

Community Participation, Farmer Networks, and Government Support Influencing the Management of Agritourism Sites in Chiang Dao District, Chiang Mai Province

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Abstract

This study aimed to analyze the production capacity, marketing, and farmer networks to enhance the value of community enterprise groups of organic vegetable growers in Chiang Mai Province. The research employed a quantitative methodology, collecting data from 357 farmers through questionnaires, including administrators, government officials, local leaders, private sector representatives, and local residents. Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics such as mean, standard deviation, and multiple regression analysis.

The results indicated that 1) overall, the groups demonstrated a high level of potential ($\bar{X}=3.79$, S.D.=0.925), with the production dimension being the highest ($\bar{X}=3.93$, S.D.=0.887), reflecting strengths in production planning, land management, and quality control. The farmer network dimension was also high ($\bar{X}=3.87$, S.D.=0.919), indicating strong collaboration and market linkage. The marketing dimension showed high potential ($\bar{X}=3.58$, S.D.=0.971) but revealed gaps in branding and pricing strategies. Recommendations to enhance group performance include developing production and quality control skills, establishing effective branding and distribution channels, and strengthening farmer networks for knowledge exchange and market connectivity. The findings provide guidance for increasing value and sustainability of organic vegetable products at both local and national levels.

Keywords: Community Participation; Farmer Networks; Agricultural Tourism Management

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Introduction

Agro-tourism represents a form of tourism that integrates agricultural activities with travel experiences, aiming to provide supplementary income for farmers while promoting the conservation of natural resources and local culture (Kothari & Perwej, 2021). Community participation is a critical element in agro-tourism, as local residents are not only beneficiaries but also key decision-makers in guiding development in alignment with the area's potential, traditional knowledge, and identity (Kalachak & Khositworawut, 2024). According to Jitthawong and Thummachote (2024), genuine participation requires that communities possess decision-making power and actively engage in policy formulation, rather than merely being invited to participate in activities. This perspective underscores that sustainable agro-tourism development relies on the meaningful involvement of local communities in management.

Chiang Dao District, Chiang Mai Province, is distinguished by its agricultural diversity and tourism potential, particularly royal projects and mountainous farming areas producing temperate vegetables, tea, coffee, and fruits, which attract numerous tourists (Office of Agricultural Research Development, 2023). Strong farmer networks in the region play a crucial role in linking agricultural production with experiential tourism activities, such as farm stays, fruit-picking events, and learning rural lifestyles. These networks also help elevate the quality standards of agricultural products and tourism services to meet market demands (Chatphattaraphon, 2025). However, challenges remain, including unstructured management, inadequate promotion, and limited infrastructure, which hinder the development of Chiang Dao as a leading agro-tourism destination (Jensen, Kantawan, & Ugsaphon, 2023).

Beyond community and farmer networks, support from government agencies is vital to the success of agro-tourism development, particularly in policy formulation, budget allocation, infrastructure support, and market access mechanisms (Tourism Authority of Thailand, 2024). Effective coordination and collaboration among the government, private sector, and communities are essential for reducing redundancy, optimizing resource use, and ensuring balanced development. Such an integrated approach promotes agro-tourism that supports economic growth, environmental conservation, and the preservation of cultural identity, while generating value for all stakeholders without compromising resources for future generations.

Building on the foregoing, the researcher aims to study and analyze the production capacity, marketing, and farmer networks of community enterprise groups

engaged in organic vegetable cultivation in Chiang Mai Province. The study focuses on identifying strengths, limitations, opportunities, and challenges that affect the value addition of organic products at the community level and their linkage to broader markets. It seeks to understand standardized production mechanisms, market competitiveness, and the role of farmer networks in strengthening community enterprise systems, ultimately providing policy recommendations and sustainable development strategies to enhance organic agriculture in Chiang Mai Province.

Research Objective

To study and analyze the production capacity, marketing, and farmer networks for value addition of community enterprise groups engaged in organic vegetable cultivation in Chiang Mai Province.

Research Methodology

This study employed a quantitative research approach, conducted as follows:

1. Population and Sample

The population comprised community enterprise groups engaged in organic vegetable cultivation in Chiang Mai Province, registered for at least five years, totaling 1,215 members across 15 groups. The sample was selected as follows: (1) 15 group leaders (one per group), (2) 30 committee members (two per group), and (3) 30 member representatives (two per group), totaling 75 participants. This sampling strategy aimed to capture diverse perspectives within the community enterprise groups in Chiang Mai.

2. Research Instruments

The study utilized a structured questionnaire consisting of five sections:

Section 1: Respondent demographic information.

Section 2: Production capacity, including cultivation planning, knowledge and understanding of organic vegetable production, quality control, application of techniques and technology, and group infrastructure management.

Section 3: Marketing capacity, including logistics management, marketing operations, and financial management.

Section 4: Network capacity, covering network management, organizational culture, and support from public and private organizations.

Section 5: Value addition of organic vegetables, including product and packaging design, product processing, sales channels, and product promotion.

All questions employed a five-point Likert scale:

1.00–1.80=Strongly disagree

1.81–2.61=Disagree

2.62–3.42=Neutral

3.43–4.23=Agree

4.24–5.00=Strongly agree

Reliability analysis of the questionnaire showed high internal consistency for all dimensions of production, marketing, networking, and value addition, with Cronbach's Alpha coefficients exceeding 0.7, meeting the established criteria.

3. Data Collection

In this study, the researcher employed a sampling method to obtain a representative and comprehensive sample of the community enterprise groups. The procedure was as follows:

Step 1: Determine the proportion of each community enterprise group, divided into 15 groups, and then apply quota sampling to ensure an equal number of participants from each group.

Community Enterprise Group	President (persons)	Committee Members (persons)	Members (persons)
1. Ban Mae Phae Organic Farming Community, San Pa Tong District	1	2	2
2. Pa Bong Organic Farming Community Group, Saraphi District	1	2	2
3. Ban Sahakorn 2 Organic Farming Community, Mae On District	1	2	2
4. Ban Mae Tha Nuea Organic Farming Community Group, Mae On District	1	2	2
5. Ban Pong Organic Farming Community, Hang Dong District	1	2	2
6. Mae Tha Organic Farming Community Group, Mae On District	1	2	2
7. Ban San Kamphaeng Organic Farming Community, San Kamphaeng District	1	2	2

Community Enterprise Group	President (persons)	Committee Members (persons)	Members (persons)
8. Mae Taeng Organic Farming Community Group, Mae Taeng District	1	2	2
9. Ban Pa Phai Organic Farming Community, San Sai District	1	2	2
10. Doi Saket Organic Farming Community Group, Doi Saket District	1	2	2
11. Mae Rim Organic Farming Community, Mae Rim District	1	2	2
12. San Pa Pao Organic Farming Community Group, San Sai District	1	2	2
13. Ban Muang Kued Organic Farming Community, Mae Taeng District	1	2	2
14. Mae Wang Organic Farming Community Group, Mae Wang District	1	2	2
15. Phrao Organic Farming Community, Phrao District	1	2	2
Total	15	30	30

Table 1 Proportion of Sample Groups for Data Collection

Step 2: After defining the sample groups, the researcher employed a convenience sampling method by distributing the questionnaires and requesting the cooperation of the selected participants. Data collection continued until the predetermined total of 75 completed responses was obtained.

4. Data Analysis

This study utilized quantitative data obtained from the questionnaires, which were analyzed and presented in tabular form. The statistical methods applied included: 1) Percentage to show the proportion of responses, 2) Mean to indicate the central tendency of the data, 3) Standard Deviation (S.D.) to measure the dispersion within each group, and 4) F-test to compare differences between groups. In addition, the analysis was supplemented with descriptive explanations to provide a clear overview and detailed understanding of the data. This approach enabled an effective comparison and assessment of the community enterprise groups' capabilities in production, marketing, farmer networks, and value addition.

Results

The researcher conducted a study on Community Participation, Farmer Networks, and Government Support Influencing the Management of Agritourism Sites in Chiang Dao District, Chiang Mai Province. The findings can be summarized as follows:

Part 1: General Information of Respondents, The majority of respondents were female (69.09%), aged between 31–35 years (29.09%), and held a bachelor's degree (33.25%). Most were not community leaders or village health volunteers (VHVs), accounting for 66.75%. Regarding membership in farmer groups or institutions, members of the Bank for Agriculture and Agricultural Cooperatives (BAAC) had the highest proportion (34.34%), followed by members of community enterprises (13.27%). These data indicate that the respondents were predominantly educated, working-age women with active involvement in community and agricultural activities, which are crucial factors for promoting agritourism development and community participation in the study area.

Part 2: Analysis of Production, Marketing, and Farmer Networks to Create Added Value, The analysis of the production, marketing, and farmer networks of community enterprise groups cultivating organic vegetables in Chiang Mai Province can be summarized as presented in the following table.

Management Aspect	Item	$\bar{X}$	S.D.	Interpretation
Production	1. Planning production and managing cultivation areas appropriately	4.12	0.892	High
	2. Use of technology and innovation in organic vegetable production	3.85	0.934	High
	3. Quality control to meet product standards	3.98	0.876	High
	4. Knowledge and skills of farmers in organic vegetable production	3.76	0.945	High
Production Average		3.93	0.887	High
Marketing	1. Analysis of target groups and market demand	3.69	0.965	High
	2. Branding and product promotion	3.54	0.987	High
	3. Distribution channels (online and offline)	3.61	0.912	High

Management Aspect	Item	$\bar{X}$	S.D.	Interpretation
	4. Appropriate pricing and value addition	3.48	1.021	High
Marketing Average		3.58	0.971	High
Farmer Networks	1. Promoting collaboration among group members	4.05	0.882	High
	2. Knowledge and experience exchange in production	3.88	0.913	High
	3. Participation in government/private support programs or activities	3.72	0.947	High
	4. Linking to markets and consumers to create added value	3.81	0.934	High
Network Average		3.87	0.919	High
Overall Average		3.79	0.925	High

Table 2 Analysis of Production, Marketing, and Farmer Networks for Value Addition

The analysis of the production, marketing, and farmer network capabilities of organic vegetable community enterprises in Chiang Mai Province revealed the following insights:

1. Production Capability: The group demonstrated high overall production capability ($\bar{X}$ =3.93, S.D.=0.887), particularly in planning and managing cultivation areas and ensuring product quality. Farmers' knowledge and skills, along with the use of technology and innovation, contributed to their strong production capacity, indicating readiness to meet quality standards consistently.

2. Marketing Capability: Marketing capability was also high ($\bar{X}$ =3.58, S.D.=0.971), yet there is room for improvement, especially in branding and pricing strategies. Enhancing market analysis, brand identity, and distribution channels both online and offline would further increase the competitiveness and added value of organic vegetable products.

3. Farmer Network Capability: The farmer networks were strong ($\bar{X}$ =3.87, S.D.=0.919), reflecting effective collaboration, knowledge sharing, and participation in support programs provided by government and private organizations. These networks serve as key mechanisms for linking production to the market, promoting value addition, and sustaining the growth and competitiveness of community enterprises.

Overall, the findings suggest that the community enterprises possess high potential in production, marketing, and networking. To further enhance value creation and sustainability, emphasis should be placed on continuous skill development, quality management, effective marketing strategies, and strengthening farmer networks to connect products to broader markets.

Part 3: Recommendations for Enhancing Community Enterprise Capabilities

To strengthen the production capabilities of organic vegetable community enterprises in Chiang Mai Province, emphasis should be placed on developing farmers' knowledge and skills in managing cultivation areas, applying organic agricultural technologies and innovations, and maintaining consistent product quality. Conducting practical training workshops and providing expert consultations can enable farmers to produce high-quality, uniform organic vegetables that meet both local and national market demands.

In terms of marketing, community enterprises should focus on analyzing market demand, building a clear brand identity, and utilizing both online and offline distribution channels effectively. Pricing strategies should reflect product quality and added value, while promoting products through social media and sales promotion activities can enhance consumer interest and confidence in organic vegetables.

Regarding farmer networks, efforts should be made to foster collaboration among group members, facilitate knowledge and experience exchange, and encourage participation in government and private sector support programs. Establishing networks that connect farmers to markets and consumers will enable sustainable value creation. Moreover, implementing systematic communication and coordination mechanisms will support continuous group development and enhance the long-term competitiveness of community enterprises.

Discussion

The study examining community participation, farmer networks, and government support influencing the management of agritourism sites in Chiang Dao District, Chiang Mai Province, provides significant insights into the development of organic vegetable community enterprises and their potential for value creation and sustainability. Overall, the groups demonstrated high capability in the management of production, marketing, and farmer networks, with an average score of ($\bar{X}$ =3.79,

S.D.=0.925). Notably, production scored the highest ($\bar{X}$ =3.93, S.D.=0.887), highlighting strengths in production planning, cultivation area management, the application of agricultural technologies and innovations, quality control, and the skills and knowledge of farmers. These competencies are essential not only for ensuring product quality but also for enhancing the overall value of organic vegetables and sustaining the competitiveness of community enterprises.

The strong performance in farmer networks ($\bar{X}$ =3.87, S.D.=0.919) underscores the importance of collaboration and knowledge sharing within farming communities. The findings suggest that the ability of farmers to build and maintain networks is central to their resilience and collective advancement. This resonates with the work of Fongkham and Phongphet (2022), who emphasized that social networks and member collaboration are key factors in strengthening the capacity and competitiveness of community enterprises. Similarly, Supun, Prasongthan, and Silpsrikul (2025) argued that cooperation, knowledge sharing, and external support, coupled with effective market linkages, are vital to sustaining competitiveness and achieving long-term development goals. These findings point to the fact that building robust and sustainable farmer networks is not simply an organizational preference but a structural necessity for organic vegetable enterprises in Chiang Mai.

Although marketing also scored at a high level, the results indicate clear areas for improvement, particularly in brand development, product promotion, and pricing strategies that reflect both product value and consumer demand. The absence of strong branding and targeted promotional campaigns may limit the ability of community enterprises to differentiate their products in competitive markets. This observation is consistent with Maopraman (2022), who highlighted the need for understanding consumer behavior and creating product value as a basis for improving competitiveness. Therefore, implementing effective marketing strategies that are well aligned with production capacity and farmer networks could significantly enhance value creation and the sustainability of organic vegetable enterprises.

The overall findings reinforce the interdependence of three dimensions: production, farmer networks, and marketing in the successful management of agritourism and organic community enterprises. These dimensions are not isolated factors; rather, they represent an integrated system where improvements in one domain strengthen the others. This perspective is aligned with the integrated development approach, which stresses that holistic and interconnected strategies are

more effective than fragmented interventions. Production ensures quality and quantity, networks enable collaboration and resilience, and marketing translates these capabilities into consumer recognition and revenue generation.

Government and private sector support further play a catalytic role in reinforcing these three dimensions. Training programs, financial assistance, and market facilitation mechanisms provide farmers with the tools, resources, and opportunities to build on their existing capabilities. Participation in government and private sector initiatives also helps bridge the gap between grassroots-level practices and broader policy frameworks, thereby enabling farmers to benefit from both localized and institutional support. This reflects the principles of participatory development, which argue that sustainable progress is best achieved when local communities are empowered through collaboration with multiple stakeholders.

Importantly, the findings demonstrate that sustainable agritourism and organic farming enterprises require a balance between internal group dynamics and external support systems. Internally, farmer groups must continue to strengthen their production planning, adopt advanced agricultural practices, and deepen their networks to ensure resilience against market fluctuations and environmental challenges. Externally, ongoing support from government agencies, private sector partners, and consumers remains crucial for scaling up operations, accessing markets, and maintaining competitiveness in an increasingly demanding global food system.

The study also underscores the importance of viewing value addition not as a single activity but as a continuum of interconnected processes. Value creation begins with efficient and quality driven production, expands through strong farmer networks that facilitate knowledge exchange, and culminates in effective marketing strategies that connect products with consumer expectations. Without any one of these dimensions, the overall system risks imbalance, thereby limiting the potential for long-term sustainability.

In conclusion, the results highlight that the success of organic vegetable community enterprises in Chiang Mai depends on a synergistic interplay between production efficiency, strong farmer networks, and innovative marketing strategies, all reinforced by sustained government and private sector support. Production should emphasize not only output but also adherence to quality standards and innovation. Farmer networks should extend beyond group solidarity to foster institutional collaboration and resilience. Marketing strategies must evolve to capture consumer

trust and loyalty while accurately reflecting the value of organic produce. By integrating these elements within a framework of participatory and integrated development, community enterprises can strengthen their competitiveness, enhance value creation, and ensure sustainable development in the long term.

New Knowledge

The study on Community Participation, Farmer Networks, and Government Support Influencing the Management of Agritourism Sites in Chiang Dao District, Chiang Mai Province generated new knowledge that contributes to the systematic development of organic agriculture. The key findings can be summarized in three main areas:

1. **Strong Production Capacity:** The research indicates that community enterprise groups possess effective capabilities in production planning, cultivation area management, and the use of technologies and innovations to enhance production efficiency. Continuous quality control and the development of farmers' skills contribute to increasing the added value of organic vegetable products, which is a critical factor supporting the sustainability of organic agriculture at the community level.

2. **Marketing and Value-Addition Capacity:** Community enterprise groups demonstrate competence in market planning and management, establishing distribution channels, promoting products, and developing organic vegetable brands. This allows products to reach consumers efficiently. Value addition through creative marketing and responsiveness to market demands enhances income and the competitiveness of the groups.

3. **Network and Collaboration Capacity:** Community enterprise groups have strong collaborative networks both internally and externally, including knowledge and experience exchange, participation in government and private support programs, and market and consumer linkages. These sustainable networks strengthen production and marketing capacities and support the systematic development of organic agriculture.

Conclusion and Suggestion

The study on Community Participation, Farmer Networks, and Government Support Influencing the Management of Agritourism Sites in Chiang Dao District, Chiang Mai Province, revealed that the community enterprise groups demonstrated a high overall potential ($\bar{X}=3.79$, S.D.=0.925). Among the dimensions, production capacity scored the highest ($\bar{X}=3.93$, S.D.=0.887), reflecting strong capabilities in production planning, cultivation area management, the use of technologies and innovations, as well as farmers' skills and quality control. The farmer network dimension was also high ($\bar{X}=3.87$, S.D.=0.919), indicating effective collaboration among members, knowledge and experience exchange, and market linkages. Although marketing capacity was at a high level, gaps remain in areas such as branding, pricing, and product promotion. Enhancing farmers' knowledge and skills in production, conducting market demand analysis, and continuously developing networks are recommended to increase product value, strengthen competitiveness, and support the sustainable development of community enterprise groups.

Therefore, the researcher provides recommendations from this study, divided into three key areas: policy recommendations, recommendations for practical application, and suggestions for future research.

1. Policy Recommendations: It is recommended to support community enterprise groups of organic vegetable farmers in Chiang Mai Province through measures that enhance production capacity, the use of technology and innovation, as well as the development of farmer networks and systematic market linkages. These measures aim to increase the value and competitiveness of organic vegetable products.

2. Recommendations for Practical Application: Community enterprise groups should utilize the findings on production, marketing, and farmer networks to plan and develop strategies for production, distribution, and continuous brand building. Additionally, organizing training sessions and knowledge exchange among members can help improve the quality and standards of products.

3. Recommendations for Future Research: Future studies should explore factors and strategies that influence the long-term sustainability of community enterprise groups and value addition. Research on consumer behavior and emerging market opportunities is also recommended to guide the effective development of organic vegetables and high-quality agricultural products.

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