

## **Farmer's health and safety awareness on the use of agrochemicals by contract farmers: A case study in Anuradhapura**

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### **Abstract**

Majority of the farmers especially in the developing nations continue to be poisoned or killed owing to unsafe usage of agrochemicals. There is a primary concern of every government and international organization on safety and health in the usage of agrochemicals. The focus of this study was to determine the contract farmers' health and safety awareness on the application of agrochemicals. For this case study, one hundred contract farmers growing vegetables in Anuradhapura district were randomly selected. Primary data were collected through structured questionnaire and interview methods. Secondary data were collected from published scientific articles and conference papers. Descriptive analytical methods using SPSS version 16 statistical software were followed to analyze the data. The results revealed that only 10% of contract farmers always follow the instructions on the label of agrochemical bottles. Very fewer farmers (20%) always shower immediately after the end of the agrochemical application. Twelve percent of those surveyed in this study keep a record of the chemicals they use to grow vegetables. Only 10% of farmers keep the knapsack for re-use. Most of the farmers (72%) have some understanding about the hazards and risks of using chemicals in the field and 28% of farmers are less aware regarding the hazards and risks of chemicals in the field. 38% of the sample follows safety practices while others follow their own ways to control the hazards and risks in the field. Most farmers (68%) forget the safety instructions when they burdened with work. A higher percentage (75%) of farmers' believe that the life risk of using agrochemicals while working in the fields is serious and not life threatening. According to the results farmers did not have an adequate knowledge and favorable attitudes towards health and safety risks in agriculture. Most of the farmers do not practice health and safety practices in the field.

**Keywords:** Agrochemicals, Contract farmers, Health and safety

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