
Impact of extension services on productivity of Betel Leaf (*Piper betel* L.) farmers in Kurunegala district in Sri Lanka

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Betel is a minor export crop that has contributed to foreign exchange earnings in Sri Lanka during the past few decades apart from the notable domestic consumption. Although betel cultivation was popular among smallholder farmers in the Kurunegala district, many have left the cultivation due to production and marketing constraints. Despite the involvement of government and private sector organizations in research, extension and marketing functions related to other minor export crops, a huge gap exists in the delivery of extension services related to betel leaf production. This research therefore intended to assess the impact of extension services on betel production while addressing the constraints. A survey was carried out from 2019.04.01 to 2019.10.01 to gather primary data from 120 farmers. Betel Farmers registered in Kuliypitiya West, Narammala, and Pannala Agrarian Service Departments were randomly selected for the study. A Key Informant Interview was conducted with the 8 extension officers to capture information regarding extension interventions. According to Likert scale analysis, poor attention paid by government extension services is a constraint identified by 82.5% betel farmers while 69.1% is not satisfied with the extension services. Many farmers (63.8%) stick to traditional methods of cultivation and a positive correlation was observed between the cultivation methods and betel production. Whilst the role of extension, is to disseminate new knowledge and information to improve farm production, this study as its conclusion, emphasizes the need for an efficient extension service to cater to the needs of the betel farmers.

Keywords: Agricultural extension, Impact, Betel production, Farmers, Constraints

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