

ABSTRACT

Title : **Attitudes toward Choosing to Study in Undergraduate Agricultural Technology Program of Senior High School Students, Their Guardians and Teachers who attended SUT-Agri Fair' 2006 at Suranaree University of Technology**

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The purposes of this research were 2 folds. First, it aimed at finding out the attitudes of senior high school students towards choosing to study in the undergraduate program in Agricultural Technology at Suranaree University of Technology (SUT). Secondly, the research was to find out whether guardians and teachers supported or advised students to select the program to study. The research methodology used in this study was questionnaires whose respondents included 191 senior high school students and 153 guardians and teachers who attended the SUT-Agri fair during January 11 - 15, 2006. The gained data were firstly recorded in a Microsoft Excel file and then analyzed by the SPSSx for Window program for percentages, means and standard deviations.

The results of the study may be separated into two groups: the students and the guardians and teachers. For the students, 86.90% came from the northeastern part of Thailand (77.50% from Nakhon Ratchasima). Among these northeastern students, 38.70% chose to study at SUT, and only about 10% selected the Agricultural Technology program, which is the same number as those who chose the Agricultural Engineering program. There were 51.30% of these students who had been once advised about their further study, and 77.50% did not know of the any curriculum offered by the Institute of Agricultural Technology.

It was also found that their parents were the most influential (the mean of 2 out of the 3 ranking scale) in guiding them to select their future fields of study. Teachers and friends also played a role, with the means of 1.82 and 1.72, respectively.

The reasons why these students selected SUT were the availability of modern facilities such as equipment and laboratories, followed by interesting curricula, good dormitories, chances to get jobs after graduation, and well educated and known instructors, respectively.

As for those who did not choose SUT, they said it was because of many reasons. The top five included the far distance from their home, the high tuition fees, the trimester system, the uninteresting curricula, and the tough programs.

For the guardians and teachers, 91.50% came from the Northeast, most of whom were from Nakhon Ratchasima and 29% of these people worked on Agriculture and Agri-business. Almost 90% of these people did not know the Agricultural Technology program of SUT, and 87.58% encouraged the students to choose only one program of SUT. The most popular (30.06%) program was Agricultural Engineering, followed by Food Technology, Animal Production Technology, and Crop Production Technology, respectively. These people also gave useful comments and suggestions of how the university may improve its services and public relations.

The data analysis indicated that the university urgently and continuously needed to make the university, the offered programs, the teaching and learning nature, employment opportunities, scholarships, and community services known to the public. This information would help motivate guardians and teachers to advise more students to choose the Agricultural Technology program as
t h e i r c h o i c e o f s t u d y .