

**ABSTRACT**

Abstract of thesis submitted to the Graduate School Project of Maejo University in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Science in Agricultural Extension

**FACTORS AFFECTING PERCEPTION OF THE KING'S NEW FARMING THEORY  
BY FARMERS IN MUANG DISTRICT, NAKHON SI THAMMARAT  
PROVINCE, THAILAND**

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The objectives of this research were to investigate (1) personal, socio-economic and psychological backgrounds of farmers; (2) their level of perception of the King's new farming theory; (3) factors associated with their perception; and (4) their problems and obstacles. The data were collected by using questionnaires from 376 samples, out of the total population of 6,314 families in Muang district, Nakhon Si Thammarat province, consisting of 40 farmers in Tambon Phosadet, 50 in Tambon Bangjak, 70 in Tambon Pakpoon, 37 in Tambon Tharai, 107 in Tambon Tharua, 15 in Tambon Mamuang Song Ton, 29 in Tambon Thasak and 25 in Tambon Paknakhon. Data analysis and interpretation were done by the SPSS and presented as percentage, mean, standard deviation and correlation coefficient.

The results were as follows :

1. The farmers were 52 years old on average, had 4-6 years of primary education and at least 20 years of farming experience.
2. The farmers had an average annual income of 33,140 baht, 71.81 percent earned incomes from farming, 71.28 percent had the farm size of 6-10 rai and an average of 4 family members, 2 of whom provided farm labor.
3. The farmers obtained agricultural information 12 times per year from neighbors, 4 times from village heads, and once from agricultural extension agents but 99.64 percent obtained such information 19 times per month through television.
4. More than half of the farmers (54.79 percent) had high motivation in the King's new farming theory, 75.53 percent had high confidence in agricultural extension agents' knowledge and ability and only 0.53 percent showed low interest in farming according to the King's new farming theory.
5. The percentage of farmers with a high level of perception of the objectives of the King's new farming theory was 47.61 and that with a moderate level of perception of service activities was 67.82.
6. Six independent variables, out of 12, were significantly correlated with the farmers' perception of the King's new farming theory : education level ( $r = 0.134$  :  $P < 0.01$ ), experience in farming ( $r = -0.113$  :  $P < 0.05$ ), information acces ( $r = 0.279$  :  $P < 0.01$ ), motivation in farming ( $r = 0.138$  :  $P < 0.01$ ), confidence in extension agents ( $r = 0.279$  :  $P < 0.01$ ) and interest in farming according to the King's new farming theory ( $r = 0.309$  :  $P < 0.01$ ).
7. More than half of the farmers had a high level of problems i.e. problems of production factors, low prices of agricultural products, low returns, lack of support in materials and equipment, government activities, and sources of credit.