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**Distribution, utilisation and valuation of local
Artocarpus spp. on Leyte, Philippines, with
special reference to breadfruit (*A. altilis*)**

Master thesis

by

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ABSTRACT

Leyte Island is located on the southeastern part of the Philippines. The island has a low level of industrialization making its economy dependent on agriculture. The natural resources of Leyte are declining and the population increasing, so it is necessary to make a better use of locally available food resources.

Artocarpus is a genus of about 60 tree species. Breadfruit (*A. altilis*) is a multipurpose tree primarily used for its nutritious fruit, while other species are locally valuable as timber/latex trees, medicine, construction materials, etc. *Artocarpus* grows in the hot, moist regions of the Southeast Asian Tropics and the Pacific Islands. Although, it is known that this genus also grows in the Philippines, there is hardly any information on its distribution and uses.

The limited knowledge available on these plants in the Philippines may possibly hinder their development and their possible contribution to food supply. This research study aims to (i) document the locally occurring *Artocarpus* spp. and their use, (ii) explore the occurrence of different varieties of breadfruit, their valuation by local people, and availability on local markets and (iii) determine management schemes.

To reach these objectives direct observations in the field and interviews to local people were carried out. A qualitative research strategy have been followed elaborating semi-structured interviews with open questions and directed to a small sample of cases.

Nine *Artocarpus* spp. were found on Leyte, three of them timber trees, four fruit trees and two were not very well defined. *Artocarpus altilis* (breadfruit) is an appreciated fruit on Leyte, with a high diversity of uses and grown as a backyard tree for subsistence agriculture. Three varieties of breadfruit were found. Breadfruit is neglected by research but, due to its high nutritional value, price and palatability, *A. altilis* shows promise for improving the quality of life on Leyte in particular and in the Philippines in general. Therefore a plan to promote this nutritious food should be implemented and develop in the island.