel sorulardan yola çıkılmıştır:

- Gıda, öncelikle insanları beslemek için mi üretiliyor yoksa tarım politikalarının ve çiftçi tercihlerinin asıl belirleyicisi ticaret mi?
- Çiftçiler tohum girdisi özelinde girdiler bakımından otonom olmanın önemine haiz mi ve kayıtlı (formal) ve kayıtdışı (informal) tohum piyasasındaki deneyimleri ne?
- Tarım, küçük tarımsal üreticilere güvenli bir geçim kaynağı teşkil ediyor mu, başlıca tehditler neler?
- Canlı bir yerel pazar var mı? Üretici ve tüketici arasındaki mesafe, yerel gıda sistemlerini nasıl etkiliyor?
- Gıda üzerinde kimin kontrolü var? Çiftçiler gıda politikası süreçlerine katılıyor mu?
- Çiftçinin özgün, geleneksel bilgisine karşı bilimsel şirket bilgisi nasıl konumlanmakta?
- Çiftçilerin doğayı korumaya yönelik bir farkındalığı var mı? Çiftçilik uygulamaları ve çevre arasındaki ilişkideki değişiklikleri nasıl görüyorlar?

Bu amaçla geliştirilen soru formuna yön vermek üzere kullanılan Gıda Egemenliği Değerlendirme Çerçevesi, aşağıdaki tabloda sunulmaktadır:

Gıda Egemenliği Değerlendirme Çerçevesi

Gıda Egemenliği Boyutları	Göstergeler
1.İnsanlar için gıda: İnsanların beslenmesi için üretimi önceliklendirmek gerekir. Gıda bir meta değildir. Ticari öncelikler ve sermaye birikimi için ticaretten ziyade, öncelikle insanların beslenme ihtiyaçları gıda politikalarını yönlendirmelidir..	Bir kavram ve uygulama olarak gıda egemenliğinin farkında olma, hane gelirinin bir parçası olarak gıda harcaması düzeyi, gıda kaynakları (mekânsal irdeleme) ve üretim araçlarına erişim (toprak, su, tohum ve krediler)
2.Gıda üreticilerinin geçim kaynaklarının korunması: Gıda üretimi milyonlarca insan için geçim kaynağıdır. Dolayısıyla gıda politikaları, başta köylüler ve küçük çiftçiler olmak üzere bu insanların geçim kaynaklarını korumaya dikkat etmelidir.	Gelir kaynakları, gelir düzeyi, varlık kontrolü ve tohum dahil üretim araçlarının mülkiyet durumu, yerel gıda satışının mevcudiyeti
3.Gıda sistemlerini yerelleştirmek, gıda mesafesini düşürmek: Üretici ve tüketici arasındaki gıda millerini (mesafesini) düşürmek çok önemli. Mesafe hesap verebilirliği ve sürdürülebilirliği azaltmakta ve bağımlılıklar yaratmaktadır.	Tarım üreticileri tarafından tüketilen gıdanın kaynakları, tarım ürünlerinin ticaretinin yapıldığı varış noktaları, seçili tohum çeşitlerinden üretilen mahsulün üreticisi ve tüketicisi arasındaki mesafe, dışarıdan gıda kaynaklarına bağımlılık düzeyi
4.Gıda üzerine karar almada yerel gıda üreticilerinin katılımı: Yerel gıda üreticileri gıda politikası üzerinde karar alma yetkisine sahip olmalı.	Kooperatif örgütlerin mevcudiyeti ve üyelik durumu, topluluk içinde neyin hasat edileceğine kimin karar verdiği hakkında farkındalık, bireysel ve kolektif siyasal eylemler, yerel ve ulusal politika süreçleriyle ve politikacılarla ilişkiler
5.Yerel bilgi ve becerilere dayanmak: Gıda üreticilerinin yerel bilgi ve becerileri takdir edilmeli, çiftçilik bilgisinin geliştirilmesi için temel kabul edilmeli ve gelecek kuşaklara teknoloji yardımıyla aktarılabilmelidir.	Tarımsal üretim ve gıda geleneklerinin korunması, yerel bilginin değeri ve mevcut durumu hakkında farkındalık, tarımsal yayım hizmetleriyle ilişki (pasif kabul mü, yoksa teknisyenlerle işbirliği mi?)

6.Doğal kaynakları korumak: Çevresel zararı ve küresel ısınmaya en aza indirmek için doğal kaynaklar korunmalıdır.	Çevresel değişimlerin gıda sistemlerine ve gıda sistemlerindeki değişikliklerin çevreye etkilerine dair farkındalık. Tarımsal uygulamalardaki dönüm noktaları ve sonuç olarak ortaya çıkan çevresel değişiklikler hakkında farkındalık.

Bu tezdeki çiftçi düzeyinde gıda egemenliği değerlendirmesi, bireysel çiftçi düzeyinde gıda egemenliğinin dışavurumlarını tespit etmek üzere yeni bir analiz aracı olarak geliştirilmiştir. Bu değerlendirme aracı, topluluk ve devlet gibi daha üst ölçekte özneler için de gıda egemenliği analizleri yapmak için uyarlanabilir özelliklere sahiptir. Egemenlik gibi tartışmalı bir soyutlama, küresel gıda egemenliği hareketinin destekçilerine kapitalizm karşıtı yürüyüşlerinin her bir adımında yön bulmalarına imkân sağlayacak somut ve operasyonel bir alana taşınmıştır.

Altıncı bölümde, iki kritik ürünün tarımını yapan çiftçilerin gıda egemenliğine dair öznel tecrübeleri ve tutumlarını belirlemek ve ülke tarımında metalaşmanın yaygınlaşması ve gıda egemenliğinin zedelenmesi arasındaki ilişkiyi ortaya koymak için Çiftçi Araştırması sonuçları sunulmuştur. Domates çiftçilerinin hibrit tohum çeşitlerine daha fazla bağımlı oldukları için küresel hibrit tohum piyasasının yayılmasından daha fazla olumsuz yönde etkilenirlerken daha yerel bir piyasada tüketicilerine daha kısa bir mesafeden satış yaptıkları için uluslararası domates ticaretinden daha az etkilendikleri, devletin domates ithalatını Ayaş'taki domates üreticileri üzerinde disipline edici olarak kullanmadığı tespit edilmiştir. Öte yandan, buğday üreticilerinin kayıt dışı buğday piyasasından daha fazla istifade ettiği, ancak içerde fiyatları düşürmek isteyen devletin aşırı ithalata yönelik kararlarından kötü şekilde etkilendiği görülmüştür. Gıda egemenliği sonuçları bakımından her iki üretici grubunun da uluslararası ticaretten etkilendiği tespit edilmiştir. Domates üreticileri küresel hibrit tohum piyasasının yayılmasına istinaden girdi bakımından otonom olma hali açısından etkilenirken, buğday üreticileri devletin serbest ticaret anlaşmaları ve ithalat kararları ve dolayısıyla ürünlerinin fiyatının düşmesi açısından etkilenmektedir. Bu bölümde köylülerin mülksüzleşmesine dair çeşitli göstergeler sunduktan sonra, Türkiye'de köylü tarımının ciddi bir yok olma sorunuyla yüzleştiği, bunun da gıda egemenliğinin geleceği bakımından yeni tartışmalar ortaya çıkardığı ele alınmıştır.

Son olarak, yedinci bölümde devletin yasal-kurumsal dönüşümü ile küçük tarımsal üreticinin gündelik tecrübeleri arasında bağ kurulmuş, farklı ölçeklerde gerçekleşen neoliberal dönüşümler arasındaki düğüm noktaları tespit edilmiştir. Tarım ve ticareti düzenleyen mevzuattaki piyasa yanlı reformlar yoluyla kapitalizmin disipline edici hukukunun ulusal hukuka nüfuz etmesi; Cumhurbaşkanına denge ve denetleme mekanizmalarından muaf tutulmuş aşırı bir güç verilmesi kaydıyla yürütmenin yasama ve yargı organlarına karşı güçlü hale gelmesi ve "yerli ve millilik" söylemini benimsenmesiyle birlikte küçük tarımsal üreticiye sınırlı siyasal katılım ve mali destek yoluyla piyasa yanlı reformların meşrulaştırılması şeklinde üç ana süreç, devletin ve birey olarak çiftçinin egemenliğini küresel sermayeye karşı sınırlandıran süreçler olarak tespit edilmiştir. Ne devlet ne de küçük tarımsal üreticiler küresel şirket sermayesinden bağımsız olarak kendi üretim kararlarını alacak konumdadır. Nu itibarla, devlet ve vatandaş/üreticiden küresel sermayeye doğru bir egemenlik devri gerçekleştiği söylenebilir. Bu kapanış bölümünde ayrıca gelecekteki araştırmalarda ele alınmasında yarar görülen alanlar takdim edilmiştir. Tarımsal emek süreçlerindeki değişimler ve mevsimlik tarım işçiliğinin yükselişi, devletin tarımsal eğitim ve danışmanlık hizmetlerinden çekilmesi, kentsel orta sınıfın kırsal yerleşimlere yükselen ilgisi, yerel liderlik sorunu ve çiftçilerin siyasal örgütsüzlüğü ve genç ve yaşlı çiftçilerin tarıma yaklaşımındaki kuşak farklılıkları tavsiye edilen araştırma başlıklarından bazılarıdır.

Çiftçi araştırmasından edinilen bulguları aktarmak gerekirse, öncelikle araştırma esnasında şahit olunan saha gözlemleri arasında ön plana çıkan altı temel hususa değinmekte fayda vardır. Çiftçilerin yöneltilen sorulara ilişkin cevaplarının ötesinde saha gözlemlerinden derlenen aşağıdaki hususlar, çiftçilerin gerçek deneyim ve tutumlarına dair tamamlayıcı mesajlar içermektedir.

I-Çiftçilerin siyasal eylemliliği baskı altındadır: Yetersiz bir ifade özgürlüğü ve aşırı umutsuzluk hakimdir.	II-Eski ve yeni köylülük bir arada varlığını sürdürmektedir: Köylüler rahatlık aramakta, piyasanın nimetlerinden faydalanmakta ancak paylaşma davranışlarında da kendi üretici

	güçlerine dayanmaktadır.
III-Toprak metalaşmış, çiftçi gözden çıkarılabilir hale gelmiştir: Tarım arazileri tarım dışında her şey için satılığa çıkarılmış durumdadır, çiftçiler kentsel altyapı arasında sıkışmış durumdadır.	**IV- Kent-yanlılık çelişkileri: Çiftçiler kentli tüketici/yerleşimciye karşı, çatışan çıkarlar, varsayımlar, beklentiler**
V-İki uçta sömürücü emek süreçleri: Köylünün öz-sömürüsü ve mevsimlik tarım işçisinin emeğinin sömürüsü bir arada	VI-Kadınları sahada görünür kılma zorluğu: çiftçi kadın ve araştırmacı kadının görünmezliği

Saha araştırmasından elde edilen veriler, Türkiye'de küçük çiftçilerin Türkiye devletiyle arasındaki vatandaşlık bağlarının ötesinde bir "çiftçi demosu" , "diaspora vatandaşlığı" veya "zirai vatandaşlık" niteliği taşıyıp taşımadığına, bu bağlamda çiftçilerin ahlaki evrensellik temelinde küresel gıda egemenliği hareketinin bir parçası olmaya hazır olup olmadıklarına, çiftçilerin kendilerini halka açık bir gıda demokrasisi içinde aktif amiller haline getiren etkili siyasal katılım yöntemleri ve kanallarından istifade edip etmediklerine, çiftçilerin gıda egemenliği kavramını özgürlük ve yapabilirlikle ilişkili bir kavram olarak algılayıp algılamadıklarına, ithal edilmiş bir kavram olarak gıda egemenliği içinde devleti nasıl konumlandırdıklarına ve son olarak kapitalist üretim ilişkilerinden yalıtılmış ve şirket gıda rejimini alt etmeye hazır köylülerin var olup olmadığına dair önemli bulgular ortaya koymuştur.

Öncelikle, ulusal ve küresel ölçekte gıda demokrasisi için dayanışma ve kolektif öznellik potansiyeli taşıyan yerel bir çiftçi demosuyla karşılaşıldığı söylenemez. Görüşülen çiftçilerin oldukça zayıf bireysel ve kolektif siyasal eylemlilik özellikleriyle birlikte küresel gıda piyasasında hayatta kalma çabasıyla meşgul olduğu görülmüştür. Ulusa ve ulus devlete bağlılık, sınırların ötesinde bir gıda egemenliğine ilişkin diğer tüm evrensel ve kozmopolitan ahlaki bağlılıklardan daha güçlüdür. Korku, yalıtılmışlık ve

çekimserlik yönündeki siyasal davranışlarla tanımlanabilecek olan örgütsüz köylü ve küçük çiftçi kitlesi, Balibar'ın (2014) kavramsallaştırmasındaki gibi bir diaspora vatandaşlığı veya McMichael'in (2013) kavramsallaştırmasındaki gibi bir zirai vatandaşlık mefhumunun çok uzağındadır. Devlet ve vatandaş ilişkisinin tarihsel gelişimi, Türkiye çiftçisini her türlü siyasal eylemin cezalandırılacağı korkusuyla devletin sadık vatandaşları olarak konumlandırmıştır. Bu miras, çiftçilerin yerel ve ulusal düzeyde örgütlü bir hareket geliştirmesinin önünde önemli bir engel teşkil etmekte ve bu da Türkiye çiftçisinin gıda egemenliği şemsiyesi altında küresel muhalif cepheye eklemlenmesini ve ülkede gıda demokrasisinin gerçekleşmesini zorlaştırmaktadır. Küresel gıda egemenliği hareketinin kozmopolitan iddialarına ve bu tezde gıda egemenliği teorisi içinde gıda demokrasisine daha fazla siyasal alan açmak adına egemenlik kavramının sınırlarını devlet egemenliğinin ötesine taşımaya yönelik gösterilen teorik çabalara rağmen, sahada çiftçilerin gıda egemenliğini sıklıkla devlet egemenliğiyle eş anlamlı olarak algıladıklarına şahit olunmuştur.

İkinci olarak; çiftçilerin Sen'in (1990) yapabilirlikler çerçevesi itibariyle ciddi bir özgürlük açığı yaşadıkları görülmekte ve çifçiler adil bir gıda sisteminden istifade etme özgürlüğünü yine öncelikle devletin bahşetmesini talep etmektedir. Saha bulguları itibariyle, egemen olan devlet; egemenlik tüccara, aracıya, küresel şirketlere ve diğer devletlere karşı talep ediliyor; egemenlik başta toprak, tohum, emek ve su olmak üzere üretim araçları üzerinde ve piyasaya erişim üzerinde talep ediliyor; gıda egemenliği de ancak güçlü düzenleme ve yeniden bölüşüm işlevleri olan egemen bir devletin var olduğu koşullarda mevcut görülüyor.

Üçüncü olarak, saha bulguları McMichael (2009) ve Van der Ploeg'in (2014) romantik iddialarındakinin aksine kapitalist üretim ilişkilerinden yalıtılmış bir köylülüğün var olmadığını doğruluyor ve Bernstein (2014) ve Jansen'i (2015) haklı çıkarıyor, Jansen'in (2015) deyimiyle bozulmuş bir köylülükle karşılaştırıyor bizi Türkiye'de. Küresel gıda egemenliği hareketinin kapitalizm karşıtı duruşu ve köylü tarımının destekçileri Türkiye çiftçisinin tecrübe ve tutumlarında zayıf bir karşılık buluyor.

Son olarak, son yirmi yılda Türkiye'de işlemekte olduğu tespit edilen yeni anayasalcılığın üç ana süreci, görüşülen çiftçilerin tecrübe ve tutumlarıyla uyumluluk gösteriyor. Küçük çiftçiler gıda sistemindeki metalaşma ve mülksüzleşmeye yönelik

dönemeçleri yürütmenin gücünün artması, demokratik katılım kanallarının daraltılması ve tarım mevzuatı ve politikalarındaki neoliberal dönüşümle bağdaştırıyor. Cumhurbaşkanlığı Hükümet Sistemi altında aşırı yetkilendirilmiş bir yürütme organı etrafında devletin yeniden yapılandırılması sürecinin bir parçası olarak tarım politikalarında siyasal hesap verebilirlik ve meşruiyet unsurlarının atlanması, çiftçilerin hayatında etkiler oluşturmuştur. Küçük çiftçiler çıkarlarının devlette temsil edilmediğinden şikâyet etmekte ve devleti küresel şirket sermayesinin çıkarlarıyla uyumlu olarak hareket etmek konusunda sorumlu tutmaktadır. Öte yandan, küçük çiftçiler çareyi de devlette görmektedir. Gıda egemenliği ve bağımsız çiftçiliğin gerçekleşmesi için devleti göreve davet etmektedirler. Yeni anayasalcılığın üç ana süreci içinde yerli ve milli söylemi üzerinden meşrulaştırma, çiftçiler tarafında geri tepmiş görünmektedir. Çiftçiler yerli ve millilik adı altında yürütülen serbestleştirme politikalarına karşı sıklıkla öfke ve şüphe ifade etmişlerdir.

Yeni anayasalcılığın üç ana süreci işletilerek devletin yasal-kurumsal olarak yeniden yapılandırılmasına ilişkin incelemeler ile gıda egemenliğinin altı temel ilkesi ve tohum egemenliği bağlamında Çiftçi Araştırması'ndan edinilen başlıca bulgular şu şekilde özetlenebilir:

1. Gıda egemenliği hareketinin genişletilmiş bir egemenlik yorumlamasına ihtiyacı vardır.
2. Çiftçiler bağımsız bir çiftçilik deneyimi için egemen bir devlete ihtiyaç duymaktadır.
3. Türkiye tarım mevzuatı 2001 ekonomik krizi sonrası üretici-vatandaşların haklarını küresel yatırımcıya devreden neoliberal bir reform saldırısına maruz kalmıştır.
4. Diğer toplumsal güçlere karşı yürütmenin gücünün aşamalı olarak yükseltilmesi Cumhurbaşkanlığı Hükümet Sistemi ile zirveye ulaşmış ve ulusal tarım bu dönemde artırılmış bir serbestleştirmeye ve yatırımcı dostu olmaya açılmıştır.
5. Yerli ve millilik siyasal söylemi ve Yürütme'nin kontrolündeki Tarım Şurası gibi "davet edilen" siyasa alanlar, tarımın serbestleştirilmesi için rızanın inşası amacıyla kullanılmaktadır.
6. Köylüler ve küçük çiftçiler girdi bağımsızlığına sahip değildir.

7. Çiftçiler gıda egemenliğini egemen bir devlet tarafından güvence altına alınan bağımsızlık ve kendi kendine yetebilme hali olarak algılamaktadır.
8. Çiftçiler, iyi düzenlenmiş bir uluslararası ticareti geçim kaynakları bakımından iyi bir şey olarak görmektedir.
9. Çiftçilerin kendi yetiştirdikleri tohumların sertifikalı tohumlarla ikame edilmesi beceri kaybı, borçluluk, bağımlılık ve netice itibariyle çiftçiler için gıda egemenliği kaybına neden olmaktadır.
10. Özel sektör ıslah çalışmaları ancak ve ancak devletin bir düzenleyici ve ıslahçı olarak dengelemesi koşuluyla iklim değişikliği baskısı altında artan dünya nüfusunu beslemek ve küçük çiftçilerin gelirlerini arttırmak bakımından gelecek vadedebilir.
11. Çiftçiler ve üreticiler arasındaki mesafe, gıda egemenliğini sekteye uğratan ahlaki, ekonomik ve çevresel etkiler oluşturmaktadır.
12. Tarım yerel köylü için bir geçim kaynağı olmaktan çıkıp bu çağın en sömürücü emek çeşitlerinden biri olarak mevsimlik tarım işçiliğini türeten bir sektöre dönüşmektedir.
13. Köylüler ve küçük çiftçilerin özgün bilgisine tarımsal girdi piyasasındaki küresel tarım şirketleri tarafından el konulmaktadır.
14. Hem domates hem de buğday üreticileri gıda egemenliğinin altı boyutu itibariyle tam bir gıda egemenliği tecrübesinden yoksundur.
15. Yalıtılmış, parçalanmış ve örgütsüz çiftçiler topluluğu, ortak çıkarları için kolektif siyasal eylemliliğinden yoksundur. Çiftçiler ne yerel ne ulusal en de küresel ölçekte bir “demos” teşkil etmektedir.
16. Küçük çiftçiler, gerçekleştirdikleri çevresel olarak sürdürülebilir olmayan çiftçilik uygulamaları için piyasa baskısını sorumlu tutmakta ve devlet ve büyük şirketleri düzeltici müdahalelerde bulunabilecek sorumluluk ve yeterlilikteki asıl aktörler olarak görmektedirler.

Devlet ve çiftçi ölçeğinde egemenlik kaybına ilişkin bulgular arasındaki bağlantı noktalarına dair de şu hususların altını çizmekte fayda görülmektedir.

1. Uluslararası ticaret, çiftçiler üzerinde disipline edici bir araç olarak kullanılmaktadır. Tarım ithalatının aşırı kullanılması, bu ticaretin asıl

maliyetlerini yüklenen çiftçi ve devletten ziyade uluslararası ticaret aracılarının çıkarınadır.

2. Dünya Ticaret Örgütü, Uluslararası Yeni Bitki Çeşitlerinin Korunması Birliği, Avrupa Birliği, Dünya Bankası ve Uluslararası Para Fonu'na verilen taahhütler kapsamında atılan tarımda serbestleşme ve özelleştirme adımları, girdi bağımlılığını arttırmış, çiftçiler için kamusal destekleri azaltmış ve çiftçi borçlarını arttırmıştır.
3. Tohum sektörü üzerinde yargı yetkisi dolaylı olarak ulusal mahkemelerden sektördeki özel şirketlerin çatı örgütüne devredilmiştir ki burada küresel tarım-gıda şirketleri de güçlü olarak temsil edilmektedir. Çiftçiler bu şekilde özel tohum şirketlerine karşı hak talepleri için ulusal mahkemelere başvurmaktan geri püskürtülmektedir.
4. Ulusal mahkemeler, küresel tarım-gıda şirketlerinin ulusal çiftçilere karşı tohum ıslahçısı olarak yönelttikleri hak iddialarına cevap vermekte, çiftçilerden maddi ve manevi tazminat talep edilmektedir. Öte yandan, Türkiye devletinin yargı organları hala çiftçilerin geçim kaynaklarının korunması üzerinden olumlu bir etkiye sahiptir. Danıştay ve Sayıştay gibi ulusal yüksek yargı organlarının kararları tüm neoliberal yapılandırma süreçlerine rağmen devletin yargı organının çiftçinin çıkarları lehine, yeniden bölüştürücü rolünün devam ettiğini göstermektedir.
5. Uluslararası taahhütlerle uyumlu olarak tohum piyasasının kayıtlı/formal hale getirilmesine yönelik yapılan ulusal düzenlemeler esnek bir şekilde uygulanmakta, popülist seçim stratejileri dolayısıyla kayıtdışı/informal tohum piyasasına müsamaha gösterilmektedir. Ancak çiftçiler devletin yasanın sıkı uygulanması yönünde stratejik bir değişiklik yapmasını, geçim kaynaklarına karşı yakın bir tehdit olarak görmektedir.
6. Islahçı haklarından faydalanmak için gerekli bürokratik prosedürler ve kayıtlı ıslah sistemine dahil olmanın maliyetleri küçük çiftçinin hukukun verdiği mülkiyet haklarından istifade etmesinin önünde engel teşkil etmektedir. Küçük çiftçiler tohum sisteminin kenarına itilmekte, dar ve kriminalize edilmiş bir kayıtdışı tohum piyasasında kendi tohumlarını üretmelerine ve aralarında takas etmelerine izin verilmektedir. Öte yandan, büyük şirketler kayıtlı tohum piyasasında güvence altına alınan mülkiyet hakları ve pazar paylarından yararlanmaktadır. Bu özel tohum ıslahçısı şirketler, çeşitlerini geliştirmek için

kendi tarımsal eğitim ve danışmanlık hizmetleri aracılığıyla çiftçinin özgün bilgisine başvurmakta ve geliştirdikleri çeşitleri geriye dönüp yine çiftçiye satmaktadır.

7. Ardı ardına gelen serbestleşme reformları ve uluslararası anlaşmalarda verilen taahhütlerle (Dünya Ticaret Örgütü başta), tarıma yönelik kamusal teşvikler çok düşük seviyelere inmiş, çiftçinin üretim takvimine cevap veremez hale gelmiş ve toprak sahibi, şirket ve girişimci çiftçiyi kayırırken köylü ve küçük çiftçiyi dışarıda bırakır şekilde işlev göstermeye başlamıştır.
8. Tarım oldukça finansallaşmış, çiftçiler borçluluk ve mülksüzleşmeyle örülü bir kısır döngüye itilmiştir. Çiftçiler bir taraftan bankalara kredi geri ödemelerini gerçekleştirebilmek için üretken varlıklarını, topraklarını satmakta bir taraftan da geleceğe yönelik üretken amaçlarla yapacakları kredi başvuruları için ipotek gösterebilecekleri varlıklardan yoksun hale gelmektedir. Tarım Kredi Kooperatifleri ve Tarım Sigortaları Havuzu bu finansallaşma sürecini sürdürmek üzere işlev göstermektedir.

Sonuç itibariyle, bu tez Türkiye'de tarımın neoliberal dönüşümü ve bu dönüşümün devlet ve çiftçi düzeyinde sebep olduğu gıda egemenliği kaybını ortaya koymaya yönelik mütevazı bir girişimdir. Ekonomi politikalarının siyasetten yalıtılması ve neoliberal tarım politikalarının benimsenmesi süreci, son yirmi yılda devletin yeniden yapılandırılıp aşırı güçlü ve merkezileşmiş bir Yürütme organı tarafından yönetilir hale gelmesiyle birlikte gerçekleşmiştir.

Türkiye akademisinde tarımsal araştırmalara bir katkı olarak, köylülerin ve küçük tarımsal üreticilerin bireysel ve kolektif öznelliğinin zayıflığı küresel gıda egemenliği hareketinin Türkiye çiftçilerine nüfuz etmesinin zor olduğunu ortaya koymaktadır. Öte yandan, COVID-19 salgını ve ardından yaşanan uluslararası ticaretteki aksamalar, girdi fiyatlarındaki çarpıcı artış ve devletlerin korumacı politika tercihlerinin gıda egemenliğine söylemsel bir güç kazandırdığı söylenebilir. Kavram, gündelik ve siyasal dilde "kendi kendine yetebilme" kavramıyla birlikte çok daha geniş bir dolaşıma girmiş, devletlerin ve uluslararası kuruluşların politika deklarasyonlarında hegemonik bir söylem statüsüne yükselmiş olduğu için, Türkiye çiftçilerinin siyasal öznelliğini gıda egemenliği kavramı etrafında canlandırmak için çok daha elverişli bir zeminin mevcut olduğu söylenebilir. Gıda egemenliği, yine de şirketlerin gıda rejimine karşı küresel

muhalefet cephesinin Türkiye dahil çeşitli coğrafyalarda yaygınlaşmasına ve alternatif politika seçeneklerinin geliştirilmesine hizmet edebilir. Küçük çiftçiler ve köylülerin tarım politikası süreçlerine dahil olması için akıllı ve etkili siyasal katılım kanalları ve yöntemlerinin geliştirilmesi, şirket gıda rejimine karşı mücadelede atılacak ilk adımlardan biri olmalıdır.

Bütün bunların yanı sıra, bu kapsamlı konu başlığının sınırlarını çizmek, odağa tohum egemenliğini almış olmaya rağmen bu tez çalışması boyunca yaşanan ciddi bir zorluk alanı olmuştur. Gelecek araştırma çalışmalarında incelenmeye değer olup bu tez sınırları kapsamında cevaplanamayan oldukça fazla soru vardır. Şu özet liste, bu alanda çalışmalar yürüten araştırmacıların dikkatine sunulmaya değer görülmüştür:

1. Yerel köylü emeğinin mevsimlik tarım işçisi emeğiyle ikâme edilmesi çiftçilerin siyasal eylemliliğini ve gıda demokrasisini nasıl etkilemektedir?
2. Kırsal liderlik ve çiftçi örgütlenmesinin gıda demokrasi için önemi nedir?
3. Çiftçilerin özgün bilgisinin gelecek kuşaklara aktarılmasında toplumsal cinsiyetin önemi nedir?
4. Kamunun tarımsal yayım (eğitim ve danışmanlık) hizmetlerinden çekilmesi çiftçilik bilgisinin metalaşması ve küçük-köylü çiftçinin gıda sisteminden dışlanmasını nasıl etkilemektedir?
5. Kırsal demografideki değişiklikler ve kentli orta sınıfın kırsal alanlara yerleşmeye ilgisindeki artışın köylü tarımı ve gıda egemenliğindeki bozulmalar üzerindeki rolü nedir?
6. Genç ve yaşlı çiftçilerin doğa ve piyasayla ilişkileri bakımından çiftçilik yaklaşımları arasındaki kuşak farklılıkları nelerdir?
7. Köylü tarımının öz-sömürü içeren özellikleri, genç kuşakların çiftçiliğe ilgisini nasıl azaltmaktadır?
8. Çiftçi topluluklarında sosyal güvenlik düzeyi/kapsamı ile bağımsız çiftçilik arasındaki ilişki nedir?
9. İklim değişikliğinden dolayı belirsizlik seviyesinin yükselmesi, çiftçiler için kamusal olarak desteklenen tarım sigortalarını nasıl zorunlu kılmaktadır?
10. Yerel yönetimlerin gıda egemenliği için rolleri ne olmalıdır?

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