



RESEARCH ARTICLE

To Study the Attitude of Horticultural Farmers Towards the National Horticulture Mission in Krishnagiri District of Tamil Nadu

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ABSTRACT

The study on the attitude of horticultural farmers towards the National Horticulture Mission in Hosur, Shoolagiri and Krishnagiri blocks of Krishnagiri district reveals that nearly half (45.00%) of the respondents in this study strongly agree. Another 20.00% do agree that NHM encourages the farmers to take up proper care of their horticultural crops in the study area. Majority (33.33%) of the respondents in this study and another 20.00% strongly disagree with the procedure for getting the benefits from NHM is complex. About (23.33%) of the respondents and another 20.00 strongly agree and agree that NHM helps the farmers to improve their overall social status in society. It was found that 36.66% strongly disagree and disagree (30.00%) that NHM creates marketing facilities for fruits during the rise in fruit production. The majority (30.00%) disagree and another 23.33% strongly disagree that NHM benefits are unreached to all due to its improper publicity in the study area. About 36.66% of the respondents disagree and another 25.00 % strongly disagree that NHM benefits only the big farmers. One-fourth (25.00 percent) of the respondents and another 18.33% strongly agree and agree in this study that NHM increase hope for small scale fruit processing industries. About 23.3% and another 18.33% of the respondents in this study strongly agree that NHM is a boon for small and marginal farmers in the study area. The findings also reveal that more than half (58.33%) of the respondents disagree and strongly disagree (23.33%) that NHM activities are irrelevant to the needs of small and marginal farmers.

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INTRODUCTION

The horticulture sector remains as an important integral component of the food and nutritional security of our nation. With various sub-segments such as vegetables, fruits, aromatic and herbal plants, flowers, spices and plantation crops, today horticulture sector has also provided economic security to millions of our small and marginal farmers and agricultural laborers belonging to a wide range of agro-climatic conditions. The Government of India, today recognising the

importance of horticulture aims at diversifying our food basket by inclusion of more horticultural crops by deploying precision farming technologies there by raising more crop per drop and aiming at doubling farmer's income. Off late, new development efforts are undertaken in Tamil Nadu and across India through National Horticulture Mission (NHM) interventions



towards promotion of holistic growth of horticulture sector. Keeping this in view, the present study was undertaken to study the attitude of horticultural farmers towards National Horticulture Mission in Krishnagiri district of Tamil Nadu.

Research Methodology

The study was undertaken in Krishnagiri district of Tamil Nadu, one of the backward district of the state where horticulture crops occupy a maximum area under cultivation. Among the ten blocks in Krishnagiri districts, three blocks namely Hosur, Shoolagiri and Krishnagiri was purposively selected as they have more number of National Horticulture Mission (NHM) beneficiaries were selected for this study. From each block, two villages were selected based on the maximum number of beneficiaries who attended NHM training. About 120 farmers representing NHM in the study area were selected for this study.

The selected respondents were interviewed with a pre tested interview schedule. Their responses were documented, tabulated and appropriate statistical tools was used for analysis.

Findings and Discussion

The findings on the distribution of NHM beneficiaries according to their attitude towards NHM are presented below in table 2

The findings of the study on the attitude of horticultural farmers towards National Horticulture Farmers are discussed below

NHM activities are irrelevant to the needs of small and marginal farmers.

Majority (58.33%) of the respondents in this study disagree and strongly disagree (23.33%) with this statement. A relative small proportion (6.67%) is

undecided on this and few more of the respondents in this study agree (6.67%) and strongly agree with the above statement in the study area. But, majority of the beneficiaries of NHM beneficiaries in this study are mostly small (55%) and marginal (21%) farmers. This makes this negative statement an irrelevant one as NHM activities are beneficial to them in carrying out their crop production and protection activities in the study area.

NHM encourages the farmers to take proper care of their horticultural crops.

The majority (45.00%) of the respondents strongly agree and another 20.00% agree that NHM encourages the farmers to take up proper care of their horticultural crops in the study area. About 13.33% are undecided on the above statement. About 10.00% disagree and another 11.67% strongly disagree with this statement. The reason behind such an outcome can be attributed to their participation in the NHM programs. Increased participation in the NHM trainings organized encourages the farmers to take proper care of their horticultural crops. Reduced or less participation in the NHM program by the beneficiaries in this study might have resulted in farmers taking up less care for their horticultural crops as they are unaware of its actual benefits.

The procedure for getting the benefits from NHM is complex

The majority (33.33%) of the respondents in this study and another 20.00% strongly disagree that the procedure for getting benefits from NHM is complex. About 11.67% of the respondents are undecided on this statement. About 23.33% agree and 11.66% strongly agree on this statement. Through, Majority disagree with this statement that the procedure for getting NHM

Table 1. Block & village wise distribution of selected respondents

S.No	Name of the Block	Name of the village	No. of beneficiaries selected for this study
1	Hosur	Nagondapalli	20
2		Thattiganapalli	15
3	Krishnagiri	Maharajakadai	30
4		Narapalli	20
5	Shoolagiri	Kudisadhanapalli	15
6		Pannapalli	20
Total			120



Table 2. Distribution of NHM beneficiaries according to their attitude towards NHM (n=120)

S.NO	Statements	Respondents (N=120)				
		SA	A	UD	DA	SDA
1	NHM activities are irrelevant to the needs of small and marginal farmers	6 (5.00%)	8 (6.67%)	8 (6.67%)	70 (58.33%)	28 (23.33%)
2	NHM encourages the farmers to take proper care of their horticultural crops	54 (45.00%)	24 (20.00%)	16 (13.33%)	12 (10.00%)	14 (11.67%)
3	The procedure for getting the benefits from NHM is complex	14 (11.66%)	28 (23.33%)	14 (11.67%)	24 (20.00%)	40 (33.33%)
4	NHM helps the farmer to improve their overall social status	28 (23.33%)	24 (20.00%)	24 (20.00%)	16 (13.33%)	28 (23.33%)
5	NHM creates new marketing facilities for fruits during to rise in fruit production	02 (1.67%)	10 (8.33%)	28 (23.33%)	36 (30.00%)	44 (36.66%)
6	NHM benefits are unreached to all the farmers due to improper publicity	24 (20.00%)	18 (9.00%)	14 (11.67%)	36 (30.00%)	28 (23.33%)
7	NHM benefits only the big farmers	14 (11.67%)	12 (10.00%)	20 (16.66%)	44 (36.66%)	30 (25.00%)
8	NHM increases hope for small-scale fruit processing industries	22 (18.33%)	30 (25.00%)	26 (21.66%)	22 (18.33%)	20 (16.66%)
9	NHM helps farmers in adopting of high-cost inputs	26 (21.66%)	24 (20.00%)	26 (21.66%)	24 (20.00%)	20 (16.66%)
10	NHM is a boon for small and marginal farmers	28 (23.33%)	22 (18.33%)	26 (21.66%)	24 (20.00%)	20 (16.66%)
11	NHM generates new employment opportunity in rural area	18 (15.00%)	24 (20.00%)	28 (23.33%)	20 (16.66%)	30 (25.00%)

(SA-Strongly Agree, A-Agree, UD- Undecided, DA-Disagree, SDA-Strongly Disagree)

benefits is complex, however more needs to be done at the grass root level. On the other hand, majority of NHM beneficiaries being small and marginal farmers in this study, making the procedure more simplified will assist many more small and marginal horticultural farmers in the study area to be a part of this scheme. So, the need of the hour is to further simply suit the needs and requirements of our horticultural farmers to make it more inclusive in the near future.

NHM helps the farmers to improve their overall social status

The majority (23.33%) of the respondents in this study and another 20.00 strongly agree and agree that NHM helps the farmers to improve their overall status in this society. About 20.00% of the respondents in the study area are undecided and the remaining 23.33%

and 13.33% strongly disagree and disagree with this statement. However, majority strongly agree (65.00%) and Agree (35.00%) that they have achieved social development in this study. Majority (55%) has also improved their farm production, enhanced their skills (71.66%) and has assisted the farmers to improve their overall social status in the study area.

NHM creates new marketing facilities for fruits due to rise in fruit production

Majority (36.66%) strongly disagree and disagree (30.00%) with NHM creating new marketing facilities for fruits during their rise in production and about 23.33% are undecided over this issue. Only a small part of the population in the present study agree (8.33%)



and strongly agree (1.62%) that NHM has created marketing facilities for their fruits during times of rise in their fruit production in the study area. The findings on the present study also indicates that more needs to be done by NHM in creating more new marketing facilities for effectively marketing the fruits produced by the farmers. Establishment of cold storage facility, value addition and fruit processing centres are sure to solve this farm problem in the best interests of all stakeholders of NHM in the study area.

NHM benefits are unreachd to all the farmers due to improper publicity

Majority (30.00%) disagree and another 23.33% strongly disagree that NHM benefits are unreachd to all due to its improper publicity in the study area. About 11.67% are undecided over this issue. About 20.00% percent strongly agree and the remaining 9.00 % agree with the above statement. With regard to the attitude of NHM beneficiaries in this study, Majority of the respondents strongly disagree that NHM benefits are unreachd to all farmers in this study due to improper publicity. More needs to be done to make it truly inclusive in nature by increasing publicity and extension activities in the study area.

NHM benefits only the big farmers

Majority (36.66%) of the respondents in this study disagree and another 25.00 % strongly disagree with this statement that NHM benefits only the big farmers in this study. About 16.66% remains undecided on this issue. However, 11.67% strongly agree and 10.00% agree that NHM benefits only the rich farmers in their study area. However, in a few areas where only big farmers are available, they could have benefited from this development scheme. So, NHM benefits only the big farmers remains as a false statement as to the findings of this study.

NHM increases the hope for small scale fruit processing industries

About 25.00 percent of the respondents in the study and another 18.33% strongly agree and agree with this statement. A considerable proportion (21.66%) of the respondents in this study are undecided about NHM, which increases the hope for the small-scale fruit process industries in the study area. About 18.33% and another 16.66% strongly disagree with this statement. Though, NHM has been working with the horticulture farmers for more than a decade in the study area it is yet to set up a small-scale

fruit processing industry. Though the idea of setting up a food processing industry for processing and value addition of horticulture produce has been there for decades nothing has progressed or materialised at the grass root level. This has made the majority of the respondents in the study not give their concrete approval for this thought. At present, NHM in the study area should work with all its stakeholders to establish a small-scale fruit processing industry which will give more economic returns to the horticultural farmers and also increase their hope towards setting up more small-scale food processing industries.

NHM helps farmers in adapting of high cost inputs

This statement finds strong agreement (21.66%) and agreement (20.00%) with a section of farmers that NHM helps farmers to adapt high cost inputs in the study area. Another 21.66% remains undecided on this statement. Remaining 20.00% and another 16.66% strongly disagree and disagree that NHM helps farmers in adapting of high cost inputs in the study. So, NHM assisting the farmers in adapting of high cost inputs in this study still needs more simplified procedures to be followed to make it truly inclusive as majority of NHM beneficiaries in the study area belong to small and marginal farmers category

NHM is a boon for small and marginal farmers

About 23.3% and another 18.33% of the respondents in the study strongly agree and agree that NHM is a boon for small and marginal farmers in the study area. Another (21.66%) of the respondents in this study are undecided and the remaining 20.00% and 16.66% disagree and strongly disagree with this statement. Though, majority of the NHM beneficiaries are small and marginal farmers, the Complex procedure followed as reported earlier in this study in its implementation has not made it inclusive. Further, simplifying it will make NHM a boom to smaller and marginal farmers as it will be given them more economic benefits, assist in societal development and skill enhancement. It will also assist in achieving higher production/ productivity of horticultural produce in the study area.

NHM generates new employment opportunities in rural areas

The responses received from the respondents on



the above statement reveal that about 25.00% strongly disagree and 20.00% agree with NHM generating new employment opportunities in rural areas . About 23.33% of the respondents are undecided over this development issue about 15.00% of the respondents strongly agree and another 16.66% disagree that NHM will generate more new employment opportunities in the rural areas. Their earlier experiences, perception and attitude towards NHM has made the respondents of this study deliver contradictory statements towards its functioning. So, the need of the hour is NHM should establish many small scale horticultural processing industry in the study area so that many unemployed youth in the nearby rural areas gain more employment opportunities and the farmers in the locality also derive good economical returns by processing and the value adding their farm produce shortly.

CONCLUSION

The findings of the study on Attitude of horticultural farmers towards National Horticulture Mission in Krishnagiri district of Tamil Nadu revealed that, more than half (58.33%) of the respondents disagree and strongly disagree (23.33%) that NHM activities are irrelevant to the needs of small and marginal farmers. Nearly half (45.00%) of the respondents in this study strongly agree and another 20.00% agree that NHM encourages the farmers to take up proper care of their horticultural crops in the study area. Majority (33.33%) of the respondents in this study and another 20.00% strongly disagree with the procedure for getting the benefits from NHM is complex.. About (23.33%) of the respondents and another 20.00 strongly agree and agree that NHM helps the farmers to improve their overall social status in society. It is found out that 36.66% strongly disagree and disagree (30.00%) that NHM creates marketing facilities for fruits during to rise in fruit production. Majority (30.00%) disagree and another 23.33% strongly disagree that NHM benefits are unreached to all due to its improper publicity in the study area. About 36.66% of the respondents disagree and another 25.00 % strongly disagree that NHM benefits only the big farmers. One -fourth (25.00 percent) of the respondents and another 18.33% strongly agree and agree in this study that NHM increase hope for small scale fruit processing industries. About 23.3% and another 18.33% of the respondents in this study strongly agree and agree that NHM is a boon for small and marginal farmers in the study area. Our policy makers, Horticultural scientists, Extension professionals need to work together to

further simplify the existing NHM procedures, reach the unreached through increasing proper publicity, set up new food processing industries in rural areas, assist small and marginal farmers in adapting high cost inputs and make NHM a boon for small and marginal farmers of our state and nation.

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