

AWARENESS OF FARM WOMEN ABOUT HUMAN NUTRITION

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ABSTRACT

Food play vital role to provide nutrition to the body. Prepare food and feed for all the family member is the important job for rural women. Thus the study was conducted to assess the present awareness of farm women about selected areas of nutrition. Data was collected by personal interview. It was found that, farm women were most aware about those nutritional aspects which were communicated by Anganwadi and health workers and mass media. They were using cereals, anola, green leafy vegetables but don't know the importance of that thus showed least awareness on nutritional aspects related to that area. About two third farm women had medium level awareness regarding selected nutritional aspects. The study implies that the information on certain nutritional aspects could be spread to increase the awareness about human nutrition among the farm women for their wellbeing.

INTRODUCTION

Rural women in our country share abundant responsibilities and perform a wide spectrum of duties in running the family. Prepare food and feed all the family member is one of the important jobs they perform. Food play vital role to provide nutrition to the body. Till date under nutrition was widely prevalent in rural areas of our country but now due to changes in socio economic conditions over nutrition is also begin to root among them. Thus this is high time to assess the present awareness of women about human nutrition. On the bases the result of the same some areas could be identified on which knowledge is to be spread among rural women that act as precautionary measures to prevent under or over nutrition conditions. The present study was thus undertaken for the same purpose.

METHODOLOGY

A self developed questionnaire was used for data collection. The awareness of fifty farm women

working at different farms of Anand Agricultural University, Anand namely Horticulture, Animal nutrition, Reproductive Biological Research Unit (RBRU), Live Stick Research Station (LRS), Bidi and Tobacco Research Station (BTRS), Agronomy, Vegetable research station were assessed during month of January and February 2009 using personal interview method. The data was analysed on the basis of frequency, percentage, mean and SD.

FINDINGS

Out of fifty farm women surveyed, more than two third farm women were of middle age group, majority of them were illiterate and the great majority were earning Rs. 30,000/- per year. Their awareness on selected nutritional aspects and its level are discussed below.

1 Nutritional awareness of farm women

The respond given by the farm woman on the questions asked to them are presented in Table 1.

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Table 1 : Awareness of farm women regarding selected nutritional aspects

n = 50

Sr. No.	Nutritional aspect	No.	Percentage
1	Take salt-sugar-solution frequently in vomiting and diarrhoea	49	98.00 *
2	Fruits and vegetables are include in the daily diet	48	96.00 *
3	Drink five to seven glasses of water daily	48	96.00 *
4	Wash vegetables before cutting	47	94.00 *
5	Ill person has to take easily digestible food	46	92.00 #
6	Patient suffering from high blood pressure has to consume low salt	45	90.00 #
7	Take calcium rich foods to make bone stronger	44	88.00 #
8	Diabetic patient has to consume less sweet food	42	84.00 #
9	Fruits provide vitamins and minerals	41	82.00 #
10	Sprouted pulses are beneficial to health	37	74.00 #
11	Do not drain away excess rice water after cooking	36	72.00 #
12	Milk is the complete food	34	68.00 #
13	Feed protein rich food to children	32	64.00 #
14	Cook vegetables in pressure cooker retains the nutrients	30	60.00 #
15	Pulses provide more protein	29	58.00 #
16	Vegetables provide vitamins, minerals and fiber	28	56.00 #
17	Cereals provide carbohydrate to the body	25	50.00 @
18	Seat in sunlight during early morning provide vitamin-D	21	42.00 @
19	Anola and citrus fruits provide vitamin-C	21	42.00 @
20	Green leafy vegetables and carrot provide vitamin-A	20	40.00 @

Mean 72.30

SD 19.90

* = Most aware # = More aware @ = Least aware

Table 1 indicates that the farm women had the most awareness about four selected nutritional aspects in decreasing order, Take salt-sugar-solution frequently in vomiting and diarrhoea (98.00%), Fruits and vegetables are include in the daily diet (96.00%), Drink five to seven glasses of water daily (96.00%) and Wash vegetables before cutting (94.00%). These tasks were found communicated by *Anganwadi* and health workers or even through various mass media. Farm women thus were aware about these aspects might be the reason for the same. Similar numbers of selected nutritional aspects were also the least aware by the farm women viz. Cereals provide carbohydrate

to the body (50.00%), Seat in sunlight during early morning provide vitamin-D (42.00%), Anola and citrus fruits provide vitamin-C (42.00%) and Green leafy vegetables and carrot provide vitamin-A (40.00%). Farm women were using cereals, anola, green leafy vegetables but don't know the importance of that, might be the reason for the same. Farm women more aware about remaining tasks in the middle range i.e. 92 to 56 %.

1 Level of nutritional awareness

The level of above mentioned nutritional aspects were analyzed for its level. The results obtained are shown in Table 2.

Table 2 : Awareness level of farm women regarding selected nutritional aspects

Sr. No.	Awareness Level	No.	Percent
1	High	12	24.00
2	Medium	32	64.00
3	Low	06	12.00

About two third (64.00%) farm women had medium level awareness regarding selected nutritional aspects while 24.00% farm women aware these aspects in high level and half of them had low level (12.00%) awareness of the selected nutritional aspects.

CONCLUSIONS

About two third farm women had medium level awareness regarding selected nutritional aspects. The farm women had the most awareness about 'take salt-sugar-solution frequently in vomiting and diarrhea', 'fruits and vegetables are include in the daily diet', 'drink five to seven glasses of water daily' and 'Wash vegetables before cutting' nutritional aspects might be its communication

through various mass media. They were least aware about 'cereals provide carbohydrate to the body', 'seat in sunlight during early morning provide vitamin-D', 'anola and citrus fruits provide vitamin-C' and 'green leafy vegetables and carrot provide vitamin-A' selected nutritional aspects. Though they were using such food in their diet but don't know the importance of the same.

IMPLICATION

Knowledge on the nutritional aspects least aware by farm women could be spread through various mass media like television, radio, exhibition, personal communication using *Anganwadi*, Primary Health Centers etc.

