

Gendered challenges in adapting to the state policy on organic potato farming, East Khasi Hills, Meghalaya, India



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1. A simple participatory video opens the door to the community, improving the quality of data
2. How to communicate with biophysical scientists is a still big challenge.
3. Matrilineal: some commonalities with patriarchal communities in terms of gender roles but a clear difference in gender relations



2. Introduction: Research areas in organic farming

Biophysical aspects

Soil
Pests and diseases
Crop systems
Varieties



Economic aspects

Cost/income changes
Productivity
Returns to labor
Market access
Consumer demand



Social and gender aspects

Diversity among the households
Diversity within the household

Social process of knowledge sharing
Beliefs in sustainability
Beliefs in health implications



3. Methodology (qualitative research): Matrilineal Christian Khasi people

1. The first field Visit (May 2017) 2. The second field visit: (October 2017) Participatory video



A video-shooting training

A video-showing event

In-depth interviews (10 men and 10 women)



A discussion session



WAHLYNGKIEN VILLAGE



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GbpkGK3SvYg&feature=youtu.be>

1. Open the door

"This event has brought the message that farmers should not be so scared of new activities carried out in the village which contribute to their wellbeing"

2. Empower farmers (youth)

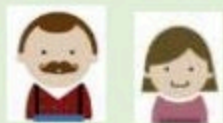
"This was the first time in the village history that villagers made a video. This farmer-orientated approach was a great initiative to empower farmers". "The farmers were proud of being part of the video."

3. Respect different ideas

"There are both positive and negative opinions about converting to organic farming but understanding both views is important."

4. Key findings

1) A myth: women support organic for environment and health



3) Matrilineal yet gendered patterns in innovation and knowledge sharing systems



2) Matrilineal: similar labor constraints with patriarchal society.



4) Diversity in interests



A myth: women do not associate organic farming with environmental sustainability and health

Organic potato is tastier but production is too low. We cannot go back to organic.

Production

We already suffer from labour burden. If organic farming requires more labour, I cannot do it.

The shortage of male labour

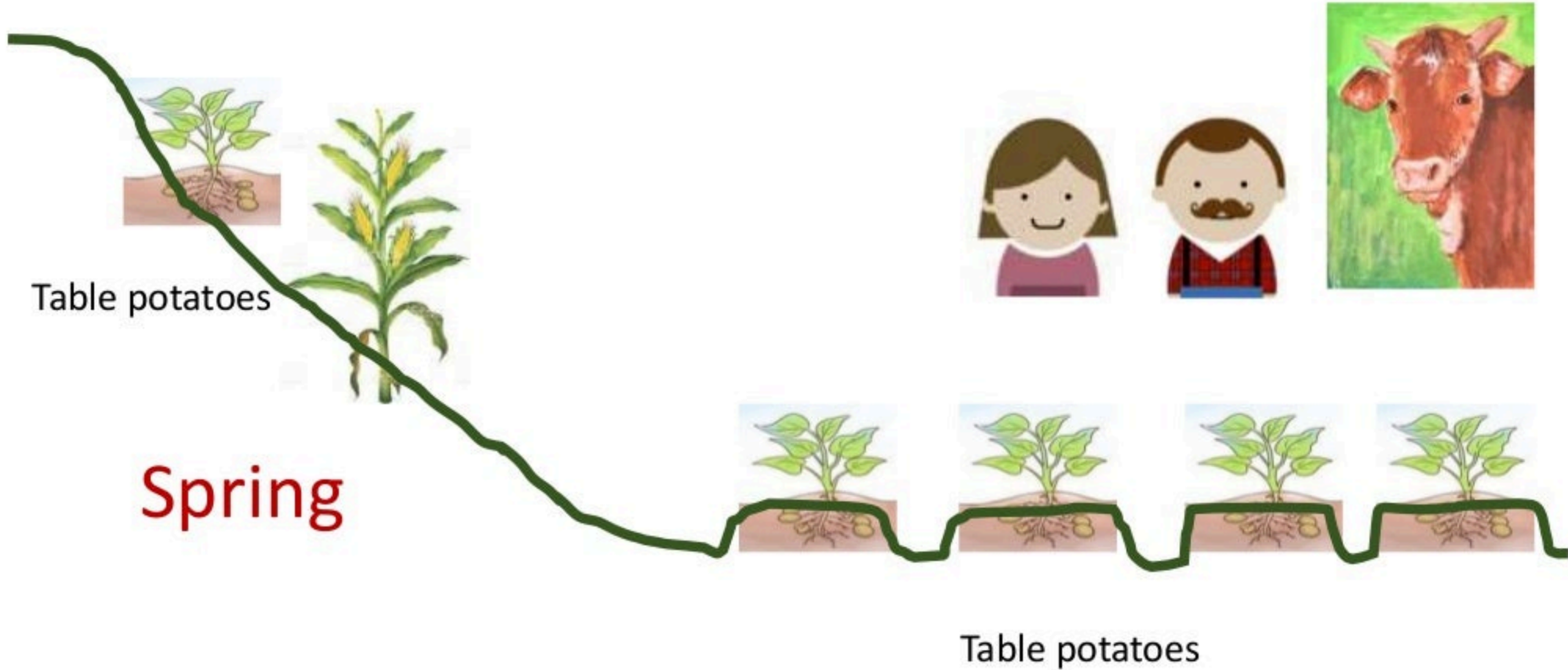
Extreme rain is a cause of increased pests & diseases. It does not matter if you spray or not.

Extreme rain

My family does not have a male labour so does not spray at all. It may be good if organic spraying become available. Then I can do it.



The concept of environmental sustainability is more associated with the rotation practices than organic farming



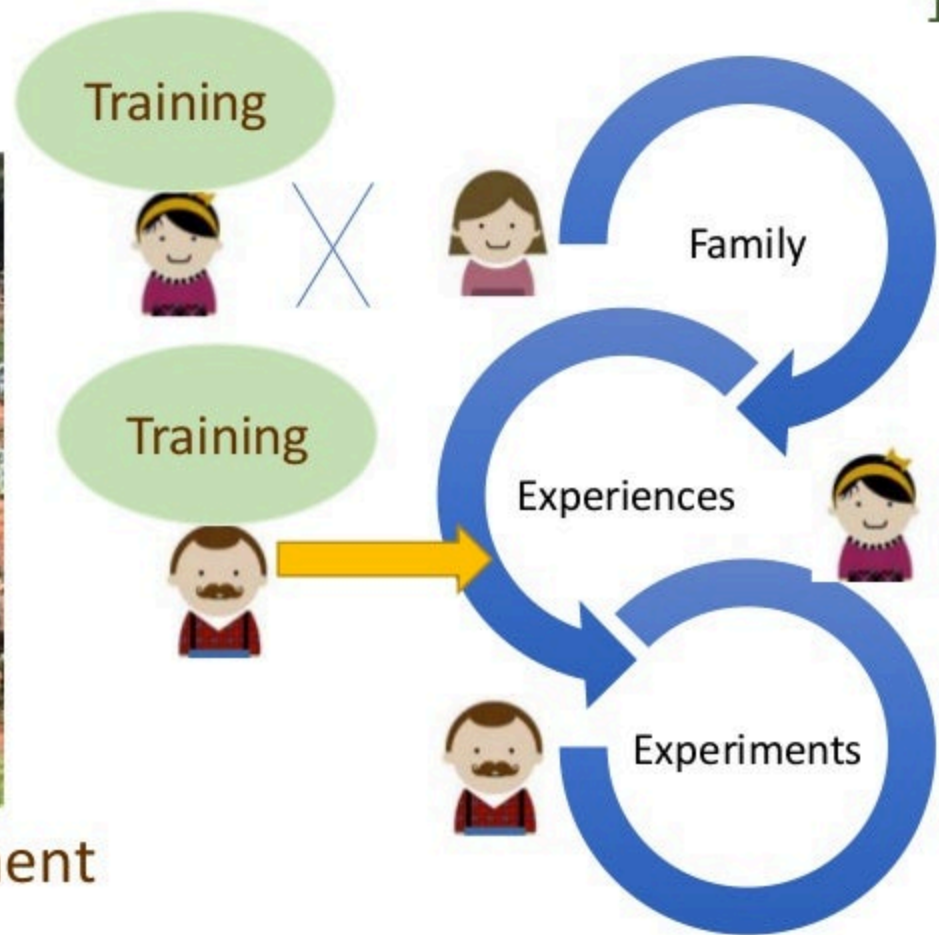


Summer - Autumn

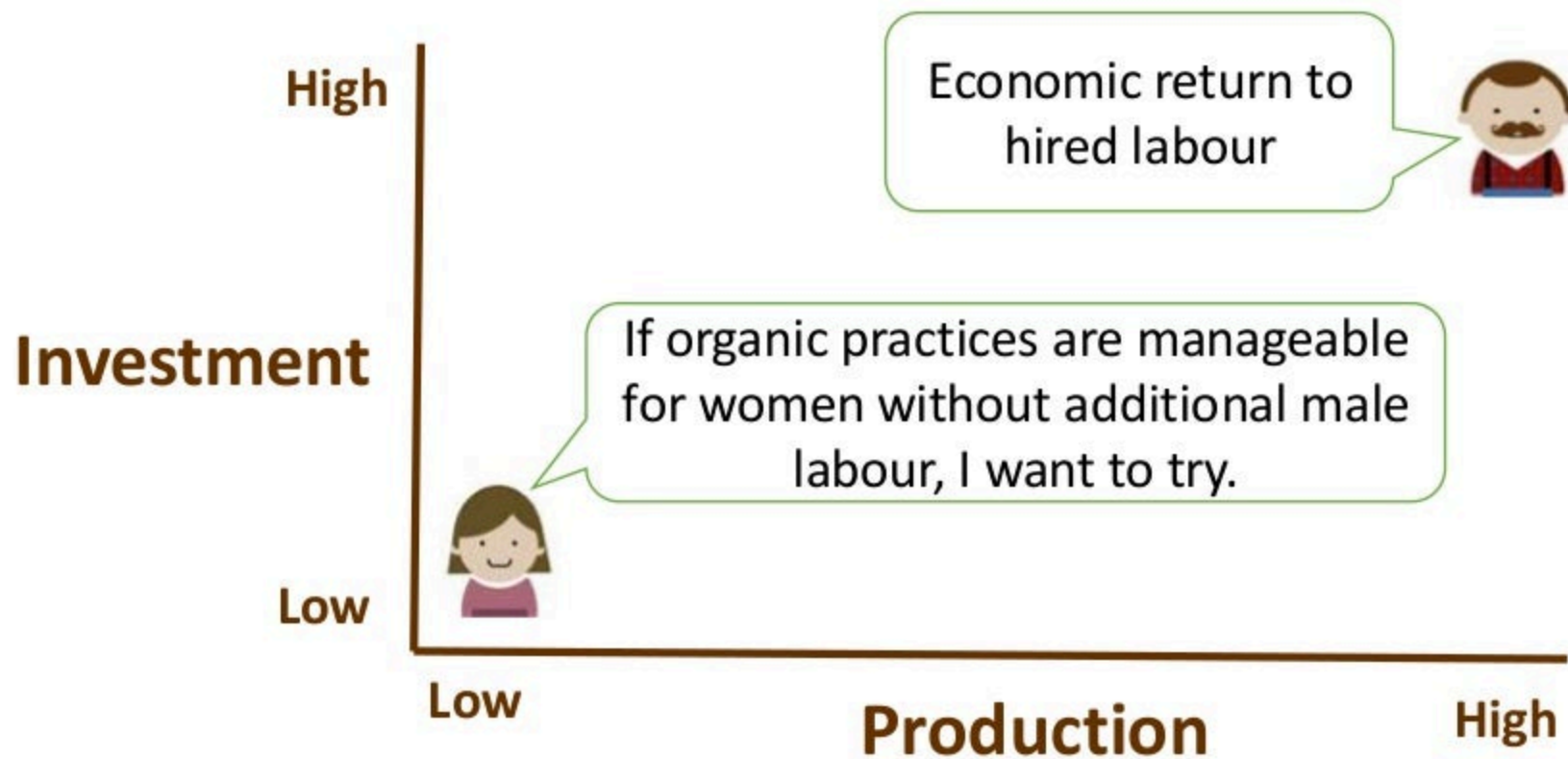
Gendered knowledge sharing systems



A male farmer doing an experiment



Diversity in needs and interests for organic potato farming



5. The gaps between biophysical scientists and social scientists



**Biophysical
research**

**Economic
Research**

Social Research

Thank you

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