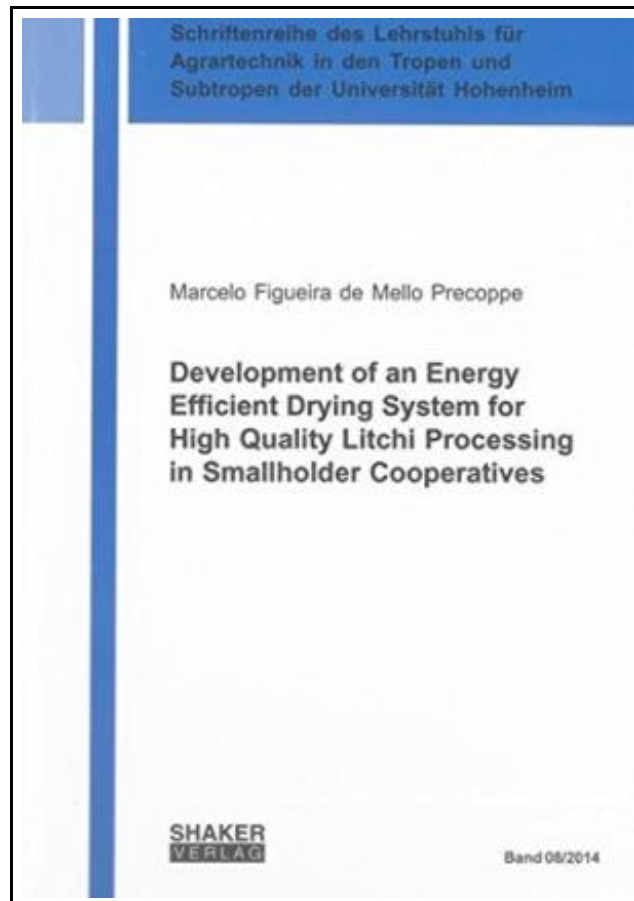


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DEVELOPMENT OF AN ENERGY EFFICIENT DRYING SYSTEM FOR HIGH QUALITY LITCHI PROCESSING IN SMALLHOLDER COOPERATIVES

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Shaker Verlag Apr 2014, 2014. Taschenbuch. Book Condition: Neu. 21x14.8x cm. Neuware - Agriculture accounts for most of the land use in Southeast Asia's mountainous regions, and here farming is mostly undertaken by smallholders, within fragile ecosystems in which it is difficult to carry out sustainable agricultural production. Thailand's mountainous regions are mostly located in the north of the country, where litchi (*Litchi chinensis* Sonn.) production is significant and constitutes an important part of the region's economy. After 1960, Thailand experienced rapid economic growth, but the mountainous regions remained largely isolated from this process at the time, as they were populated largely by ethnic minority groups who practiced swidden agriculture and grew opium poppies in fields located at higher altitudes. Then, during the 1970s and 1980s, many rural development projects were introduced in order to replace poppy cultivation, and the most common crop used to do this was litchi. As a consequence, by the early 1990s, litchis had become one of the area's key crops and had made Thailand one of the world's major producers. However, in the late 1990s, the domestic market for the fruit reached saturation, and as a result prices started to decline. This fall in prices led to the replacement of litchi orchards with seasonal crops, the cultivation of which led to an increase in erosion, plus pesticide and water use. In an attempt to make litchi growing profitable again, scientists from The Uplands Program, a Thai-Vietnamese-German interdisciplinary research project, set up a project aimed at promoting litchi drying among farmers' cooperatives, as a way to cope with the saturated fresh-litchi market. Village-based litchi drying requires low-cost and easy-to-use equipment, but at that time there was a lack of such dryers on the market that is both, energy efficient and able to yield a high-quality product....



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