Farmers’ landholding strategy in urban fringe areas: a case study of a transitional commune near Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam

Abstract

Farmers in peri-urban areas across Vietnam are experiencing a rapid transformation in livelihood and land use practices. Peri-urbanization is rapidly occurring with a risk of conversion of large amounts of farmland into non-agricultural land. Additionally, an increasing number of laborers are moving away from agriculture and rural areas. Understanding how these farmers respond to changes in this transformation is important to the development and planning of these areas. This research investigates the landholding behaviors of farmers in a transitional commune on the fringe of Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam. Our data demonstrated that despite the outflow of labor from farming and the pressure of peri-urbanization on local land resource, most farmers maintained their agricultural production and landholding by using various strategies such as adopting less labor-intensive crop choices, delaying inheritance, and diversifying their livelihoods. With increasing land price, landholding also provided farmers with more options for their livelihood strategies. Besides, farmers in Thanh Loi are determined to reserve their land for inheritance. Therefore, future land use in Thanh Loi depends on a large number of non-agricultural laborers.

Keywords:

peri-urbanization, urban fringe areas, rural transition, labor outflow, landholding behavior, Vietnam