

Evaluation of farmer broadcasting service as a tool for disseminating agricultural information

Melani U.A. Vithanage^{1*} and Nilantha De Silva²

¹Department of Agriculture, Rice Research Station, Labuduwa, Akmeemana, Sri Lanka

²Department of Agricultural Economics, Faculty of Agriculture, University of Ruhuna, Mapalana, Sri Lanka

Abstract

Communication channels play pivotal role in disseminating information. But when the bulk of population is illiterate and inaccessible to modern means of communication, the challenge is all the more difficult. In this situation mass media like radio can play a significant role in disseminating information. Radio is a very popular and powerful communication medium and has proved very effective in helping to disseminate agricultural information. Farmer broadcasting service of the department of agriculture undertakes production and broadcasting of agricultural radio programmes to disseminate agriculture information to farm community in order to improve their knowledge and change attitudes in a favourable manner. A quasi-experimental study was designed to determine the present situation of farmer broadcasting service, the effectiveness and relevance of the programs on agricultural production and the factors which affect the production of farmer broadcasting service. A total of 146 farmers were selected randomly from Galle district. Data were collected using pre-tested questionnaires. The findings of the study show that the majority of the respondents (99.32%) are radio listeners. Though there are various mass media communications, farmer broadcasting service is still used by farmers (82%). Information provided through farm broadcasting service programs has been reliable for 61% of farmers. Majority (70.5%) of the farmers were of the view that they prefer to listen agricultural news, 62% of the farmers expressed that they listen to discussion programs by an expert or an extension officer. However, 60% of farmers would like to listen the programmes in morning hours and evening hours. The first rank was given to agriculture instructors as the most credible source of information regarding agriculture. Farmers have ranked the farmer broadcasting service next to the television. The majority (71.92%) of the farmers in Galle district are engage in the rice cultivation. Rice cultivators also engage in the vegetables, fruits and animal husbandry. All of the respondents (100%) are radio listeners and they are all (100%) know about the farmer broadcasting service, but only 17.14% respondents have clearly listened. Among the eight programs the first rank was given to *Kadamalla* as the most famous program of farmer broadcasting service.

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***Corresponding Author:** meludeshikais@gmail.com