

How rural community support organic agriculture in China?

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August 2011

Abstract:

This case study takes root in a small village and sheds light on the alternative sustainable development initiative in rural China. We investigated the social effect in the diffusion of organic farming by new rural community development. Given the change of social network induced by the new community development, a natural experiment allows us to make use of this change for identification of social effect within the social network which is defined by the traditional production group and the new rural community in the village. To address problems of identification such as the “reflection problem”, “correlated effects” and “endogenous group formation”(Manski, 1993), the endogeneity of participation in the new rural community is exploited to construct instrument for the endogenous social effect. We conducted household survey in the village and use this original survey data to provide evidence for the existence of “social multiplier” during the diffusion of organic farming in rural China. Our case study confirms the importance of rural social network and provides useful political implication for sustainable rural development in developing country.

Key words: Social effect; Organic farming; Rural community construction; New rural reconstruction; China

JEL Classification: D71, O33, Q55

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