

Agricultural Information Needs of Farmers Engaging in Red Onion Cultivation

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Abstract

The information about the new technological advancements and innovations should be transferred to the agricultural farmers to adapt to them. The study was aimed to assess the information needs of farmers engaging in red onion cultivation in the area of 'Urumpirai' in the Jaffna district and to identify the types of information sources approached by the farmers cultivating red onions. A descriptive survey research method was used in the study. The data was collected by using a structured interviewer-administered questionnaire. A sample of ninety-eight (n=98) farmers was randomly selected from the population. The study revealed that the most important information needed by the farmers was the information on the market price of onion and the availability of marketing facilities with the mean score value (SD) of 4.69 and 4.64, respectively. It was followed by the selection of the soil, weedicide usage, diseases, pest management, and storage conditions. It is evident from the study that the agricultural farmers in the study area mostly used other farmers (SD 2.8) to get the information. It was followed by friends & relatives and sales agents with the mean score value of 2.7 and 2.6 respectively. The study identified that the farmers actively search agricultural information for onion cultivation. The most highlighted information needed was the market price and the availability of marketing facilities. They used various types of information sources. The main sources of information were informal information sources such as other farmers, friends & relatives, and sales agents. It is suggested to improve the extension services to provide reliable, easily accessible information sources to the farmers to get timely new technological information.

Keywords: *Agricultural information, Farmers, Information needs, Red onion cultivation*