

Evaluation of School Gardening Programme: A Case Study

Vithanawasam RM and Wijeratne M

*Department of Agricultural Economics and Extension, Faculty of Agriculture,
University of Ruhuna, Mapalana, Kamburupitiya*

Abstract

School garden is a practical component under home gardening concept. One important paradigm is to provide education with a school garden. If the younger generations receive knowledge on agriculture, it will provide an incentive to stay in agriculture and contribute to the production. The study mainly focused on three objectives. They are; to study the physical and human resources available in school gardening, reveal about the economic benefits, and find out limitations encountered by school gardens and provide suggestion to improve this component.

The study revealed that the schools have utilized only 33 percent of the total land available. The schools (57%) have allocated 20-80 perch area for school gardening programme. Further, 49% of the schools have practically cultivated this extent. In connection with soil conservation, ditches and terraces was used by 49% and 38%, respectively. Many schools (50%) have used wells as the water resource and the rest of the schools have access to tap water. Many of the school gardening programmes have cultivated low country vegetables, but some schools have successfully grown up country vegetables. It is interesting to state that 38% of the schools have produced compost from the waste.

In the cluster of GCE OL students, agriculture subject was taken by 30% in 2007, 21% in 2008 and 19% in 2009. This shows a rapid decline. Further, among the GCE AL category 8 present, 8 present and 10% of the students have taken agriculture in 2007, 2008 and 2009, respectively. It is important to state that in 19% of the schools teach agriculture as a subject without a qualified agriculture teacher. However, 40% of the schools equipped with graduate teachers. The school gardening programme has not earned significant income and only 43% of the schools have collected a monthly sales exceeding Rs. 500. Lack of agricultural tools and equipment, lack of time to work in garden, lack of money, insufficient land, lack of water and problem of security fence are the major limitations encountered by most of the schools.

Keywords: economic benefits, resource, school gardening programme, vegetables