

Factors Affecting Conversion from Conventional to Organic Vegetable Farming in Thailand



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Purpose of study There is barrier among farmers in developing countries to convert to organic farming. This study examines factors affecting the decision of Thai vegetable farmers to convert and suggests possible measures to improve conversion.

Literature review indicated that:

- ✓ Young age & higher education of farmers;
- ✓ Labour availability;
- ✓ Availability & ownership of land
- ✓ Ownership of livestock;
- ✓ Availability of marketing channel
- ✓ Availability of credit; and
- ✓ Training on organic farming techniques;
-all have a positive effect on conversion

Research Methodology

Quantitative : Questionnaire-based survey of 158 vegetable farmers, both organic and conventional. Data analyzed with SPSS and binomial logit regression analysis.

Qualitative : Focus group discussion using Matrix Scoring and Participatory System Analysis

Binomial Logit Regression Analysis

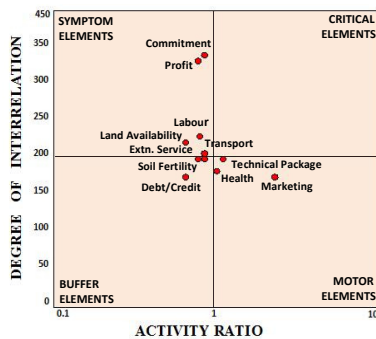
Independent Variables	B	Wald	Significance
1. Age of the farmer	0.524	5.417	0.020
2. Education level of the farmer	-0.871	7.917	0.005
3. Land ownership status		0.676	0.713
3.1 If one plot rented out	-0.813	0.359	0.549
3.2 If two plots rented out	-1.415	0.673	0.412
4. Number of chicks/ducks	0.003	0.457	0.499
5. Casual agri work in the nearby village	0.579	0.964	0.326
6. Saving money by household	-0.518	1.119	0.290
7. Borrowing money by household	-0.380	0.778	0.378
8. Membership of farmer co-operative	-0.200	0.215	0.642
9. Participation in research/experiments		17.854	0.000
9.1 None	-21.918	0.000	1.000
9.2 Observation Only	-20.322	0.000	1.000
9.3 Active Participation	-19.830	0.000	1.000
Constant	21.251	0.000	1.000

Statistically significant factors:

- ✓ **Middle aged** farmers are more likely to convert to organic farming due to better savings and access to credit, and concern for health and soil fertility.
- ✓ **Higher education** hinders the conversion process due to employment opportunities elsewhere.
- ✓ **Level of participation** in research or experiments has bearing on training methods.

Participatory Systems Analysis

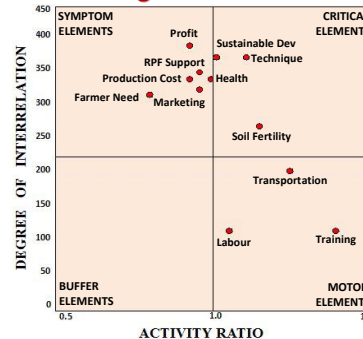
Conventional Farmers



Organic farmers prioritized training in techniques, soil fertility & sustainability. Labour & transport emerged as elements with influence.

Conventional farmers prioritized profits and had low motivation towards soil fertility. Marketing was an important element.

Organic Farmers



Implications

- Interventions should focus on middle-aged farmers with basic education & land title deeds.
- Training methods should highlight real benefits of organic farming through on-site demonstrations.
- Policy support is needed for increased market outlets and price stability for organic products.
- Strengthen farmers' institutions for collective activities and decision-making to avoid dependence on external agencies.