

Happy Field Happy Farm: Quality food produced by happy farmers for everyone

Phrae, Thailand Phrae, Thailand
Nilobon Pramarn



Year Founded:

2014

Organization type:

for profit

Project Stage:

Start-Up

Budget:

\$10,000 - \$50,000

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Project Summary

Elevator Pitch

Concise Summary: Help us pitch this solution! Provide an explanation within 3-4 short sentences.

Happy Field Happy Farm will encourage and support small-scale rice farmers in Namcham community to grow high quality rice varieties and to adopt sustainable agricultural practices. Our team will engage in product development process through food processing, package designing, branding and marketing.

WHAT IF - Inspiration: Write one sentence that describes a way that your project dares to ask, "WHAT IF?"

What if all rice paddy of 980 ha in Namcham community could be shifted to 100% organic farming practices and produce more safe foods for us all?

About Project

Problem: What problem is this project trying to address?

Large quantity of low-grade rice has been produced into the market so that low price of rice products is a crucial problem that smallholder rice farmers have been facing over time. With intensive chemical use, not only it contributes to risk of health problems of both farmers and consumers but also adversely affect to the ecosystem. We think that all these problems open door for change in agriculture, especially at the smallest level; farmers.

Solution: What is the proposed solution? Please be specific!

We will encourage smallholder rice farmers in our community to organically grow high quality rice varieties and promote secondary food processing to increase value in terms of nutritional quality and food preservation. In our food processing, it still keeps the natural value of rice, no other inputs involve during the process. Such as, Germination process, for DonKaew GABA Rice product, it helps soften rice texture, increase nutrient values and prevent rancidity and weevils. It is all about natural process in food. What we do next is to improve packaging design, to create branding and to do marketing. We will shorten supply-chain to ensure fair trade for both farmers and consumers. We believe everyone deserves good food in fair price.

Impact: How does it Work

Example: Walk us through a specific example(s) of how this solution makes a difference; include its primary activities.

Now, we are working with Mrs Sriwan Porjit, a 61 year-old rice farmer, who set up GABA Rice Processing Group in Namcham community. In 2011, she started growing 8 quality rice varieties and producing GABA Rice supported by Maejo University. At that time, Mrs. Porjit sold her GABA rice 60

Baht/kg (£1.2). Before that just like other farmers, she could sell her low-grade rice only 9 Baht/kg (£0.2). In March 2014, we worked with her as a consultant, we have done product development, product design, created branding and online marketing. As a result, the price was raised up more than double. Now we have 5 GABA rice products on the list; Original Mixed 8 Rice, Rice Berry Blend, Pure Jasmine Rice, Pure Rice Berry Rice and Pure Black Glutinous Rice.

Impact: What is the impact of the work to date? Also describe the projected future impact for the coming years.

Now we have 3 smallholder farmers who are interested in this project and willing to develop together. Three of them are shifting farming practices to organic to produce high quality rice. Mrs. Porjit is playing an important role as a successful model and a food processing expert to train farmers who are interested. In Mrs. Porjit case, she can increase her income from selling GABA Rice 60,000 Baht/Ton without a middleman comparing with low-grade rice 9,000 Baht/Ton to a middleman. However, her market is limited within Phrae province, with quality of the product, her GABA rice is widely known by word of mouth. From our action, we can publicise the product and expand the market to rice consumers in the rest of Thailand. The respond is positive. Our customers seem to concern more about food safety and quality of food from our provided online information about rice and food safety.

Spread Strategies: Moving forward, what are the main strategies for scaling impact?

Within 3 years, we will increase farmers in our project to 50% of all farmers in our community by organising workshop facilitated by experts and successful farmers. We will encourage and support young people to be a smart farmer. We will set up Happy Field Happy Farm as a company and generate job opportunities for local young people to return home, to develop our community to be ready for rapid pace of development from outside. We want build a sense of ownership among them. We also expect to export our products to send quality food to our friends in other countries as well as in Thailand.

Sustainability

Financial Sustainability Plan: What is this solution's plan to ensure financial sustainability?

Our social enterprise will guarantee fair price of rice products and buy it from smallholder farmers who participate our project. Our main revenue to run our business is from selling rice products that we develop through food processing. However, in start-up and scale-up process, we also need some supports from support agencies for facilities, machines, equipments, workshop and management cost.

Marketplace: Who else is addressing the problem outlined here? How does the proposed project differ from these approaches?

Rice market in Thailand is very competitive but there is huge room for high quality rice products both national and international market. Even if there is an organic movement spread widely, but to make it happen is not easy at all. As it is most suitable for the small-scale farm size due to a more detailed form of farm management. Not only is high quality products highlighted but we also have social value as a key point. In Thailand, there are many emerging organisations addressing the same problem, but we rather build a stronger network to solve this problem together. We are not competitors.

Team

Founding Story

I grew up in Namcham community since I was born. I really love a beautiful panoramic scenery of rice paddy with fresh air in my community. 10 years later after I had been away from home, I found so much change in my community. Farmers no more wants to be a farmer. Many of them sell their land to start other jobs. Rice paddy is turned to a furniture factory piece by piece. It is quite sad to see this change. My worry is if this change still happens, who will grow rice for us in the near future? As people do not want to be a farmer anymore. My intention are to conserve the fertile paddy fields which feed us since I was young, to improve quality of food, and to raise farmers' social status as a smart farmer who produces quality food for us all.

Team

1) Nilobon Pramarn Founder & CEO (Full-Time) MSc International Development, University of Birmingham, The UK 2) Panitnart Kanjanatiwat Food-Scientist (Part-Time) MSc Food and nutrition for development, Institute of Nutrition, Mahidol University, Thailand 3) Maroot Limruamsup Designer (Part-Time) BSc Agricultural Economics, Kasetsart University, Thailand. Our team also cooperates with Maejo University and Subdistrict Administrative Organization.

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