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SUPAPUN LEKHAPISIT : A STUDY OF SOIL AND WATER CONSERVATION ADOPTION BY FARMERS IN SURROUNDING VILLAGES OF KHAO HIN-SORN ROYAL DEVELOPMENT STUDY CENTER KHAO HIN-SORN SUBDISTRICT PHANOMSARAKAM DISTRICT CHACHOENGSAO PROVINCE. THESIS ADVISORS : KASAM KULPRADIT, M.Sc. PONGPIT PIYAPONG, M.Sc. KRIANGSAK HONGTO, M.Sc. 139 p. ISBN 974-589-890-2

Soil erosion is the main problem leading to the loss of social - economic and environmental aspects. The degradation of soils resulting from the wide cultivation of many important economic crops such as casava, without proper management, together with unfavourable topographic and climatic condition of the localities which generates soil erosion, cause farmers to face economic loss due to increasing production costs for soil improvement. In the mean time the prices of the produce are low.

The main objectives of this study is to encourage the farmers to adopt soils and water conservation methodology to conserve potentiality of soils to maintain sustainable production. The various factors affecting the adoption of various conservation practices are also studied for application to the extension planning for the wide adoption of soil conservation practices.

Eighty - eight farmers' familys answered questionaires. Factors found to be involved in the adoption of soil conservation practices were living factor, size of land, frequency of contact with the center, characteristic of farmer, knowledge and attitude which were statistically significant at the level of 0.05, compared to land owning and crop varieties which computed at the level of 0.1.

The study shows that the knowlege and the contact frequency to the center have direct correlation to attitude. When farmers contact frequently to the center they adopt the mechanical control methodology. The characteristic of farmers has correlation with the adoption of vegetative controlling method and the vertiver grass, while there were no factors relating to soil and fertilizer improvement method, which might be due to the traditional practices more than other suporting factors.

Encouragement of the soil and water conservation adoption can affect farmers sustainable adoption. Planning should be appropriate to both the physical topographic and climatic condition, and the social and economic conditions of farmers.