Principles of Kyusei Nature Farming

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Distinguished Guests
Conference Participants
Friends and Colleagues
Ladies and Gentlemen,

First, I would like to express my sincere thanks and appreciation to the Luiz de Queiroz College of Agriculture and the people and organizations who have worked so hard in planning for this Second International Conference on Kyusei Nature Farming here in Brazil. I am especially pleased that this Conference is being held on the occasion of the 90th anniversary of the founding of your college.

Many people tend to believe that today we are enjoying the most prosperous period and highest level of civilization in the history of mankind. However, a truly civilized society is one in which the quality of life is assured. When considered in this context it is apparent that our quality of life on this planet is increasingly threatened by continuing degradation of our national resource base, and pollution of our global environment. Degradation of our agricultural lands by wind and water erosion, desertification, and salinization in some countries has led to an alarming decline in soil productivity. Also, the excessive use of chemical fertilizers and pesticides has caused extensive pollution of soil, water and air that has adversely affected food safety and quality, and has endangered human and animal health. Thus, it is not surprising that during the last decade, many consumer, environmental and farmer's organizations began to seek alternatives to chemical-intensive farming methods.

One such alternative is Kyusei Nature Farming, the subject of this Conference. Kyusei Nature Farming is a farming method which follows the ideals and principles of nature farming as advocated by Mokichi Okada, a Japanese philosopher and naturalist who founded Sekai Kyusei Kyo in 1935. The word Kyusei in Japanese means "saving," and broadly interpreted Kyusei Nature Farming implies that the world can be saved through natural or nature farming methods. Kyusei Nature Farming is based on five requirements:

1. It must produce high quality food to enhance human health.
2. It must be economically and spiritually beneficial to both producers and consumers.
3. It must be sustainable and easily practiced.
4. It must conform to nature and protect the global environment.
5. It must produce enough food to support the world population.

A new technology that appears to hold great promise in making nature farming a reality for all mankind is that of effective microorganisms (EM). It was developed by Professor Teruo Higa, a scientist at the University of the Ryukyus in Okinawa, Japan. The technology is based on the use of mixed cultures of beneficial microorganisms as inoculants that can increase the microbial diversity of agricultural soils. EM establishes a new soil microbiological balance that can improve soil and plant health, and the yield and quality of crops. One of the main goals of this Second International Conference on Kyusei Nature Farming and of future conferences is to share this technology among all nations.

The First International Conference on Kyusei Nature Farming was held in Thailand in October l989 and was cosponsored by Sekai Kyusei Kyo, the International Nature Farming Research Center, the Thai Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives, and the USDA/USAID Dryland Agriculture Project. This was a highly successful conference which has resulted in very generous support from the Government of Thailand for promoting the development of Kyusei Nature Farming in Thailand. We have also established a research and demonstration farm near Bangkok which regularly holds seminars and training courses for scientists, teachers, students and farmers on all aspects of Kyusei

Nature Farming. This education program for technology transfer, including EM technology, is open to any individual or organization who wishes to gain knowledge about Kyusei Nature Farming.
Following our first conference in Thailand, the Asia-Pacific Natural Agriculture Network (APNAN), a non-governmental, non-political scientific organization was founded. The goal of APNAN is to promote research and development of natural farming systems and technologies in the Asia-Pacific Region. Member countries of APNAN now include Bangladesh, Brazil, India, Indonesia, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Myanmar, Pakistan, Peoples Republic of China, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Taiwan and the United States. APNAN scientists have been conducting extensive research on natural farming systems and the use of EM technology. I am pleased that many of them are presenting technical papers at this Conference.
In 1992, the United Nations International Conference on Environment and Development will be held in Rio de Janeiro. A resolution to begin to resolve problems of the global environment is expected to be endorsed by some 160 countries. Brazil will play a key role in hosting the conference and ensuring that there is a strong international commitment to the protection and preservation of the environment both now and in the future. There is no question that modern conventional agricultural using excessive amounts of chemical fertilizers and pesticides has contributed to the destruction of our natural resources and degradation of the environment. I believe that Kyusei Nature Farming and the use of EM technology can contribute greatly to restoring a healthy ecological balance between development and conservation so that mankind and nature can co-exist and prosper.
It is my sincere hope that the participants at this Second International Conference will consider how the principles of Kyusei Nature Farming and EM technology can contribute to the development of a more environmentally-sound and sustainable agriculture in Latin America and, indeed, worldwide
Finally, I wish you a most successful conference that brings forth new ideas, approaches and strategies that will foster cooperative research and education programs and networks throughout this Region and worldwide for the benefit of all mankind.

Thank you very much.