

ABSTRACT

Thesis Title : Adjustment in Agricultural Development Policy under the Eighth National Economic and Social Development Plan in Consonance with the Current Economic Crisis (1997)

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This study uses a descriptive approach in analyzing the policy, strategies and measures of agricultural development during the Eighth National Economic and Social Development Plan (1997-2001).

For the past 35 years, Thailand has pursued the policy of national planing, starting from the First National Plan through to the Seventh Plan (1961-1992) for regulating the country's socio-economic development. This has yielded both positive and nagative implications to the society as a whole. Such implications are taken as the basis for drafting the Eighth Plan. In 1997, however, the unexpected economic crisis as a result of the 'bubble' economy has necessitated the adjustment in development policy, strategies and measures under the Eighth Plan. This is to ensure their harmony with the economic recession and their capability in tackling unemployment which has been caused by the returned-home labour from the industrial sector to the agricultural sector.

The main concepts of agricultural development during the Eighth Plan are ; "to enhance the quality of life, to produce competitively and to take care of natural resources". The target for agricultural growth rate is set at 2.9 percent per year, associated with 9 policies : 1) agriculatural restructuring 2) increasing productivities and reduce costs 3) improving qualities and product processing 4) streamlining Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives 5) rural savings 6) fertilizers and chemicals

7) natural resource management 8) preparations for coping with the changing global atmosphere and 9) preparations for the 21st century.

The economic crisis taking place in 1997-1998 has brought about shortcomings in the agricultural policy under the Eighth Plan. This therefore has resulted in eventual policy adjustment in 3 categories : 1) agricultural restructuring, 2) development of agro-processing, and 3) development of production and processing technologies.