

Preetiya Niyomrad 2009: Factors Affecting the Adoption of Information Technology of Rice Knowledge Bank Utilization of Farmers: A Case Study of Farmer Field School Group, Nakhon Rachasima Province. Master of Science (Agricultural Economics), Major Field: Agricultural Economics, Department of Agricultural and Resource Economics. Thesis Advisor: Associate Professor Vute Wangwacharakul, Ph.D. 85 pages.

Thailand has implemented a pilot project on use of information technology of rice knowledge bank at farm level since 2007. Computer systems were setup in rural communities as a tool for farmers to access to rice knowledge bank in electronic forms. However, use of new information technology at farm level requires basic skills, especially the readiness to accept the technology. The main objective of this study is to analyse factors affecting the adoption of information technology of rice knowledge bank. Data for crop year 2007/2008 are obtained from a survey of 110 farmers who were members of farm school in the pilot project area. Multinomial logit model is used to analyses the factors.

The results show that factors affecting behaviors of farmers in adoption of information technology are mainly computer skill, technical support and rice knowledge. Increasing capacity and technical support would increase possibility of farmers to adopt the new information technology the most. The same is true for rice knowledge. In addition, households with children familiar with new technology and farmers with more training also contribute positively to adoption potential. However, the study finds that experiences and farm sizes tend to have negative effects on the adoption. These contradict to general perception and further investigation should be conducted.

Hence, the government should simultaneously provide capacity building on computer skill and technical support to farmers, with rice knowledge dissemination by new information technology. In addition, Youth participation on capacity building on basic computer knowledge and skills to farmers should also be promoted.

Student's signature

Thesis Advisor's signature

____ / ____ / ____