

## Acknowledgement

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## Abstract

This research has two main objectives. The first objective was to study Japanese's interest to participate in agro-tourism in Chiang Mai Province. The second objective was to provide suggestions for agro-tourism development in Chiang Mai to serve the Japanese' interests. The researcher started the process by studying what agro-tourism services were being offered in Chiang Mai along with concepts and theories about agro-tourism. Then, a focus-group questions list was developed according to the reviewed information along with Agro-tourism concepts and theories. The researcher conducted 3 rounds of focus group with different informants in each round. The researcher applied purposive sampling technique to choose informants for this research. The researchers analyzed the data using coding technique along with recursive abstraction technique. The research results answered the research objectives as follows.

The first research objective was to study Japanese tourists' interest to participate in agro-tourism in Chiang Mai. The results showed that from the 42 proposed ago-tourism activities, there were 38 activities that more than half of the informants agreed that they would like to participate in. There were 3 activities that every informant agreed to participate in which consisted of: 1) Tasting agricultural food products 2) Buying chemical free agricultural products and 3) Eating local style food. The other activities that more than 90% of the informants were interested in participating were 1) Participating in hands-on manufacturing food process in factories 2) Walking on own and read signs and 3) Riding horse. There were, however, agro-tourism activities that less than 50% of the informants would like to participate in which were 1) Playing or taking pictures at photo spot 2) Buying souvenirs (modern design) 3) Buying well-known brand name herbal medicine, and 4) Seeing exhibition, respectively.

The second research objective was to provide suggestions for agro-tourism development in Chiang Mai to serve the Japanese' interests. According to the focus group results, the most effective way to advertise Agro-tourism to Japanese residents in Chiang Mai would be to promote it via Japanese magazine distributed in Chiang Mai. The timings that would attract them to travel most were when there are festivals, during low season, and during their children's school breaks. The factors affecting their decision to travel or not travel were cost, distance to the travel destination, and road difficulty. The results showed that the Japanese lives in Chiang Mai have high interest in agro-tourism and were willing to participate if the timing and cost of agro-tourism were designed to match their demands.