

ORGANIC AGRICULTURE POLICY IN TUYEN QUANG PROVINCE FOR THE PERIOD 2018-2021

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Organic agricultural production has been taking place in many countries around the world with a strong shift from traditional agriculture to sustainable agriculture in order to create high-value agricultural products with food safety, environmental protection and climate change adaptation. Organic agricultural production is considered as the natural farming with strict control of irrigation water, unpolluted soil and no use of chemical fertilizers, pesticides, herbicides, growth stimulants and plant varieties, livestock and materials derived from genetically modified organisms. Organic agriculture is attracting the attention of the whole society and is the preferred choice of consumers today. Our Party and the State have timely worked out guidelines and policies to prioritize and support efforts to develop sustainable, environmentally friendly, productive and competitive agricultural products including the organic. Through a practical research, it shows that, in addition to the results in implementation of the organic agricultural production policy achieved in the period of 2018-2021 in Tuyen Quang province, there should be good orientations and solutions to facilitate further development of the organic agricultural production.

Keywords: *Organic Agriculture, Organic agricultural production, Policy on organic agricultural production, Consumers and Tuyen Quang province.*

1. Introduction

Organic agricultural production brings in a number of benefits such as creating higher economic value than normal products, ensuring the health of consumers without affecting the environment (water, air, land...), and it can be combined with other economic forms to reach higher income for farmers.

In response to the urgent requirement of organic agriculture, the Government issued the Decree No.109/2018/ND-CP dated August 29, 2018 on organic agriculture to manage and develop organic agricultural production in which it clearly states the production principles, standards and inputs for organic agricultural production. Particularly, priority is given to the application of issued policies for the development of organic agriculture and a number of specific policies to support small businesses, cooperatives, farms, households and groups of households doing organic production.

This is the major policy of the Party and the

State, creating momentum for development of the environmentally friendly and sustainable agriculture and enhancing the competitiveness of organic agricultural products. However, this is also a new area that needs to have further researches. In reality, the implementation of organic agricultural production policy in Vietnam currently still has some shortcomings such as specific policies are not strong enough to encourage development and the certification system, standards, regulations and supervision need to be more consistent in practice. Organic agricultural production in Vietnam still faces with many challenges and difficulties which require measures to overcome in the near future.

2. Research overview

Over the years, there have been many researches on organic agriculture. It is noteworthy that some authors have made quite specific comments on this field such as: Nguyen Quoc Hung (2011), "Organic agriculture - The key to ensuring sustainable food

security in Vietnam”, research on difficulties and challenges of sustainable food security in Vietnam. Ensuring food security is not only a purely humanitarian issue, but also to contribute positively to the socio-political stability of each country as well as the whole world. The author presents a number of challenges to Vietnam’s food security, issues related to food security, but does not work out appropriate solutions in organic agricultural production.

Author Nguyen Dang Nghia (2016) with the paper titled “Trends of organic agriculture development and clean agricultural production in Vietnam” gave some typical models of organic farming and pointed out the direction in organic agriculture development in Vietnam in the coming time. Bach Tan Sinh (2019) in the writing titled “Vietnamese organic agriculture towards sustainable consumption and production” provided an initial picture of the current status, challenges and opportunities of organic agriculture, policy analysis and institutions promoting the formation of organic agriculture according to the ecological innovation approach with the principles of the product cycle and the value chain of agricultural products. However, the author has not come up with ways to effectively implement policies in organic agricultural production.

Pham Thi Thuy, Pham Kim Oanh (2014) with the article titled “Organic agricultural production in Vietnam” expressed their enthusiasm to have a real organic agriculture for the country, so they focused on in-depth research on cultivation to effectively apply in organic agricultural production practices.

Recent workshops can be mentioned as follows “Evaluation of production, marketing and innovation of the organic agricultural policy for the period 2016 - 2019” (June 2019), “Proposing solutions for organic agriculture development in Vietnam” (September 2019), and “Promoting the consumption of organic agriculture in Vietnam in association with the application of Vietnamese and Japanese organic agricultural standards” (November 2019). Moreover, in-depth studies have referred to organic agriculture, organic agricultural production, farming methods in organic agriculture, causes of difficulties and proposed solutions to improve the effectiveness in implementation of organic agricultural production policies.

The overview shows that the studies only touch upon the perspective of policy advice, successful findings and limitations in organic agricultural production. However, they have built up a theoretical basis for the implementation of organic agricultural production.

3. Research method

This writing uses mainly secondary data analysis and expert method, which involves in using available data collected from previous evaluation studies to learn about relevant aspects of the raised problems. This also includes the collection and study of relevant documents to get an overview of the implementation of the policy of organic agriculture, especially the information and lessons learned from the previous researches or annual reports of relevant agencies on implementation of the policy on organic agricultural production. Along with that, the expert method provides in-depth analysis and explanations on the theoretical and practical basis of the implementation process of organic agricultural production policy in Tuyen Quang province for the period of 2018-2021.

4. Research results

4.1. Policies on facilitation of organic agricultural production

Decrees of the Government, Resolutions of the Provincial People’s Councils and specific regulations and plans have been issued recently. They are a “push” of development for organic agricultural production, specifically:

The Government has issued the Decree No.109/2018/ND-CP dated August 29, 2018 on Organic Agriculture with many mechanisms to support small businesses, cooperatives, farms, households and household groups involved in organic agricultural production, typically 100% funding support for identifying areas and areas eligible for organic production, a one-time support of 100% of the cost for issuing a product certificate in conformity with the Vietnamese standards on organic agriculture issued by a certification organization (for the first time or renewal), support for training on organic production, funding for development and replication of organic production models... Apart from the Decree, others are the Circular No.16/2019/TT- BNNPTNT dated November 1, 2019 by the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development detailing a number of articles of the Decree No. 109/2018/ND-CP August 29, 2018 by the Government on organic agriculture, and the Decision 885/QĐ-TTg dated June 23, 2020 by the Prime Minister approving the plan on organic agriculture development for the period of 2020 - 2030.

Tuyen Quang province has also implemented specific solutions, mechanisms and policies to encourage organic agricultural production such as the Resolution No.06/2020/NQ-HĐND by the People’s Council of Tuyen Quang province on policies to encourage the development of organic

agriculture in Tuyen Quang province. The resolution focuses on four groups of policies, from input on seeds, soil improvement, conversion of production methods to supporting market access to off-take products for organic agricultural production; the Decision No. 14/2021/QĐ-UBND of the People's Committee of Tuyen Quang province promulgating the Regulation on organic farming areas in Tuyen Quang province; the Decision No.358/QĐ-UBND dated June 8, 2021 by the People's Committee of Tuyen Quang province approving the Plan on restructuring the agricultural sector towards the development of agricultural, forestry and fishery products with focus on key products, specialties in the chain of quality assurance, highly added value associated with new rural construction for the period of 2021 - 2025 and orientation to 2030.

However, policies to support agricultural and rural development in the provinces, when applying to encourage the development of organic agriculture, have faced with many difficulties due to the scope of regulation and subjects of application of organic agricultural production different from existing provincial policies. On the other hand, organic agricultural production has its own characteristics, so it is difficult to apply the provinces' existing production policies to organic agricultural production. Therefore, Tuyen Quang has issued many resolutions and decisions to adapt to the actual situation of organic agricultural production in the areas.

It must be said that the plan to implement the policy on organic agricultural production in communes in Tuyen Quang province has been clearly formulated for the purposes, requirements and in line with reality in order to bring about optimal efficiency. Departments and agencies in Tuyen Quang province have actively and creatively coordinated to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the policies. Ministries and Departments of Science & Technology, Natural Resources and Environment, Agriculture & Rural Development, Industry and Trade, Vietnam Organic Agriculture Association, Tuyen Quang Organic Agriculture Association, District People's Committees and the research institutions have paid special attention to the tasks related to the policy and its beneficiaries. Non-governmental organizations, international organizations and businesses have also actively strengthened cooperation with domestic and foreign scientists to research, invest and support the development of organic agricultural production. Along with the expansion of the scale, people engaged in organic farming have changed their farming practices and planned to maintain certified organic products. At the same time, the province

focuses on the plan to replicate the effective organic models in the districts such as the model of planting pomelo, orange, tea..., and the plan to implement organic transformation policies according to the TCVN 11041-2: 2017 and international standards in districts in Tuyen Quang province according to the areas of each district and commune. Along with that, the province has developed a plan for joint venture and association to produce clean seedlings that supply plant varieties to meet the needs of communes and towns in the planning area for organic orientation and organic production.

Moreover, thanks to the strengthening of propaganda on organic agriculture, training and awareness raising for people about organic farming techniques and processes, nowadays, people have understanding of the role and importance of organic agriculture for public health. Since then, it helps change perception in creating high-quality products, gradually reducing environmental pollution in production, and meeting the increasing demands of consumers. Propaganda and communication have contributed to guiding production and business households to create safe products as committed, ensure quality production in accordance with organic technical processes. In addition, the province also strengthens propaganda to maintain the existing brands, mobilizing households to production according to the standards of organic products and organic transformation. At the same time, it requires communication and mobilization of the people to participate in fairs to promote and introduce products and announce geographical indications, developing articles, communication programs on production and consumption of products on the mass media... so that more people know about organic farming and products that are good for health and the environment. In particular, strengthening communication mechanisms and policies to encourage the development of organic agricultural production is really needed. Therefore, the people have voluntarily implemented the policy at the request of the State agencies, well implemented the policy objectives and effectively implemented the proposed plan.

The monitoring and inspection of organic production models and processes under the guidance of specialized agencies always ensure timely, effective and correct techniques. Specialized agencies always strengthen inspection, urge and guide cooperatives to implement farming in a timely manner, ensuring the right standards of organic agricultural production as the basis for evaluation and replication. At the same time, it requires to strengthen guidance and inspection of management of logos and trademarks, stamps and

trademarks for organic products, and check whether the implementation of the policy has adequate steps or not to promptly monitor and supervise the policy implementation.

4.2. Results in implementation of the organic agricultural production policy in Tuyen Quang province

Tuyen Quang has a lot of natural products and this is the pride of advantage. The province has participated in the big project on “Strengthening the production structure and marketing of organic agricultural products in the North of Vietnam” by the Agricultural Development Denmark Asia - ADDA, a Danish NGO from 2016 to 2019. Han Yen, Yen Son and Son Duong are the districts of the project implementation areas where a great number of farmers have been trained in the project. Also, it has provided training of trainers on organic agriculture whereas it has not yet been implemented in the province. Tuyen Quang province also has another advantage with a model of producing certified organic seedlings in the area. With the absorption of scientific and technical advances from countries around the world, trade promotion, communication enhancement and the development of organic agricultural production, Tuyen Quang shall certainly be the leading province in the field of organic farming in this area.

Organic agricultural production models have been implemented by the province since 2017. The provincial Department of Agriculture and Rural Development in collaboration with the provincial Association of Organic Agriculture have organized 10 training courses for more than 230 learners on organic agricultural production, thereby helping farmers access knowledge of organic farming, turning theory into action in practice.

In 2017, the Chairman of the Committee for Ethnic Minority Affairs signed 6 decisions on approval for 6 projects to build up models of organic pomelo planting groups of the poor and near-poor households in Don village, Moi village, Co village, Minh Thanh commune and Tan An village, Dong Tho commune in Son Duong district. Grapefruit planting area was 80ha, number of trees planted were 4,202 of which 3 year old trees were 515, 1 year old trees were 3,687. The Institute for Ethnic Minority Policy and Strategy of the Committee for Ethnic Minority Affairs, which is the leading institution, has provided training for 6 classes on pomelo planting techniques and organic composting process for the project, and trained 6 technicians who are team leaders of the 6 projects with 70 persons from households participating in the project. The project’s activities have created favorable conditions for households participating in

the project to have access to a reasonable, effective and sustainable method of crop restructuring. At the same time, it helped households master the technical process of planting and caring for pomelos in the direction of organic production, creating safe food products with high economic value. The project, at the same time, has integrated technology transfer associated with collection of agricultural waste and by-products at farmers’ households under processing into organic fertilizer for pomelos.

Tuyen Quang province currently has a number of crop products that are being applied with organic production methods such as rice, oranges, pomelos, tea.... However, they are mainly organic pomelo products (most in Yen Son district), organic orange (Ham Yen district) and organic tea (Son Duong district). By the end of October 2021, the province has over 90ha of plants of all kinds produced according to organic standards, of which over 30.2ha of oranges and 29.4ha of pomelos are certified for organic production with the PGS standard, 27.5ha of tea, 3.0ha of rice with certified organic production according to the standard TCVN 11041-2:2017.

From the socio-economic perspective, the policy of organic agricultural production has created favorable conditions for exchange and cooperation, production development, industry and service development in production and business. The development of organic agriculture also creates jobs for local people to earn more income for economic stabilization. From the environmental perspective, the building and replication of models applying production processes according to organic standards and organic microbial products has promoted processing and inoculants in agricultural production, contributing to environmental protection, better health and quality of life. Households’ collection of daily household waste, agricultural by-products and compost them into organic fertilizers has contributed to improving environmental sanitation in households and communities as well as reducing costs for local waste treatment.

It can be seen in reality that Tuyen Quang has a legal framework and policies on organic agriculture ready to support the development of organic agricultural production. Moreover, organic agriculture has received the attention of authorities at all levels in the province with the desire to development and expansion of the sustainable and environmentally friendly organic agricultural production, improving productivity and product quality. In addition, there has been the training support from the Vietnam Organic Agriculture Association, the Provincial Organic Agriculture Association, especially the households participating in organic production of the communes are

enthusiastic members with solidarity and high determination in implementation of the organic agriculture policies.

However, the scale of organic agricultural production is still small, the output of agricultural products is still low, the value is not high, and it has not met the market demand. The operational efficiency of some agricultural cooperatives is not commensurate with the local development potentials and conditions and unsustainable. The application of advanced science and technology to production and processing faces many difficulties, lacks chain linkages and poor consumption markets. Some crops are spontaneously produced by local people and not according to the planning. Agricultural extension officers in charge of communes have not been closely followed to give timely instructions and have not followed the plan. Propaganda and awareness raising for producers and consumers is not regular in the meantime there are not many effective organic production models for propaganda and replication. Products generated according to organic standards in the province are a few and not diversified. Currently, there are only organic rice, orange, grapefruit and tea products, but the area and quantity are limited. Production linkages between farmers and enterprises and cooperatives are still not close. It is worth mentioning that the production sense of people in some places is not high and many households still have the thoughts to rely on the investment and support of the State.

Currently, policies to support the development of organic agricultural production in the province are not strong enough to encourage and attract businesses and cooperatives to invest in and associate with organic agricultural production. The stage of planning and urging inspection and supervision is the slowest in implementing the policy of organic agricultural production in Tuyen Quang.

The main reason is that the province's existing policies to support rural agricultural production have a different scope than organic agricultural production. In addition, there is a lack of orientation on areas that are eligible for organic production. There are areas and households with agricultural land that are eligible for organic production, but lack of policy for development. The work of training, technical training and science and technology applied to organic agricultural production is still limited, disease control and product quality improvement are also facing many difficulties. Organic agricultural production has a rigorous process, takes a long time to improve the soil, costs for production are high, and input materials for production face many difficulties. Meanwhile, the management and implementation of organic agricultural production

policies by specialized agencies are not regularly and continuously carried out.

5. Discussion

Policy on organic agricultural production is always the issue of concern to the Party and State. Since the issuance of the Decree No.109/2018/ND-CP dated August 29, 2018 on organic agriculture, in order to manage and develop organic agricultural production, many resolutions and decisions of institutions and agencies have been made. It shows that the agricultural sector has made positive progress, markedly changed in production in the period of 2018 - 2021 in Tuyen Quang province.

However, in order to increase added value and sustainably develop in agricultural production, it is necessary to encourage the development of organic agricultural production in order to create favorable conditions for farmers and businesses to invest in production development for improvement of production value with sustainability and environmentally friendly approach. Therefore, the promulgation of specific policies with specific characteristics of the province to encourage the development of organic agricultural production in Tuyen Quang province is a necessary requirement for the development of sustainable agricultural production in response to the current situation.

In order to facilitate organic agriculture development with sustainability, it is needed to implement good policies, have appropriate plans and coordinate with management agencies and specialized institutions at all levels in policy implementation. Besides, it is necessary to widely propagate on the mass media the models of organic production in communes in the province to be introduced in in trade promotion programs and promotion of Tuyen Quang's organic products at fairs, exhibitions and display for product introduction in provinces and cities. Also it needs regularly monitoring, inspecting, monitoring and evaluating lessons learned in the implementation of the policy on organic agricultural production.

First: Reviewing and selecting products with economic value, farmers, suitable land area to ensure standards for conversion to organic standards in the localities.

Second: Organic agricultural production must follow the principle of having a certificate of labeling with full information about the production location, producers, certifiers and transparent organic product certification company. Consumers who discover an unsafe product can trace the production process. This represents the responsibility between producers and consumers.

Third: Taking advantage of all investment

resources to implement organic agricultural policies, because without resources, the policy cannot become true.

Fourth: Strengthening the inspection, supervision and instruction to the policy implementation to support provision of loans and credit from the State for the development of organic agricultural production.

Fifth: Strengthening cooperation in association with research and application of science and technology in the stages of planting, processing, communication, promotion, branding and consumption of organic agricultural products; Developing agricultural products in accordance with organic standards for evaluation and ranking according to the criteria of the OCOP program (one commune one product) and Promoting products according to organic standards.

Sixth: Improving efficiency in organization and connection for production through training and awareness raising for people, effectively implementing policies to support linkages between

production and consumption of agricultural products. The authorities need to act as the focal points to connect producers and production enterprises with consumers.

6. Conclusion

Currently, consumers have become more cautious in their food choices with health given first priority. Therefore, organic products are the option for a part of consumers. However, from the actual implementation of the organic agricultural production policy in Tuyen Quang, it shows that there are still many shortcomings that need support from the Government and local authorities. The results achieved and the limitations in implementing policies for organic agricultural production pointed out in this article are the basis for the policy makers to draw out practical experiences in formulating the new organic agriculture policies. The 6 solutions mentioned in this writing are practical experiences and it is a hope that they shall be suggestions for implementation of the organic agricultural production policies with more effectiveness.

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CHÍNH SÁCH SẢN XUẤT NÔNG NGHIỆP HỮU CƠ GIAI ĐOẠN 2018-2021 TẠI TỈNH TUYÊN QUANG

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Sản xuất nông nghiệp hữu cơ đã và đang phát triển ở nhiều quốc gia trên thế giới có sự chuyển đổi mạnh mẽ từ nông nghiệp truyền thống sang nông nghiệp bền vững nhằm tạo ra sản phẩm nông sản có giá trị cao về chất lượng, an toàn thực phẩm, bảo vệ môi trường và thích ứng với biến đổi khí hậu. Sản xuất nông nghiệp hữu cơ được coi là canh tác tự nhiên có kiểm soát chặt chẽ về nước tưới, đất không bị ô nhiễm, không sử dụng phân hóa học, thuốc trừ sâu, trừ cỏ, chất kích thích tăng trưởng, không dùng giống cây trồng, vật nuôi và nguyên liệu có nguồn gốc là sinh vật biến đổi gen. Nông nghiệp hữu cơ đang là vấn đề thu hút sự quan tâm của toàn xã hội, là sự lựa chọn ưu ái của người tiêu dùng hiện nay. Đảng và Nhà nước ta đã có những chủ trương, chính sách kịp thời ưu tiên và ủng hộ nỗ lực phát triển nền nông nghiệp bền vững, thân thiện môi trường, có năng suất và sức cạnh tranh của sản phẩm nông nghiệp, trong đó có nông nghiệp hữu cơ. Qua nghiên cứu thực tế, bài viết cho thấy, bên cạnh những kết quả về thực thi chính sách sản xuất nông nghiệp hữu cơ đã đạt được trong giai đoạn 2018-2021 ở tỉnh Tuyên Quang, cần có những định hướng và giải pháp tốt hơn để sản xuất nông nghiệp hữu cơ ngày càng phát triển.

Từ khóa: *Nông nghiệp hữu cơ; Sản xuất nông nghiệp hữu cơ; Chính sách sản xuất nông nghiệp hữu cơ; Người tiêu dùng; Tỉnh Tuyên Quang.*