

Maneenoot Thipchit 2010: Thoughts and Behavior of Farmers in Bio-agriculture Synergy Group Ban Naku for Learning Process Management towards Bio-agriculture System, Naku Sub-district, Phak Hai District, Phra Nakhon Si Ayutthaya Province. Master of Science (Agricultural Extension), Major Field: Agricultural Extension, Department of Agricultural Extension and Communication. Thesis Advisor: Associate Professor Savitree Rangsipaht, Ph.D. 330 pages.

Objectives of the research were: 1) to study basic personal data of farmers towards bio-agricultural practices, 2) to study thoughts and behavior of farmers towards bio-agricultural practices, 3) to identify conditions and limitations of farmers towards bio-agricultural practices, 4) to illustrate lesson learned of farmers in converting thoughts and behavior towards bio-agricultural practices, 5) to indicate procedures in knowledge management process towards bio-agricultural practices and 6) to seek for suggestions of farmers in converting thoughts and behavior towards bio-agricultural practices. Population was 41 farmers in Bio-agriculture Synergy Group Ban Naku Phak Hai district, Phra Nakhon Si Ayutthaya province. An instrument to collect data was an interview schedule. Descriptive statistics to analyze data included percentage, arithmetic mean and standard deviation. Data were mainly presented in terms of description.

Research findings were: 1) Farmers in Bio-agriculture Synergy Group Ban Naku were females, aged between 41-50 years old (46.3%). They attained Bachelor degree at the highest educational level and primary education at the lowest level. They gained 0.5-10 rai of farm holdings (36.6%), had 2-3 members per household (46.3%) and were farm labors (70.7%). The main occupation was paddy farming (70.7%). The minor occupation was vegetable growing (39.0%). They had experiences in farm works between 1-10 years (41.5%), in utilizing bio-agriculture 2-3 years (41.5%), and in its application to vegetable (39.0%). Most farmers had basic knowledge on four formulas of bio-extract including the application and usefulness of bio-substance. They used six learning methods consisting of training, method demonstration, individual practice, group practice, field trip and group learning. Farmers indicated three learning channels which were people media, group media and mass media such as television programs, printed materials and radio programs. 2) Most farmers expressed their thoughts that they utilized bio-agriculture in order to reduce production costs by using knowledge and local materials in applying bio-agriculture in their field. Most farmers indicated their behavior that they did the bio-extract by themselves and partially purchased supplement hormone. 3) There were eight factors concerning with conditions and limitations of bio-agricultural practices. Those factors were: basic demographics, socio-economic, physical, knowledge, attitude, utilization and extension of bio-agricultural practices. 4) Most farmers had experiences and lesson learned in converting thoughts and behavior towards bio-agricultural practices. From previous utilization, they had to buy chemical substance and chemical fertilizers with high costs but earned low production prices. They, then, substituted bio-agriculture for chemical substance and chemical fertilizers to reduce the production costs. 5) The learning process management patterns mostly employed five methods which were: focus group discussion, stimulate interest, build confidence, stimulate practice and monitor learning results towards bio-agricultural practices continuously. 6) Suggestions included categorizing farmers into three groups: perception group, learning group and advance learning group in converting thoughts and behavior of farmers towards bio-agricultural practices.

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Thesis Advisor's signature