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MARISA KOSEYAYOTHIN; PARTICIPATORY ACTION RESEARCH ON NATURE FARMING FOR AGRICULTURAL HOUSEHOLDS IN THAI-CAMBODIA BORDER AREAS. THESIS ADVISORS; RACHANONT SUPAPONGPICHATE. Ph.D., KLA SOMTRAKUL, Ed.D., PATTARABOON PICHAYAPAIBUL, Ed.D., 266 P. ISBN 974-664-903-5

The objectives of this research were to study the achievement of the agricultural household heads learning of nature farming through participatory action research; and to study and compare economic social and environmental changes in the above-mentioned households, before and after undertaking participatory action research. The samples of this study were 30 agricultural household heads in Tubtim Siam 05 Project Village Tambol Klong-Khaituan Amphore Klonghad, Sakaeo province, selected by purposive sampling, with consideration of their willingness to participate in the nature farming activities. Research instruments were indepth interview questionnaire, participant and non-participant observations, focus groups discussions, conferences, portfolios and testing knowledge. Percentage, mean, standard deviation, mode and t-test were employed for data analysis.

Results revealed that after undertaking participatory action research, the achievements of the samples' learning in nature farming were increased significantly at the level of 0.01. The sampled agriculturists showed an improvement in social, economic and environmental factors. Agriculturists decreased the use of toxic substances, using the herbs instead to protect and get rid of pests, using the natural fertilizers instead of chemicals, using the residual materials for making natural fertilizers. The participatory action research process found that the practices of nature farming were still continuing long after the study. The target agriculturists were continually planting vegetables, expanding their agricultural areas to do nature farming and increasing the kinds of vegetables. Military authorities have recognized the importance of nature farming by providing public land of 10 rai for planting vegetables.

This research concluded that participatory action research was an appropriate means for environmental education for the learning of nature farming, which would result in sustainable agricultural development. Therefore, it is recommended that action research should be employed in the process of environmental education aimed at achieving learning and practical skills' development, thus contributing to development of economic, social, and environmental conditions. Emphasis also should be placed on the underprivileged groups, small communities, as well as the needs for the communities to become self-sufficient.