

## **GREENING SMALL AND MEDIUM-SIZED FOOD PROCESSING ENTERPRISES IN NORTHERN THAILAND**

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### **ABSTRACT**

Food processing by small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) is becoming more important in Thailand. Not only is more food being processed, but the government is also promoting food processing by smaller firms in particular, in order to stimulate economic growth in rural areas. This increasingly leads to environmental problems. This article reviews several options for improving the environmental performance of these SMEs. Based on the literature review, an inventory has been made on different strategies to improve environmental practices of smaller enterprises. These strategies are compared with existing practices in northern Thailand. In this comparison, specific attention is paid to the role of the national government, market actors and local communities in implementing the strategies identified in the literature. Empirical evidence is based on four case studies in the province of Chiang Mai in northern Thailand. We conclude that there are interesting perspectives for 'greening' small and medium-sized food processing enterprises in Thailand. However, an improved collaboration between private actor and government institutions is needed, especially in developing and implementing technologies applicable to these firms. In addition, combining environmental regulations with food safety regulations offers concrete perspectives.