

Farmers' Adoption of Recommended Tiger Prawn Raising Practices in Pattani Province, Southern Thailand

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ABSTRACT

One hundred and ten farmers in Pattani province, southern Thailand were interviewed to investigate the status of tiger prawn production, farmers' adoption of government recommendations concerning raising practices for this species, associated problems in production, and factors associated with the adoption of the recommendations.

It was found that investment in tiger prawn farming was undertaken primarily by non-resident owners. About one-half accessed a loan from various sources, the main source being relatives. Most profited from their investment. Farm magazines and friends were the main sources of farm information. Most farmers adopted the government recommendations for pond construction, pond preparation, stocking density, feeding, water drainage and aeration, use of drugs and chemical equipment, and environmental control and management, of which only a few were aware. Disease outbreaks and low survival rate were mentioned as major production problems. Income, use of labour and production yield were positively correlated with the farmers' adoption of recommended practices.

The study indicates that the overall economic situation of farmers has perhaps the major influence on their adoption behavior, in that those who follow the recommendations tend to be higher in economic status and receive better profits from their work much more than those who do not follow them. It is advisable that increased attention be paid to educating farmers to be aware of the residual effects of using drugs and other chemical substances in their operations, and thus make decisions with environmental concerns in mind.

Key words : Adoption, Recommendations, Tiger Prawn, Farmers, Southern Thailand

INTRODUCTION

The tiger prawn is an aquatic crustacean which is economically very important to Thailand, and very easy to raise. It has a good taste and is in great demand all over the world. Thailand has thousands of kilometers of mangrove coastline, which is ideal for breeding tiger prawns, and financially there are good profits to be made from a prawn-raising operation. For these reasons and others, many people are interested in raising tiger prawns, and the shrimp-farming industry has grown rapidly over the last two decades. In 1997, Thailand