

## **His Majesty the Late King Bhumibol Adulyadej of Thailand The Innovative Inspiration for Entrepreneurship Around the World**

### **Phauthiwong Uarmahacharoen**

Founder/Executive Director of Farm Fit Food Co. Ltd.

Vice President #1, Asia Council for Small Business

Email: [drsukitti@yahoo.com](mailto:drsukitti@yahoo.com)

**Received:** July, 31 2022 | **Reviewed:** July, 23 2023 | **Accepted:** September, 1 2023

---

During his 70 years of royal reigns of Thailand, His Majesty the late King Bhumibol Adulyadej spent much of his life travelling to remote locations all over Thailand to observe and improve the livelihood of his subjects. Over the years he initiated countless development projects to eradicate rural poverty, facilitate access to medicine and improve the advancement and dissemination of knowledge and education.

In 1981, during one of his visits to Narathiwat in southern Thailand, His Majesty noticed that annual flooding was destroying large areas of agricultural land adjacent to a large peat swamp forest. Even though the water drained, the land could not be used for cultivation due to the high content of pyrite in the underlying layer of bluish-grey mud being oxidized, making the soil strongly acidic. To address this, His Majesty initiated a project to convert the peat swamp area into productive agricultural land whilst minimizing the impact on the environment and the wetland ecosystem (UNDP 2007).

In 1984, His Majesty took action to solve the problem of soil acidification (Chainuvati and Athipanan, 2001). He showed that good water management and an irrigation system were essential to the success of the project - several times per year, simulating the dry

and rainy season conditions were applied to accelerate the reaction of pyrite and a constant cycle of soaking and draining by fresh water removing sulphite from the soil - so-called "Tricking the Soil". Also, the ground level was graded and an arrangement of dykes set up so that acidified water drained off the affected land. Dikes at the perimeters of each plot stored or released water from inside the field, ensuring that the water table stayed above the mud layer to prevent the release of even more acid into the soil. Using lime in combination with soil flooding or mixed with topsoil was another solution that helped improve the soil quality.

The Soil Improvement Project gradually advanced with new findings gained through painstaking research. His Majesty the King closely followed the progress of the project and personally advised the team "to use successful experiments as a guideline but make sure to remember the failed ones so that the same mistakes would not be repeated (Sangkhamanee, 2013)." On a visit to the Pikun Thong Royal Development Center on 5th October 1992, His Majesty noted that "the experiments have confirmed that the technique works very well. The results are very important because they are unique and have not been published elsewhere. The same technique can be applied to other areas where there is a soil acidity problem." By royal appointment, the technique was applied in other provinces such as Nakorn Nayok, which suffers from similar problems (Piyawan Suksri et al. 2008). To acknowledge the tremendous contribution by His Majesty the King, The National Innovation Agency (Public Organization) or NIA under the Ministry of Science and Technology wishes to honor His Majesty as the "Father of Thai Innovation" and seeks "Klaeng Din Project" as a National Innovation Project, since the technique has improved the condition of over 7 million rai, or 1.12 million hectares of land in

The highlight is His Majesty the Late King Bhumibol Adulyadej of Thailand as King of the Kings that paved the roads to endorse the Monarchy in Thailand is still playing an important role in the socio-culture of the Thai people, more remarkable than Monarchies in other countries. Although His Majesty the Late King

Bhumibol Adulyadej of Thailand doesn't run the government, the late King utilizes the unique social culture position to help Thai farmers to become more successful by becoming agripreneurs (Chalapati, 2009). Through his unique social culture position, the late King analyzed the problems, identified the solutions, and innovated the implementation that fitted the Thai situation. The late King could execute his innovation massively by leveraging his unique social culture position.

The Monarchy's unique socio-culture position and the late King's involvement in finding the solution look like a secret formula for the impressive development of agripreneurship in Thailand. Based on the framework of CI-EL (Creativity, Innovation, Entrepreneurship, and Leadership), entrepreneurship is a concept of value creation activities in business practice. The idea of "entrepreneurship for humanity" is shown significantly as the importance of ethical and humanitarian values which are commonly found in today's Thailand Prototype Business Practice.

His Majesty consistently maintained that Thailand is inherently an agricultural country and should never abandon its roots- repeatedly emphasizing that Thailand must be able to feed itself. His Majesty therefore attached a great deal of importance in helping agriculture flourish. He applied His knowledge in sciences, mainly acquired from His previous trips abroad, to create and support over 4,000 Royal Development Projects. The Projects focused on increasing the efficiency and effectiveness of farming methods, using modern techniques such as crop substitution, water management (Phothisansakul and Runguphan, 2017), reversing the effects of soil erosion (Rattanaloeadnusorn, 2017), along with inventions and innovations such as artificial rainmaking, the Chaipattana Aerator (Suravut et al., 2017) and generating renewable energy from palm oil- many of which received patents domestically and abroad. Ultimately, this resulted in a significant improvement in the livelihood and welfare of the majority of Thailand's farmers (Naipinit, Sakolnakorn, and Kroeksakul, 2013).

Today, many of His Majesty's inventions and innovations, such as artificial rainmaking, are increasingly being applied abroad in more various business aspects. Such remarkable achievements that have created a positive impact on a local and global scale have earned His Majesty the recognition and accolade of "Thailand's Development King" by the United Nations and the international community. This is a title well-deserved for His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej in light of the incredible legacy He has left behind.

### Further Reading

- Aree Naipinit, Thongphon Promsaka Na Sakolnakorn, and Patarapong Kroeksakul, "Sufficiency Economy for Social and Environmental Sustainability: A Case Study of Four Villages in Rural Thailand," *Asian Social Science* 10, no. 2 (December 29, 2013): p102, <https://doi.org/10.5539/ass.v10n2p102>.
- Chavalvut Chainuvati and Withaya Athipanan, "CROP DIVERSIFICATION IN THAILAND," *Crop Diversification in the Asia-Pacific Region*, April 2001, 130–46.
- Jakkrit Sangkhamanee, "An Assemblage of Thai Water Engineering: The Royal Irrigation Department's Museum for Heavy Engineering as a Parliament of Things," *Engaging Science, Technology, and Society* 3 (May 3, 2017): 276–91, <https://doi.org/10.17351/ests2017.55>.
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Kingdom of Thailand  
National Innovation Agency of Thailand
- Piyawan Suksri et al., "Sustainable Agriculture in Thailand: An Evaluation on the Sustainability in Ethanol Production," Academic Frontier Project "Digital Asia Building: Regional Strategy Design Platform," 2008.
- Snidvongs Suravut et al., "Stand Alone Water Wheel Low Speed Surface Aerator Chaipattana RX-2-3, Controller System," *Energy Procedia*, 2017 International Conference on Alternative Energy in Developing Countries and Emerging Economies,

138 (October 1, 2017): 751–55,  
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.egypro.2017.10.214>;

Sukhan Rattanaloeadnusorn. (2017). Inoculants Fungal Trichoderma, Mucor And Bacillus For Community Development Based On Sufficiency Economy PhilosophY. GEOMATE Journal, 13(40), 16–23. Retrieved from <https://geomatejournal.com/geomate/article/view/1360>

Supaporn Chalapati, “Sufficiency Economy as a Response to The Problem of Poverty in Thailand,” *Asian Social Science* 4, no. 7 (February 10, 2009): p3, <https://doi.org/10.5539/ass.v4n7p3>.

UNDP, “Thailand Human Development Report 2007: Sufficiency Economy and Human Development” (UNDP, 2007).