

Production et producteurs de coton dans la province du Hebei, Chine

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Literature reference 2013, FOK Michel, Wang Guiyan and Liang Weili
Production et producteurs de coton dans la province du Hebei, Chine

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English title of the work Cotton farming and farmers in Hebei province, Northern China

Title of the work Production et producteurs de coton dans la province du Hebei, Chine

Year of publication 2013

Author's email michel.fok@cirad.fr

Book title Cotton Beltwide Conferences, San Antonio (USA)

Miscellaneous extra information Le document chargé est le diaporama de la présentation;
Uploaded document is the powerpoint slideshow of the presentation at the conference

URL Address http://www.slire.net/download/2192/fok_cotfarming_china.pdf

Countries concerned China

Associated thesauruses Colire

Keywords Colire Family living conditions

Living conditions

Access to welfare services

Education

Women's' contribution to production

Women's fieldworks

Change in women's contribution

Effects of women's production contribution

Women's work load

Technical assistance to producers

Public supply

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Abstract

China is the leading cotton country in terms of production, consumption, and imports. Cotton production trends in China impact directly on its import needs and the world cotton market. The characteristics of Chinese cotton farming are a factor in cotton production trends but they remain insufficiently assessed.

This paper helps to make up for the lack of analyses on cotton farming in China. It is based on data obtained through four years of surveys in Hebei province, Northern China, from 2006 to 2009.

The results show that cotton farm holdings are quite tiny, less than one hectare. This farm size is not substantially increased for those who are able to rent land from families having in practice moved out of farming. The widespread involvement of farming family members in off-farm activities implies a degree of farming feminization. In return, the resulting income provides financial assistance for farming. Farm heads are, on average, in their early fifties, with a primary school education, slightly better than their wives. The size of their families appears to be less impacted by the one-child policy. Unmarried children, in their early twenties, are of significantly higher educational levels than their parents, particularly for girls. Thanks to this educational level, farmers' children are extensively involved in off-farm activities and are seldom engaged in farm activities, even occasionally. There are still youngsters getting into farming, but at a lower rate than the older people close to moving out. The lower educational level of these young farmers raises the question of whether they have embraced farming by default. Globally, cotton production is likely to result from fewer farmers in the future.

English abstract

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