

**JOÃO FERNANDES VIEIRA (1613–1681)**  
***INSTRUCTIONS ON HOW TO MANAGE A SUGAR MILL AND***  
***ESTATE (1663)***

Regiment that the Administrator of the Engenho should follow to satisfy his obligations and unburden his conscience, and doing otherwise, he must explain himself to God and is obliged to give restitution to the owner of the estate.

**Confess the Slaves [negros]** – He will be obligated every year to order everyone under his control to confess each Sunday and on saint’s days, and he will order them to hear mass, and the children born he will order to be baptized in their time . . .

**Slaves Who Become Ill** – As the blacks become ill, he will try to heal their bodies and provide whatever is lacking on the estate, and if the illness is dangerous, he will send the slave to the person who handles my affairs in Recife, if he believes that the slave cannot be cured on the estate.

**Housing the Slaves** – He will be obligated to go each morning to the slave quarters to see if the slaves are ill and to provide to them anything that is lacking and he will require that their houses be well swept with their sleeping platforms and mats in order; and he will require them to plant their gardens on saint’s days and when the engenho is not milling, he will give them Saturdays for their planting in the winter.

**Punishing the Slaves** – Punishment of slaves should not be done with a stick nor should slaves be struck with rocks or bricks but when deserving of punishment, they should be tied to an oxcart and punished with a whip, and after being well-lashed, they should be cut with a razor or knife and then treated with salt, lemon juice, and urine and then placed for some days in chains; and it is a woman being punished, she will be whipped in a shirt of baize and it should be done inside a house [privately] with the same whip.

**Count the Slaves** – the slaves should be counted every day and those missing found by all means.

**Care of the Oxen** – He will take great care with the ox herd of the estate and send them to pasture with the best herdsman and count the herd each day and look immediately for any that are missing. In the same manner, cure them of any illness or infestation that they may have and take care that those that work one day do not work the next and he will pay attention that they do not suffer the work too greatly . . .

**Report the Death of Slaves and Oxen** – He will report the death of all slaves that die on the estate and the cause of death and do the same with the oxen so that everything is clear, and he will register the birth of the children that are born.

Taken from João Fernandes Vieira, “Instructions on How to Manage a Sugar Mill and Estate,” in *Early Brazil: A Documentary Collection to 1700*, edited by Stuart B. Schwartz and translated by Clive Willis and Stuart B. Schwartz (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 224–229.