

Organic Community Planning: An application for designing Lo-shan Village of Hua-lien County, Taiwan

Chen, Y.S.¹

Keywords: organic community, Hua-lien county, Lo-shan village, organic farming, Taiwan.

Abstract

The urban development of a modern city with heavy traffic, serious pollution, and land over-exploitation emerged in cities of Taiwan a few decades ago. While we tackle the existing problems from the urban areas, we should also develop some alternative opportunities for the rural areas. This would help to mitigate the problems caused by heavy population in cities and achieve a compromise or a balance of development between urban and suburban areas.

The talk will cover the scope of traditional farming villages in Eastern Taiwan, which is not only full of historical and cultural meaning, but also the best home-base of the future green valley. To explore the geographic environment of a traditional natural village transforming ecological community, the talk particularly examines the existing traditionally natural village located in Eastern Taiwan, Lo-shan village, Fu-li town, Hua-lien County.

Based on the principle of organic community, the development of the Lo-shan village to be the "formation of Taiwan's first organic village" was initiated by Hualien District Agricultural Improvement Station in 1998. Almost ten years were spent on the conversion from conventional agriculture to organic farming in Lo-shan village, which now eventually wants to share its successful experiences to the world. However, can the successful pattern from Lo-shan be copied to other areas especially those Taiwan's countryside? Hence, in the present study, we analyze Lo-shan's environment as well its geographical conditions for making a good success of an organic village that could probably provide some implications to other regions conducting organic production. As a consequence, the Lo-shan region overall tried to transform its basic idea to organic agriculture system in symbiosis of humans and nature since 1998. With the basic goal of establishing an organic village, together with the improvement of experience-based exchange facilities, and enjoyable farming village life, the business has been promoted mainly by agricultural cooperatives and local area producers with the support of the administration from the local Farmers' Association. Although various challenges, including the increased number of disease and pests facing agriculture subtropical areas as compared to temperate areas and difficulties in extending sales and distribution networks, it is necessary for organic producers in Lo-shan village to advance the business, while cooperating with consumers in the future.

¹ Department of Animal Science, National I-Lan University, Taiwan, e-mail: yschen@niu.edu.tw