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## E-learning for Agricultural Communities

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### Abstract

Agricultural knowledge and new technologies of food production often do not reach the ultimate users: the farmers. E-learning transmits relevant information to farmers and educators, thus contributing to higher education and poverty alleviation. E-learning is seen as a means of increasing access to educational opportunities in rural areas and keeping pace with rapid changes within the agricultural sector. This study examines e-learning adoption trends within the agricultural producer community in Central-Java, Indonesia. Whereas e-learning has reached early or late adoption status within other sectors, such as in the IT sector, Economy and Management, Indonesian Agri-Business have yet to “jump on board”. Numerous reasons were noted, including: rising cost of traditional, classroom-based training, long distances from peripheral regions to centres for education, lack of teachers for agricultural production, internet and computer access in Central-Java, wide spread Mobile telephony in the rural areas, computer skills for Indonesian farmers, low production costs for e-learning, and sustainability of e-Learning courses for Agri-Business. The study did note various agricultural e-learning initiatives of online university courses and programs. Specific objectives of the project are to: (1) train interested farmers, agricultural researchers, educators in the production and use of e-learning courses, (2) Produce e-learning materials on agricultural production methods, (3) introduce the materials in selected communities, (4) support their technical delivery and provide the hardware. The production of desirable e-learning courses with free ware Content Management Systems (CMS) and the written survey would be published and of interest to regional government, e-learning developers and agricultural producers. The author set out to understand e-learning adoption trends, barriers and opportunities within Indonesian agricultural sector. The study will also examine potential benefits of e-learning to the agricultural sector. Opportunities are noted, along with best practices to assist those who wish to develop e-learning products and services for this sector.

**Keywords:** CMS, e-learning, education, free ware