

Improvement in rainfed rice production during an era of rapid national economic growth: a case study of a village in northeast thailand / Watanabe Kazuo

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Abstrak

ABSTRACT

Rainfed paddy fields cover a large area in Northeast Thailand. Rice production there is known to be highly variable, with generally low yields. With the Thai economy developing rapidly since the 1960s, an increasing number of farmers have sought employment in the non-farm sector. As a result, some worry that rice growing in this region might decline or even disappear. In reality, however, it continues to play an important role in ensuring basic food security to rural households. This study investigates technological advances in rice growing during this period of rapid economic growth in Don Daeng village using a dataset spanning approximately 50 years. The results indicate that farmers adopted small-scale agricultural machines, irrigation technologies, land consolidation, high yielding varieties, chemical fertilizers, and the direct seeding method on their own initiative. These technologies and methods contributed to increasing rice yields and stabilizing production. They also appear to have substantially improved labor productivity, allowing farmers to procure their main food supply from their paddy fields while earning an additional income from the off farm sector, which could then be reinvested in agriculture. Thus, the interaction between these sectors is currently supporting small scale rice production in peri urban villages in Northeast Thailand.