

An analytical study on training needs of vegetable growers

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Abstract : A study to know the training needs of vegetable growers has been undertaken in Bangalore district during 2003. Potato and Tomato were the most important crops of this area. Accordingly 100 respondents were selected and interviewed for knowing the knowledge gap and the training need area. Training needs of the farmers are concerned with content of the training programme and also the content should be in accordance with the choice of the trainees with respect to time, place, duration and method of training.

Keywords : *Training needs, Vegetable growers, potato, tomato, knowledge.*

Introduction

India is the second largest producer of fruits and vegetables in the world after China. It contributes about 8.57 and 13.41 per cent of the world's total produce of fruits and vegetables, respectively. Over the years Karnataka has shown tremendous increase in acreage under vegetable crops. However, there exists a big gap between the yield levels attained by the scientists and the vegetable growers. This underlines the fact that the available technology has the potential for higher yields and that the farmers need to be given necessary knowledge and skills for its widespread use by providing continuous training. Training has become a critical input especially in view of the growing sophistication in agricultural technology as well as its cost intensive nature. However, no training programme would bring desirable changes in the knowledge, skill, attitudes and other behavioural components unless it is a need-based programme. Much can be achieved in the direction of increasing

vegetable production and productivity if the farmers are trained after assessing their level of training needs and requirement. Hence, an attempt was made to assess the training needs of vegetable growers with respect to the contents, time, duration, place and method of training for efficient and production oriented use of farm technology.

Methodology

The study was conducted in two villages of Devanahally taluk in Bangalore Rural District, which is one of the leading vegetable growing taluks in the district. Since potato and tomato are the most important crops of the area in terms of acreage and production, only those farmers were taken as the respondents of the study who had any of the above listed crops as the major crops under vegetable cultivation. A sample of 100 respondents was selected randomly proportionate to the population of vegetable growers in the selected villages. A well structured interview schedule was

Table 1. Level of training need in vegetable production technology

Farm practices	Mean training need score			
	Potato	Rank	Tomato	Rank
Improved varieties	0.06	XV	0.52	XI
Seed rate	0.77	IX	0.02	XV
Sowing time	0.28	XII	0.10	XIII
Method of sowing	0.25	XIII	0.14	XII
Irrigation	0.13	XIV	0.09	XIV
Weed control	0.71	X	0.61	X
Dose of fertilizers	1.33	IV	1.62	IV
Method of fertilizer application	0.79	VIII	1.13	V
Compost / FYM application	1.15	VI	1.07	VII
Seed treatment	1.39	III	1.66	II
Insect pest control	1.40	II	1.78	I
Disease control	1.44	I	1.65	III
Storage	0.96	VII	0.86	VIII
Marketing	0.70	XI	0.68	IX
Seed production	1.26	V	1.12	VI

prepared and used to collect information on the existing level of knowledge of the respondents with respect to vegetable production technology and to find out their preferences for the time, duration, place and other aspects for organizing an effective training programme. The farmers were personally interviewed during the months of June-July, 2003.

The training needs of vegetable growers were identified in terms of 'knowledge gap' which was operationalized as the difference between the existing level of knowledge and the maximum or full level of knowledge with respect to production technology recommended for potato and tomato crops. The gaps in farmers 'knowledge' were called as 'Training need score' which was calculated by subtracting the mean knowledge score from the full

knowledge score *i.e.*, 2. Based on these scores, the training needs were identified. Scores were then stratified into two levels of training need *i.e.*, more and less important by using mean training need score for better interpretation of results.

Findings and Discussions

Training need areas in vegetable production technology

Table 1, presents the mean training need scores and ranking of training need against each component of vegetable production technology for each crop separately. A look at the above table indicates the priority areas of training under various components of vegetable production technology. The high priority areas based on mean training need scores were related to all the plant protection practices like seed

Table 2. Time, method, venue and duration of training preferred

Particulars	Yes	No
a. Time of training		
1. January to March	8.0	92.0
2. April to June	100.0	-
3. July to September	20.0	80.0
4. October to December	12.00	88.0
b. Method of training		
1. Method demonstration	100.0	-
2. Lecture + field trip	10.0	90.0
3. Lecture + discussion	28.0	72.0
4. Group discussion	76.0	24.0
5. Field trip	16.0	74.0
6. Exhibition	12.0	88.0
c. Training venue		
1. Farmers Training Centre/Krishi Vignana Kendra	20.0	80.0
2. In their village	80.0	20.0
3. Taluk / District H.Q.	24.0	76.0
d. Duration of Training		
1. 1 day	30.0	70.0
2. 2-3 days	100.0	-
3. 4-5 days	20.0	80.0
4. 1 week and above	8.0	92.0

treatment, insect pest control and disease control and fertilizer management practices. Similar results were also reported by Kaur and Khurana (1996) while conducting research on training needs in the area of management practices of vegetables. The areas of the vegetable production technology having low priority for training were agronomic practices like seed rate, improved varieties, method of sowing, sowing time, irrigation and weed control practices. Based on the above findings, it is concluded that the training of vegetable growers must have top priority for the production technology components relating to

plant protection and fertilizer management practices.

Time, Duration, Place and Method of training

The training needs of the farmers are not only concerned with contents of the training programme. In addition, a need based training programme has to be in accordance with the choice of vegetable growers with respect to time, place, duration and method of training. In view of this, the respondents of the study were asked to give their preference on all these aspects (Table 2).

Suitable time for training

As regards the time of training, the respondents preferred January, February, March, April, May and June months for organizing training in vegetable crops. However, the most preferred months were April to June.

Duration of training

Duration of training is one of the important factors for the success and effectiveness of training. The findings of the study revealed that cent per cent of the respondents preferred duration of training to be of two to three days, 30 per cent preferred training of one day duration, 20 per cent of the respondents were in favour of 4 to 5 days duration and the remaining 8 per cent training of one week duration. Hence, it can be concluded that training should preferably of short duration, ranging from two to three days.

Venue of training

In response to a question regarding farmers preference about the convenient place of training, 80 per cent desired training at the village level followed by district headquarters and KVK/FTC as the venue of training. It seemed that farmers were not able to spare much time from their farm activities to attend the training outside their village.

Method of training

Majority of the respondents required by using different extensions methods especially

methods like demonstration, discussion, lecture and field trips.

It is evident from the findings of the study that the plant protection and fertilizer management practices of vegetable cultivation fall under high priority areas for organizing training of vegetable growers. They preferred training of two to three days duration, during April to June months using various extension methods especially method demonstrations at their village. Hence it is necessary to conduct training programmes based on the felt needs of farmers which could definitely influence and change the behaviour of vegetable growers in a desired direction.

Conclusion

So any training should be based on the need and also the interest of the farmers. Identification of the farmers, assessing the needs, locality, *etc.* will lead to the method of training. Again the priority areas are to be identified while formulating the training programmes. Short duration as well as vocational training programmes in the field of vegetable cultivation should be organized after planning the programmes.

References

- Kaur, S. and Khurana, G.S. (1996). Training Needs of Vegetable Growers in Ludhiana District of Punjab. *Agricultural Extension Review*. **8(3)** : 19-22.