



Hungarian University of Agriculture and Life Sciences
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Abstract

Title of thesis: The Maize Production in Lao PDR

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Maize (*Zea mays* L.), commonly known as corn, is one of the world's most widely cultivated cereal crops, essential for food, animal feed, and industrial applications. Maize originated in Central America and is now grown in various climates and soil types around the globe, making it an important crop. This study examines the maize production landscape in the Lao People's Democratic Republic (Lao PDR), highlighting its critical role in agricultural development and economic stability. In Laos, maize is the second-largest temporary crop after rice, primarily grown in the northern provinces where favorable agroecological conditions allow the cultivation of several maize varieties. Its adaptability, high yield potential, and strong market demand in neighboring countries have established it as a crucial contributor to both household incomes and national export revenues.

This research sought to establish the situation of maize production in Laos, focusing on cultivation techniques, pests and diseases, and market linkages with neighboring countries such

as Thailand, Vietnam, and China. Through field surveys and interviews with farmers in Xiengkhuang and Vientiane provinces, insights were gathered into local production methods, preferred maize varieties, and market demands. Additionally, surveys in major markets in Vientiane Capital provided data on consumer preferences, price ranges, and market challenges. The findings indicate that while maize production contributes significantly to local economies, it faces constraints like seasonal pest outbreaks, fluctuating prices, and competition in export markets. In addition, the high value of imported seeds makes Laos producers highly dependent on outside sources and increases production costs.

The study concludes that improving local seed production, expanding access to regional markets as well as adopting sustainable farming practices can enhance the viability and profitability of the maize industry in Laos. These findings offer valuable insights for policymakers and agricultural stakeholders aiming to strengthen Laos's agricultural systems and market integration.