



Clean Agriculture Newsletter No.13

Clean Agriculture Development Project

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This is a technical cooperation project over five years (2017-2022) funded by JICA, targeting four Pilot Provinces (Vientiane Capital, Luang Prabang, Sayabouly, and Xieng Khouang). It aims at promoting clean agriculture, namely Organic Agriculture and Good Agricultural Practices (GAP), based on market needs in the Pilot Provinces.

Project activities update

1. Results of the OA market survey

The survey was conducted on Feb 2nd, 3rd, 6th, and 10th, 2021 at the ITEC OA market in Vientiane capital (open every Wednesday and Saturday), to understand the consumption trend and improve OA markets. Staff from Provincial Agriculture and Forestry Office (PAFO) in Vientiane Capital, District Agriculture and Forestry Office (DAFO) in Saysetta, and OA committee in Vientiane capital interviewed a total of 143 consumers. The interview results show that 60 % of the consumers visit the OA market 2 times a week and 37 % come once a week. 50 % of the interviewed consumers provided information on the reasons why they come to the OA markets. 79% indicated they come because of convenience of the market, 71% because of the availability of organic agricultural products, and 64% because of freshness of the products. In addition, more than 30 % of the interviewed consumers provided information related to varieties and safety of vegetables and fruits sold at the OA market. 59 % mentioned that the price of products is appropriate, which is an increase of 10 % from that of previous survey conducted during the rainy season (August to October) of 2018. Direct comparison however is not possible since the price of agricultural products in the rainy season tends to be higher than in the dry season. However, awareness or evaluation for OA products by the consumers improves step-by-step.

Recommendations were made to improve the OA market. 24% of the consumers suggested to use price tags for the products, 19% recommended to provide toilets, 15% recommended to install a coffee corner and 14% suggested rearrangement of the parking place. Based on the result of the survey, efforts for improvement of the “better OA market” will be made bit-by-bit, by collaborating with relevant parties.



Atmosphere of the survey by PAFO staff in Vientiane capital

2. Conducting ‘Survey on selection of farmers to participate in the Green House (GH) Supporting Program’ and ‘OA Group Survey’

The ‘survey on selection of farmers to participate in the Green House supporting program’ and ‘OA group survey’ have been conducted in collaboration with the Clean Agriculture Standard Center (CASC) as implementing agency. The survey has been conducted during 3-12 March 2021 in 3 target provinces, i.e. Lunag Phabang, Xayabouly and Xieng Khouang.



Atmosphere of the survey by PAFO staff in Vientiane capital



CASC staff explaining the selection standards

The project plans to provide construction materials for a total of 25 Greenhouses (GH) in 4 provinces i.e. Vientiane Capital, Luang Phabang, Xayabouly and Xieng Khouang. Completion of the green house construction is expected by the beginning of June 2021 before the rainy season starts. It is expected that the project will improve the production and sales of the farmers by increasing the number of cultivated crops during the rainy season and reducing diseases such as phytophthora disease by preventing humidification in the soil.

The expected impacts from the project are that after the farmers recognize that the increase in production and sales, exceeds their inputs from own funds, they will be keen to install GH by themselves and increase the number of GHs from own funds.

The project, through its collaboration with the implementation agency, implements activities which directly improve the income of farmers by solving agricultural production issues.



CASC staff conducting the survey for understanding the current situation of the OA group

3. PR video for promoting OA in Vientiane Capital

The project has completed the PR video for promotion of OA in Vientiane Capital. Although the video has a duration of only 2 minutes, the OA markets and OA farmers in Vientiane Capital have been wholly covered. The video has been posted on the electric bulletin board at Patousai park in Vientiane for 3 months since the beginning of February 2021.



PR Video on the electric bulletin board at Patousai park - Vientiane

The video was also shown at the booth of OA farmers at the Lao Food Festival in Vientiane Capital, which was held during 23-27 February 2021. Please view the PR-video at the Facebook page of JICA Laos office (https://fb.watch/4ixGhrZJ_fM/) and the organic home page. (https://fb.watch/4ixLqr8Q_CU/).

Voice from OA fields

The opinions of key persons involved in the promotion of organic agriculture in the target provinces have been collected. In this issue, we introduce Ms. Melany, the OA group leader at Nong Da village, Sikhottabong District, Vientiane Capital, who sells processed drinks by using OA products at the OA market.



Ms. Melanee Sisambath

leader of the OA group in Nong Da village

We visited Ms. Melany at her stall selling processed OA products at the ITECC OA market on 17th March 2021. She sells eight kinds of processed drinks by using OA products such as corn, pumpkin, and taro. The corn processed drink is the best-selling product. "I participated in a 3 weeks course for food-processing in Khon Kaen (Thailand) about 15 years ago", she said. "23 persons including Thai people participated in the course. Three Laotians also participated in the course".

Eighteen OA farmers are engaged in food processing in Vientiane Capital. "I started to make the processed drinks by using OA products for me and my family.", she said. "The taste is better if OA products are used". Because she has participated in many trainings related to the food processing or post-harvesting, she always gives advice for the packaging of products etc. to other farmers at the OA market.

