

Extension and Technology Transfer

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Background

The Working Group on Extension and Technology Transfer (i.e., outreach) discussed the need to improve the productivity, stability, profitability and sustainability of low-input, subsistence-type, small-scale farmers. The transfer and application of practical, appropriate and affordable nature farming technologies could significantly alleviate hunger, reduce environmental pollution, and improve the standard of living and quality of life' of farmers and their families.

Recommendations

The Working Group has recommended the following actions to be initiated by governments, universities, private voluntary organization (PVO's), non-government organizations (NGO's), and farmer's organizations:

- 1) Test and evaluate new technologies for improving natural farming systems, including effective microorganisms (EM), for different agroecosystems and taking into consideration local cultures and traditional farming methods.
- 2) Conduct tests and demonstrations of new technologies on farmer's fields using farmer's resources and capabilities wherever possible.
- 3) Establish short-term training courses at universities, experiment stations, and PVO and NGO centers to teach farmers the advantages, adaptations, and limits of the new technologies.
- 4) Prepare and distribute extension circulars and pamphlets for farmers that describe the benefits of adopting the new technologies for natural farming systems in accordance with local cultures and conditions. Where possible, such information should also be disseminated through audio-visual techniques including radio and television.
- 5) Provide alternative technologies to small-scale farmers at the lowest possible cost for improving the productivity, stability, and sustainability of natural farming systems.
- 6) Select "key" farmers at different locations who are willing to assist in conducting on-farm tests and demonstrations to promote new technologies for nature farming to other farmers.
- 7) Establish natural agriculture networks for Latin America (LANAN) and South America (SANAN) to facilitate the transfer of information on new technologies to research and extension staffs of government agencies, universities, PVO's, NGO's and farmer's groups. Establish linkages between these organizations and the Kyusei Nature Farming development centers for technical assistance and support.
- 8) Establish outreach programs that link farmers and consumers for marketing of produce directly, or through farmer's cooperatives, and to make consumers aware that such produce was grown without pesticides.