THAILAND DRYLAND CHAMPIONS 2013

Awardee
Mr. Thaklowa Nimit

Place of activity
Na-Ngua Subdistrict
Namsom District
Udontani, Province
Thailand

Combating low fertility soils caused by soil erosion and problems of shallow and skeletal soils, Mr. NIMIT uses Vetiver grass to minimize soil erosion and reserve moisture. He applied various soil-improvement techniques to minimize production inputs and conserves soil ecology, for example, application of microbial liquid fertilizers and compost from farm’s by products incorporating with green manures. Instead of hazardous chemical insecticides, he uses herbal insecticides to avoid environmental damage. He adopts sufficient economy and applies integrated agriculture for family consumption and for sale. He has livestock and grows a variety of crops including herbs for medicines. He also applies rotation cropping in his organic paddy fields. Without chemical fertilizer application, his crop-yields are proven high. He can earn a living by selling various crops throughout the year. It enables him to restore from debts of previous investment. During 2007-2012 he joint government agencies in setting up of more than 250 organic farming groups. So far, he has been a guest lecturer to provide knowledge on application of Vetiver grass for soils and water conservation to more than 12,000 farmers. The action of Mr. Rezene has influenced the inhabitants of Adi Neamn; as a result some farmers have taken major actions to save degraded dry land and change it productive one.
Awardee
Mr. Tanong Saengked

Place of activity
Kao-Ya Sub-District
Sribunpod
Pattalung Province
Thailand

Mr. Tanong Saengked is a Volunteer Soil Doctor (VSD) of Land Development Department (LDD). With support and recommendation from LDD staff, he understands how to improve his water logging land for more productivity. Having furrow system in place to control and drain excess water, he also grows Vetiver grass along furrow’s contours to prevent soil erosion and conserve water. He uses many approaches to improve soil fertility such as: microbial liquid fertilizers, green manure crops, compost, and so on. Mr. Tanong Saengked is very experience in utilizing Vetiver grass for various purposes such as soil and water conversation or building material. He won many competitions and awards organized by private companies and government agencies. Part of his land is set aside for Vetiver grass reproduction. Mr. Tanong Saengked also conducts training lessons to demonstrate the benefits of Vetiver grass. In his capacity as VSD, soils and water conservation and Vetiver grass utilization techniques have been transferred to quite a number of farmers.
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Awardee
Mr. Mai Kraisut

Place of activity
Nachumhed Sub-district
Yantakwaw District, Trung
Thailand

Recurrent flooding and sand sedimentation made Mr. Mai Kraisut’s farm land unfertile. After he obtained knowledge from LDD staff, he put in place furrows in his land. Soil erosion has been managed by using Vetiver grass. Soil fertility has been improved by applying compost and microbial liquid fertilizer. Almost 1 hectare of his land has been assigned to be a learning center for 13 modules of land development practices consisting of knowledge on:

1) Acidic soil improvement by dolomite application
2) Microbial liquid fertilizer production
3) Compost production
4) Application of microbial fertilizer with orchards
5) Fruit covering to avoid damages from insects by indigenous methods
6) Green manure application
7) Herb gardening
8) Application of compost and microbial liquid fertilizer to vegetables
9) Application of Vetiver grass for general soils and water conservation
10) Native vegetables production
11) Application of microbial liquid fertilizer in irrigation system
12) Micro bio-technology for water treatment
13) Application of Vetiver grass for soils and water conservation in fruit tree plantation

Mr. Kraisut also applies integrated organic farming to which environment and ecology are conserved. Considering his successful experience and knowledge, LDD regularly invites him to present his success stories to interested farmers.
Awardee
Mr. Prayong Boonthong

Place of activity
Nawang Sub-district
Mueang District
Amnat Charoen Province
Thailand

Facing low fertility and highly acid sandy soils with hard pan, Mr. Prayong Boonthong started improving his land nine years ago. Previously, he depended on chemical fertilizer and insecticide until he turned to more organic and integrated farming. He diversifies his farm land for multiple purposes for example: paddy, fruit trees, vegetable, livestock and etc. He also has farm ponds for water harvesting and irrigation. In using these reservoirs, he has minimized input cost. After harvesting, he ploughs and incorporates his paddy field with rice straws and leguminous crops. He applies Dolomite to raise soil pH and microbial liquid fertilizer to increase soil fertility. As a result, the pH increases while the hard pan is easier to plough and the rice’s yield has been raised. He keeps practicing all these soil improvement techniques every year. Comparing rice’s yield of the year 1999 with 2012, it increased from 350 to 800 kg. /rai. His paddy field has been selected for demonstration of organic rice farming. At present, his farm land has been assigned as a learning center for interested farmers to visit and learn from his experience. Now, a number of his risks have been minimized and his income has been sustained throughout the year.