

Pornchai Linhavess 2008: Measuring Happiness Levels and Analyzing Factors Affecting Happiness of Farmers in Sufficiency Economy Villages, Phanat Nikhom District, Chon Buri Province. Master of Science (Agricultural Economics), Major Field: Agricultural Economics, Department of Agricultural and Resource Economics. Thesis Advisor: Assistant Professor Penporn Janekarnkij, Ph.D. 140 pages.

The study aims to measure the happiness levels and analyze factors affecting the happiness of rice farmers living in the sufficiency economy villages, Panat Nikhom District of Chon Buri Province. The happiness levels of rice farmers were compared with three different methods: Thai Happiness Indicators, The Survey of Happiness Data, and The Measurement of Happiness in People Life. Psychological theories and philosophy of sufficiency economy are applied as framework to determine the explanatory variables in the model. The cumulative logit model is employed in analyzing the factors affecting the happiness of rice farmers.

The results show that most of the rice farmers obtain happiness at high level. Based on the statistical tests using the goodness-of-fit statistics, the statistics measuring predictive power and explaining of factors as independent variables to happiness as a dependent variable, it is found that the model with “happiness” measured by Thai Happiness Indicators is the best fit in this study. Factors affected the happiness of rice farmers significantly are the following. Living in a village where sufficiency economy related activities are constantly supported, conducting sufficiency economy related activities, and earning income from other agricultural products other than rice indicate the positive relationship with rice farmer’s happiness. On the contrary, the two factors including number of years of formal education and the non increasing level of present income compared with income in the past show the negative relationship with happiness.

It is suggested that Thai Happiness Indicators is a better measure of rice farmer’s happiness compared with the others. In order to maintain the happiness of rice farmers, relevant agencies in agricultural sector should disseminate the philosophy of sufficiency economy more broadly and support practicing sufficiency economy related activities constantly throughout the country. Further, to sustain and increase rice farmer’s family income, relevant agencies should encourage other income generating activities in support of low income from rice production.

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