

An Attitude of Small Scale Cassava Farmers in the Northeast Towards
the Government Policy of Reducing Cassava Planting Areas

Associate Professor Anukul Klungboonkrong (research leader)

Mr. Pala Chouwarat (research assistant)

ABSTRACT

The main objectives of this research are: (i) to understand the attitude of small scale cassava farmers in the northeast region towards the government policy of reducing cassava planting areas; (ii) to find out the procedures of reducing cassava planting areas obtained from the opinion of small scale cassava farmers; and (iii) to understand the problems and obstacles which will be experienced by the cassava farmers according to the reduction of cassava planting areas. This research is primarily based on the interviewing and observing small scale cassava farmers in the three selected provinces (Nakhon Ratchasima, Khon Kaen, and Khalasin) including 64 farmers. The research was conducted within 12-month period from July 1, 1990 to June 30, 1991.

It is found that 90% of the 64 farmers realized the government policy of reducing cassava planting areas. However, only 32 percent of those farmers decreased their cassava planting areas, while the rest did not respond to such policy. From the opinion of these interviewed farmers, 64 percent of such farmers agreed with this policy, but the remaining 36 percent did not.

There are several factors obstructing the success of the policy of reducing cassava planting areas. They are: (i) farmers can earn income from growing cassava (approximately 744 baht per rai); (ii) there is no market-place problem for selling cassava products; and (iii) cassava can be planted in almost every type of soil and the taking care procedures are simple and suitable for existing farmer knowledge.

Based on the government policy of reducing cassava planting areas the following recommendations are obtained: (i) the amount of cassava planting areas should be reduced when considering cassava farmers for the whole country; (ii) the amount of cassava planting areas should be kept constant regarding individual and group of small scale cassava farmers; (iii) cassava farmers should not expand their planting areas; (iv) the improvement of soil quality should be promoted; and (v) the cultivation of other crops should also be promoted because the income from this cultivation can alleviate the financial problems of the cassava farmers.