

Role of Kyusei Nature Farming in the Modern World

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Mr. Chairman, Distinguished Invitees, Eminent Scientists, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Today is indeed a very memorable occasion to us involved in Kyusei Nature Farming and EM Technology. This is the beginning of a very important activity in the calendar of events of Kyusei Nature Farming and EM Technology, which was initiated over 60 years ago, when the concepts of this form of nature farming was introduced into the world by the eminent philosopher, Mokichi Okada (1882 - 1955). It also is the culmination of work by a small and dedicated staff over two years, in organizing this conference.

Agriculture in this world is in grave danger - not of excessive production, but by its inability to sustain the yields obtained through the technologies developed over the years, which rely heavily on the use of dangerous synthetic chemicals. This fact is compounded by the accumulation of wastes, primarily by animal production units, urbanization and agro based industries. Furthermore, the introduction of genetically manipulated plants and animals pose questions that may have serious repercussions, which have not been considered to date. Under these circumstances, the world today is trying to develop methods to overcome these problems while maintaining the high productivity of agriculture and preserving the environment for the future generations.

The problem that would arise due to modernizing agriculture of the world was identified in the 1930's by Mokichi Okada, in Japan. He was not a soothsayer, but an erudite naturalist, who sensed the problems based on developments taking place at that time. Therefore, he developed a system of farming, which was termed **Kyusei Nature Farming**, which literally means "**Saving the Earth**". This was not a very complex system of farming, but one which could be practiced by all.

The fundamental concepts of Kyusei Nature Farming are as follows -

- Production of safe and nutritious food to enhance human health
- Economic and spiritual development of producers and consumers
- Sustainability and ease of adoption
- Conformation to natural systems and the protection of the environment
- Production of sufficient food for the increasing populations

This method of nature farming was being adopted in Japan. However, as in all organic farming systems, problems of low production and uneven quality were evident, although the concept was indeed very sound and beneficial to humankind.

In the 1980's the development of the technology of Effective Microorganisms (EM) at the University of the Ryukyus, Okinawa Japan, and its subsequent incorporation as a vital and integrated component in Kyusei Nature Farming added strength to the program. The solutions of EM developed from five genera of free living microbes found in all ecosystems of this world, was based on the fundamental principles of ecology - that of developing the detritus food chain to enhance the efficiency of organic matter to increase crop yields in organic systems. Subsequently the technology was expanded further to encompass animal production systems, waste management and industries. Today, the concepts of EM Technology and Kyusei Nature Farming have expanded beyond the limits of organic agriculture to encompass all activities of humankind

Kyusei Nature Farming and EM Technology was introduced to the international community in 1989, with the International Conference on Kyusei Nature Farming in Thailand. At this conference, the participants overwhelmingly endorsed the concept to establish a network for scientifically validating and expanding Kyusei Nature Farming and EM Technology. The Asia Pacific Natural Agriculture Network (APNAN) was established in 1989, and this organization, although small and with few members of staff working on a very restricted budget, has helped expand the concepts in the region and in many other parts of the world. This was followed by the international conferences on Kyusei Nature Farming and EM Technology in Brazil, USA and France in 1991, 1993 and 1995. Today, we are gathered here to begin the Fifth International Conference on Kyusei Nature Farming

ad EM Technology in Thailand, following the tradition founded eight years ago, when the First Conference was held in Khon Kaen, Thailand. I must admit that the plan until two weeks ago, was to hold this conference in Beijing - in the Peoples Republic of China. However, due to unforeseen circumstances, the authorities in China requested that we either postpone the meeting or cancel it - this placed us in a great dilemma. I am pleased that our friends in Thailand offered to hold the conference with the same program on the same dates. To this I am grateful. I am also thankful to you all for changing your plans at the last moment and coming. Your support is a source of encouragement to us. It shows that you are interested in Kyusei Nature Farming and EM Technology, which can be a tool for the maintenance of Sustainability of Agriculture and the Environment.

The technology that will be presented with scientific evidence and experiences on the success of the methods of Kyusei Nature Farming and EM technology will highlight its fundamental concepts - that of working with nature to overcome the problems facing this world. The use of microbes that are present in all ecosystems, and not using any modified or genetically engineered species in this technology is one concept that is vital for its success. Thus, the technology is safe, simple, sustainable, easily adopted and of superior quality.

This conference beginning today will highlight the success and adaptability of Kyusei Nature Farming and EM Technology. It is most opportune that it is being held in Thailand, Asia, when the region is striving to preserve its beautiful environment while maintaining and possibly enhancing the food production programs to ensure self sufficiency and food security. This is indeed a gigantic task but I assure you that it is possible. The technology offered will help this region and the world and humankind to produce sufficient food of superior quality while maintaining and enhancing environmental quality and sustainability for the future generations. This is the principal objective of this conference.

I do request you to participate actively in this conference, which brings together members from over 25 countries, the International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements (IFOAM), administrators, scientists and farmers. A good program has been developed and I request you to study the concepts carefully, listen to the presentations, observe the posters, discuss and most importantly raise questions that you may have in the final day, when a session has been developed for this purpose.

Please be assured that these concepts and the technology is tested over time, and request you to experience the many advantages that it has - to make this world a better place for humankind of the present and the future.

I also take this opportunity to thank all those who worked hard to make this conference a reality, The International Nature Farming Research Center and its associated bodies, Sekai Kyusei Kyo of Thailand and the Asia Pacific Natural Agriculture Network, for all their hard work and sponsorship. It is with pleasure that I acknowledge the support extended by IFOAM and the EM Research Organization to this conference.

We are sure that you would be convinced of the possibilities of Kyusei Nature Farming and EM Technology. At the end of this conference please do keep in touch. We assure you of assistance and support to test this technology and its subsequent adoption in your own environments to maintain high productivity and sustainability of agricultural systems and preserve the environment.