



## **Survey on traditional rice varieties grown in selected sites in southern Sri Lanka**

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A preliminary survey was carried to find out traditional rice varieties grown in selected sites in Southern province. Susceptibility of identified traditional rice varieties to recorded insect pest attacks were evaluated under the laboratory conditions. Farmer preference for specific traditional rice varieties were evaluated by using structural questionnaire and discussions with relevant stakeholders. Twenty five rice farmers who grow both traditional and hybrid rice varieties in secretarial divisions of Ambalantota, Hakmana, Kamburupitiya, Tihagoda, Ambalangoda, Attudawa were subjected to this study. The main traditional rice varieties grown by farmers were “Kalu heenati”, “Ratdal”, “Ma vee”, “Kuruluthuda”, “Hatada vee”, “Dahanala”, “Madatawalu” and “Pacchaperumal” and usually these farmers grow more than one traditional rice varieties in their paddy cultivation. Results indicated that more than 50% of farmers preferred to grow rice varieties such as “Kuruluthuda”, Kaluheenati, Ratdal and Hatadavee and the least preferred rice variety was “Madatawalu” (10%). Specifically in Matara district farmers preferred to cultivate Ma vee in Nilwala river basin due to the tolerance of this rice variety for flooding. In Ambalantota farmers grow Pacchaperumal and Kuruluthuda due to their high salinity tolerance. Other reasons for selecting traditional rice varieties were low expenditure (31%), good income (27%) high nutritional values and medicinal properties (27%). About 15% cultivated these varieties as their family tradition. Laboratory bioassays indicated that Kuruluthuda was the most resistant rice variety for insect pest attack. The present study indicated that traditional rice varieties have good potential as suitable alternatives for various environmental impacts and infestations of common insect pests of rice.

**Keywords:** Keywords : traditional rice varieties, farmer survey