

Agriculture and the Environment

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Honorable Guests and Colleagues
Distinguished Faculty of Luiz de Queiroz College
Conference Participants
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am most pleased to be with you today to participate in the inauguration of this Second International Conference on Kyusei Nature Farming. As Secretary of Environment, I deal with many complex environmental issues that are of concern to the State of Sao Paulo, and to the public and private sectors as well. We meet almost continuously to discuss problems, issues, initiatives and proposals that will protect, control and preserve the natural environment for all of our society. As a guiding principle we are aware that our focus must be on the sustained development of our natural resource base.

The subject of this Conference is of great interest to all of us who are assembled here. It is apparent that our traditional or conventional methods of farming have led to excessive soil erosion by wind and water, depletion of soil organic matter, and exhaustion of soil fertility. All of this has contributed to an alarming decline in soil productivity. As crop yields decreased, more and more chemical fertilizers and pesticides were applied in an effort to sustain production. This, of course has contributed to the pollution of our soil, water and air, and has raised serious questions relative to food safety and quality, and human and animal health.

Consequently, we in Brazil are very interested in new technologies that the farmer can apply on a practical basis to reduce his dependence on agricultural chemicals and prevent further degradation of his soil and water resources, and the environment. I should also emphasize that any new method or approach to a more sustainable agriculture must be productive and profitable over the long-term. I am told that Kyusei Nature Farming and the use of effective microorganisms (i.e., EM technology) can accomplish these goals. I sincerely hope so, for the sake of all mankind.

In conclusion, I would like to thank the organizers for holding this Conference at our Luiz de Queiroz College of Agriculture and to extend a warm welcome to all of the participants. I assure you that my office and the government of the State of Sao Paulo are truly at your service.

I trust that your deliberations on how agriculture and the environment can become more harmonious and compatible will be highly stimulating and most productive. We look forward to receiving your recommendations.

Thank you very much.