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SOCIO-ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS ASSOCIATED WITH THE MANAGEMENT PRACTICES OF RAMBUTAN FARMERS IN SELECTED TOWNS OF LAGUNA

THESIS

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SOCIO-ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS ASSOCIATED WITH THE MANAGEMENT PRACTICES OF RAMBUTAN FARMERS IN SELECTED TOWNS OF LAGUNA

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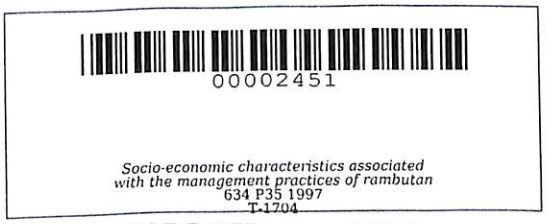
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A B S T R A C T

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The study was conducted for the purpose of determining the management practices employed by rambutan farmers in selected towns of Laguna. Specifically, this study aimed to determine the socio-economic characteristics of rambutan farmers, the management practices; the relationship between socio-economic characteristics of rambutan farmers and their management practices; and the problems encountered by the rambutan farmers.

The towns selected for the study were San Pablo, Alaminos, Calauan, Nagcarlan and Liliw. Forty two rambutan farmers were used as respondents.

The mean age of the rambutan farmers was 48 years. In general, all respondents had formal schooling. The average number of dependents was three with an average farming experience of eight years. The obtained mean yield and net income were 2,615 kilograms and ₱60,010, respectively. All were owner-operator with a mean farm size of 1.5 hectares.

All farmers employed the necessary management practices. In land preparation, rambutan farmers used plow and carabao for medium-scale farm and simply dug a hole with the use of hoe for backyard farms. Most farmers believe that the best distance between rambutan trees is seven to nine meters.

Farmers cannot provide enough water due to lack of facilities. Shading is not necessary because trees need an open air. Application of chemical fertilizers like complete and 0016 was done twice a year. Respondents preferred manual method of weeding rather than the mechanical method because the latter is quite expensive. In addition, all farmers practiced pruning to regulate the size and shape of the plants using knife, bolo and pruning scissors. Majority of the farmers applied chemicals in controlling pests instead of smudging method. Owners employed hired laborers in harvesting using priming and picking method.

Among the socio-economic characteristics, years of experience, income and size of the farm were found to be significantly related to the selected management practices. The years of farming experience therefore, plays a vital role in adopting certain management practices. If a farmer has longer years of farming experience, he knows more about what farming practices to employ. Size of the farm is another contributing factor. If the farm is relatively large, there is a greater tendency to follow the proper distance in planting. Income is also related to management practices. The more efficient the management practices, the higher the income obtained from the rambutan.

Respondents' common problem was the prevalence of pests like fruit fly, mealy bugs and mango twig borers. Other problems cited were natural calamities, lack of government support and theft.

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SOCIO-ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS ASSOCIATED WITH THE MANAGEMENT PRACTICES OF RAMBUTAN FARMERS IN SELECTED TOWNS OF LAGUNA 1/

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INTRODUCTION

Rambutan (Nephelium lappaceum L.), otherwise known as the Philippine lychee, has gained much popularity and acceptance since its introduction in the country a century ago. The fruit has derived its name from "**rambut**", a Malay word for hair. This spiny fruit is available only during the periods of August to October, and as such, remains quite expensive (Tacio, 1988).

There is perhaps, no fruit in the Philippines that can match the striking attractiveness of rambutan (Coronel, 1986). Before, it was ranked among the minor fruits but because of the introduction of Development Act of 1995, rambutan is now a part of high value fruit crops mainly due to the high demand for it in the international market. More evidently, 1995 statistics shows that Thailand, Malaysia and