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Access to Agricultural Technology, Information, and Funding



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Abstract

This research examines the access to agricultural technology and innovations, information, and funding in 10 provinces across 4 regions of Thailand. The study employs a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods, including 400 sample questionnaires, in-depth interviews, and 10 focus discussion groups to gather data. The collected data is analyzed using frequency, mean, and qualitative analysis techniques.

The findings reveal that farmers, particularly the elderly, face challenges in accessing technology due to their limited technological skills and lack of interest in agricultural innovations. The high costs and complexity associated with agricultural machinery further hinder their adoption. Moreover, farmers with small landholdings find it difficult to justify investing in expensive machinery. Additionally, a significant shortage of new-generation farmers exacerbates the problem. To address these issues, several solutions are proposed. Firstly, it is essential to motivate and incentivize new farmers to engage in rice cultivation. This can be achieved through the provision of welfare systems and knowledge sharing on agricultural technology. Secondly, facilitating access to capital loans for effective farmer groups can help increase their accessibility to agricultural machinery. Lastly, promoting the availability of agricultural machinery services and rental markets can also alleviate the burden on individual farmers.

Regarding access to agricultural information, online media channels play a crucial role in disseminating information, especially as most farmer households have smartphones and internet access. However, elderly farmers often lack the necessary skills to search for information online, facing typographic and vision-related challenges. Moreover, some farmers exhibit limited interest in utilizing online information sources. In response, the government should prioritize providing knowledge and enhancing motivation for elderly farmers to effectively utilize online information resources.

In terms of accessing loans, farmers face challenges due to their limited understanding of lending regulations and financial management. Some farmers struggle to meet the collateral requirements set by financial institutions, resulting in their inability to secure sufficient financial support. Furthermore, misallocation of loan funds for unintended purposes contributes to the

problem. To address these issues, the government should focus on building farmers' understanding of loan regulations and enhancing their financial management skills.

Overall, this study sheds light on the complexities surrounding access to agricultural technology, information, and funding in Thailand. The proposed solutions aim to empower farmers, bridge the generational gap, and enhance agricultural practices in the country.

Keywords: Accessing, Technologies and Innovation, Information, Loans