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Sustainable Aquaculture for a Secure Future

Title: **Impacts of Extension Practice: Lessons From Small Farm-Based Aquaculture of Nile Tilapia in Northeastern Thailand**

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Abstract: This study compared the effectiveness of different extension techniques at communicating high-input inorganic fertilization (HIG) technology to small-scale, northeast Thai fish farmers. HIG adoption rates and associated fish production during 1997/1998 varied according to extension intensity across three farmer groups. Short training sessions were found to be equally effective at communicating HIG technology to farmers as longer on-farm trials. Both forms of extension were more effective than farmer-to-farmer communication at producing higher fish yields. Yields across all groups, however, were significantly lower than HIG-projected yields, suggesting that extension methodology did not exclusively affect production in this system. Farmer income, land holdings, attitudes, predisposition to risk, and fertilizer price all may have affected production. Improving production will involve a multifaceted approach, possibly including development of less capital-intense technologies, focus on short training sessions, encouragement of farmer cooperatives, and advocacy of economic policies that improve farmer access to credit and local markets.

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