

Role of Kyusei Nature Farming and EM Technology in Thailand

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I am deeply honored and pleased to be invited as the Guest of Honor to this important Fifth International Conference on Kyusei Nature Farming and EM Technology, being held in Bangkok. I am also thankful to the organizing committee for inviting me to present an address to you all.

At the onset, I wish to confirm that I strongly believe in any research and development programs that help increase agricultural productivity, while maintaining sustainability. In this connection, I wish to stress that I will cooperate and extend my fullest support to you all at this conference, which will discuss an important method of increasing agricultural production, while maintaining environmental quality. This is very important to us as it will help eliminate starvation and malnutrition, while preserving the ecosystems for our future generations.

It is now a common fact that with the onset of globalization, one country cannot reach out for stability and development. We need to collaborate, and again I am happy that participants from 29 countries are gathered here today to discuss methods of maintaining productivity in agriculture through Kyusei Nature Farming and EM Technology.

The Royal Kingdom of Thailand does not face food problems as some countries do. This is because ours is an agricultural country. We produce sufficient food and also export. Our export products include rice, fruits, animal products and aquacultural products. Therefore, the agricultural sector has provided 100,000 million Bahts per year to the national economy. Therefore, we can say that agricultural exports are a principal way to earn foreign exchange to our country. Therefore, agricultural production in Thailand may not require the same quantity of assistance as that needed for industries. The recent changes in the value of our currency makes our agricultural products more competitive and the potential for increased earnings expand further.

Our kingdom as well as the countries of the developing world face a crisis. This is the competition that occurs due to the competition from the international markets. These markets require agricultural commodities that have been grown with minimal use of chemicals. They are also concerned about the environment. Therefore, agriculture in our countries face two challenges, namely, to increase production and also quality.

How could we do these?

The first is to raise the production per unit land area by enhancing soil fertility. The current practices of using harmful chemicals destroy the environment and are harmful. Therefore, the need at the present time is integrated farming in order to maintain soil fertility. This can be done by the use of practices such as organic manuring, the use of crop residues, biological nitrogen fixation and green manuring. These are also advocated by Kyusei Nature Farming.

The second is to reduce the application of agrochemicals for pest and disease control. This will help maintain the quality of the environment and agricultural ecosystems. This is because there are many harmful substances that affect human health. I am happy to inform you that Thailand has reduced the use of chemicals through integrated pest management programs, but I also have heard that the use of EM could help this aspect as well.

We are moving into the 21st century. One of the major problems that our country and those of the region face is - How do we look after the increasing populations with limited resources? We also have to conserve the available natural resources for the future generations.

Most international fora of the world talk of food security today. How do we do this? One important way is to develop new technologies and new thinking to increase production and maintain the environment. This is the challenge that the policy makers, scientists and farmers as well as those reserving the environment face.

The Fifth International Conference on Kyusei Nature Farming and EM Technology is an important milestone in overcoming the challenges faced by us. I have learnt that the technology offered is

very successful and here are farmers who have experienced the benefits of the technology in Thailand. Therefore, it my hope that this conference will develop guidelines to enhance the current technologies of agriculture and environmental preservation.

I wish this conference all the success - I hope it will be a fruitful experience to all of you and you will have happy memories of the conference, our beautiful country and its world known hospitality. I thank you again for inviting me to be here with you. It was indeed an honor.