

Farmers' Awareness for Services Provided by the State Department of Agriculture, Punjab

Kuldip Kumar¹, Devinder Singh Sekhon², D. S. Dhillon³ and Prabhjot Kaur⁴

Introduction

State Department of Agriculture has a crucial role to play in disseminating the latest agricultural technology to the farmers for increasing productivity per unit area. The State Department of Agriculture faces a tough challenge in meeting the agricultural production and productivity requirements in view of small and fragmented land holdings. This places a great responsibility on the State Department of Agriculture for transferring of latest technology to the farmers, beyond ensuring adequate and timely supply of farm inputs. To meet this challenge, the Department has started various programs and activities for the benefit of farmers. Unless the beneficiaries know about the services provided by the State Department of Agriculture, Punjab, it is a distant dream that they took benefit of it. Keeping this in view, the present study was conducted to study the awareness of farmers regarding these services and their utilization.

Methodology

This study was conducted in three randomly selected districts i.e. Hoshiarpur, Sangrur and Ludhiana of Punjab State. Six villages were randomly selected from three

blocks, one each from the selected district. The stratified random sampling was done to ensure the equal representation of small, medium and large farmers in the sample. In this way, 180 farmers were selected representing all the three categories i.e. small, medium and large farmers. A structured interview schedule was used to collect the information about the awareness of farmers regarding the services provided by the State Department of Agriculture, Punjab.

Results and Discussions

The services provided by State Department of Agriculture, Punjab to the farmers were listed and various questions pertaining to these services were framed to know the awareness of farmers about them. The findings of the study are discussed as under:

A. Awareness of respondents about training camps organized by the State Department of Agriculture, Punjab

The data given in Table 1 revealed that 88.33 per cent, 83.33 per cent and 78.89 per cent of the farmers were aware about the village, block and district level training

¹ Associate Professor of Extension Education, PAU, Ludhiana

² Ex. M. Sc. Student, Department of Extension Education, PAU, Ludhiana

³ Professor of Extension Education, PAU, Ludhiana

⁴ Assistant Professor of Extension Education, PAU, Ludhiana

Table 1: Distribution of the respondents according to their awareness about training camps

Aspects of Awareness	Category of Farmers			
	Small (n ₁ =60)	Medium (n ₂ =60)	Large (n ₃ =60)	Total (n=180)
District Level Training Camps	40 (66.67)	54 (90.00)	48 (80.00)	142 (78.89)
Block Level Training Camps	43 (71.67)	56 (93.33)	51 (85.00)	150 (83.33)
Village Level Training Camps	46 (76.67)	59 (98.33)	54 (90.00)	159 (88.33)
Mean Scores	4.20	5.55	5.00	
T' Value	S/M=2.33** M/L=0.59 ^{NS} S/L=1.89**			

Figures in Parentheses are percentage

NS = Non significant

** = Significant at 0.05 level

camps. It was also found that there was a significant different in the awareness of medium farmers as well as large farmers over small farmers.

B. Awareness of respondents about soil and water testing services provided by the State Department of Agriculture, Punjab

The data presented in Table 2 revealed that almost 95 per cent farmers were aware about the services provided for soil and water testing. They were also aware about the location of the soil and water

testing laboratories. The test of significance indicated that there was no difference in the awareness about soil and water testing services among different categories of farmers.

C. Awareness of the respondents about the quality control measures undertaken by the State Department of Agriculture, Punjab

The results presented in Table 3 showed that 55.00 per cent of respondents were aware about the quality control measures undertaken by the department.

Table 2: Distribution of the respondents according to their awareness about regarding soil and water testing services

Aspects of Awareness	Category of Farmers			
	Small (n ₁ =60)	Medium (n ₂ =60)	Large (n ₃ =60)	Total (n = 180)
Awareness about soil and water testing	55 (91.67)	57 (95.00)	60 (100.00)	172 (95.56)
Awareness about the location of laboratory	55 (91.67)	57 (95.00)	60 (100.00)	172 (95.56)
Mean Scores	1.83	1.90	2.00	
t' Value	S/M=0.47 ^{NS} M/L=0.59 ^{NS} S/L=1.84 ^{NS}			

Figures in Parentheses are percentages

NS = Non significant

Table 3: Awareness of farmers regarding quality control measures undertaken by the Department of Agriculture

Aspects of Awareness	Category of Farmers			
	Small (n ₁ =60)	Medium (n ₂ =60)	Large (n ₃ =60)	Total (n = 180)
Awareness about quality control measures	21 (35.00)	37 (61.67)	41 (68.33)	99 (55.00)
Awareness about commodities				
a. Pesticides	21 (35.00)	37 (61.67)	41 (68.33)	99 (55.00)
b. Seeds	14 (23.33)	26 (43.33)	32 (53.33)	72 (40.00)
c. Fertilizers	18 (30.00)	28 (46.67)	38 (63.33)	84 (46.67)
Mean Scores	0.88	1.53	1.85	-
t' Value	S/M=1.56** M/L=1.32 ^{NS} S/L=1.99**			

Figures in Parentheses are percentages

** Significant at 0.05 level

NS = Non significant

Similarly; 55.00, 40.00 and 46.67 per cent of respondents were aware about the quality control measures undertaken by the department for pesticides, seeds and fertilizers, respectively. It was also found that there was a significant difference in the awareness of medium farmers as well as large farmers over small farmers.

Conclusion

Based on the results of the study, the conclusions may be derived as under:

1. A large majority of the farmers were aware about the services provided by the department for imparting training and testing of soil and water samples.
2. There is a need to make the farmers aware about the various programs for quality control of agricultural inputs, so that they can avail this service whenever needed.