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Changing Face of Home Gardens: A Case Study of Phong My Commune, Vietnam

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Abstract

Home gardens have a long tradition in Vietnam. They contribute to the livelihood of a significant part of the rural population. The traditional home gardens stand out by the virtue of the nutrition benefit they have for a family. Nutrition and food supply are still the important aspects of home gardens in the community Phong My. Tree and particularly fruit trees are grown frequently (citrus species, star fruit, litchi, jackfruit, sugar apple, mango) but not more only for the own consumption. Nowadays up to 70 % of the total home gardens production is intended for sale. All families buy a significant amount of food at market which considerably turns farmer's production orientation. The majority of them displayed their intention to focus on cultivation of several cash crops (acacia, betel nut palm, black pepper, cassava, jackfruit, pummelo, sugar cane, peanut). The particular example is one of the most frequently grown fruit tree pummelo (*Citrus grandis*) that is solely a matter of market production. These plans significantly alter income diversity, home gardens appearance and importance of their special functions and biodiversity which have also a severe environmental impact. Other contributing factors are soil erosion and natural disasters. The aim to change a number of grown species demonstrates that the production shift is an ongoing process. Farmers rely on lower amount of products than ever before and become more vulnerable due to the fluctuated market price. Income generated from home garden has been ranked among the main income sources which shares total farm income by up to 76 %. The local agriculture practices obviously call for the intervention of the agriculture extensions that would propose the sustainable solution contributing to the environmental and economical improvements by using of local resources.

Keywords: Home garden, key crop, market, production orientation, tree, Vietnam