



ISSN (E): 2277-7695
ISSN (P): 2349-8242
NAAS Rating: 5.23
TPI 2022; SP-11(10): 41-44
© 2022 TPI

www.thepharmajournal.com

Received: 18-08-2022

Accepted: 20-09-2022

Trishnalee Saikia

Subject Matter Specialist, Krishi
Vigyan Kendra, Jorhat, Assam,
India

PK Pathok

Director of Extension Education,
Assam Agricultural University,
Jorhat, Assam, India

P Handique

Senior Scientist and Head, Krishi
Vigyan Kendra, Sivasagar,
Assam, India

S Borthakur

Senior Scientist and Head, Krishi
Vigyan Kendra, Jorhat, Assam,
India

H Gogoi

Assistant Professor, Assam
Agricultural University, Jorhat,
Assam, India

Corresponding Author:

Trishnalee Saikia

Subject Matter Specialist, Krishi
Vigyan Kendra, Jorhat, Assam,
India

Performance of information channels on commercial fish and vegetable farmers of Sivasagar district in Assam, India

Trishnalee Saikia, PK Pathok, P Handique, S Borthakur and H Gogoi

Abstract

Proper and timely information is the utmost need of the farming community for their overall socioeconomic development as well as for the development of agrarian nation like India. There are various sources of information related to agriculture sector both formal and informal, govt and non-governmental in India as well as in Assam, viz. agricultural university, extension centres like Krishi Vigyan Kendras, Research stations, State departments, Radio networks, Newspaper, Television channels etc. But, very few studies have been conducted in this regard to know the performance of these extension sources in the farming community. Present study was undertaken to see the use of extension networks by the fish producers and vegetable growers in Sivasagar district of Assam. From the study it was observed that 51 per cent of the fish producers obtained information from all the sources like public, private and mass media, whereas the rest 49 per cent obtained from private and mass media only. In case of commercial vegetable growers, it was found that 69 per cent of the growers obtained information from private and mass media whereas the rest 31 per cent obtained information from all the sources like public, private and mass media.

Keywords: Information needs, source of information, research station, mass media

Introduction

Agriculture sector contributes about 17 percent to the total GDP of Indian economy and provides employment to over 60 percent of the population. In the state of Assam, Agriculture is the mainstay of more than 70 per cent of the population. According to 2001 Census, 2.66 crores of the total populations of the State depend on agriculture fully or partially. Nearly 40 per cent of State income is contributed by agriculture.

The productivity of agricultural sector can be improved to a considerable extent with the help of appropriate, reliable and need based information in time. Agricultural information can help the producers in taking various decisions regarding management of land, labour and capital. Proper information can reduce the cost of production to a considerable extent. Similarly, agricultural income can be increased by taking advantage of market opportunities. Farmers can escape crop loss by real time access to weather forecasts, selecting proper varieties and planting techniques. Disseminating proper information to the farmers is the main objective of any agricultural extension system.

An agricultural information system can be defined as “a system in which agricultural information is generated, transformed, transferred, consolidated, received and fed back in such a manner that these processes function synergistically to underpin knowledge utilization by agricultural producers” (Röling, 1988) [4].

The farmers generally need information on seeds, fertilizers, agriculture credit, irrigation, disease and pest management. Sources of information can be radio, television, extension workers, cooperative societies, friends and colleagues, newspapers and magazines, books/leaflets, phones, libraries and institutes like Agricultural University, research stations etc.

Agricultural Research and Extension system in Assam

Assam Agricultural University has been playing a pivotal role for socio economic development of the farming community of the North Eastern region through research on agriculture and allied sectors and proper extension of these technologies to the farmers and take all necessary steps for dissemination and adoption of technologies developed. In Assam,

at present 23 nos. of Krishi Vigyan Kendras (KVKs) are functioning under Assam Agricultural University, Jorhat, 2 nos. are directly under ICAR and one is under an NGO for dissemination of technologies and providing need-based advisories to the farming community in 26 different districts of Assam. The University has Publication and Information wing of the Directorate of Extension Education which regularly publishes Annual Reports, Newsletters, Farm Newspaper, Extension Bulletins etc. for circulation among the extension functionaries as well as farmers.

Assam Agricultural University has six Regional Agricultural Research Stations (RARS) viz., 1. RARS, Titabar, 2. RARS, Shillongani, 3. RARS, Gossaigaon, 4. RARS, North Lakhimpur, 5. RARS, Karimganj 6. RARS, Diphu and five commodity research stations like Horticultural Research Station, Kahikuchi, Sugarcane Research Station, Buralikson, Citrus Research Station, Tinsukia, Goat Research Station, Byrnihat and Livestock Research Station, Mandira.

Besides Assam agricultural University, Jorhat there are various Govt. departments like Agriculture, Animal husbandry and veterinary, Fishery, Sericulture etc. which have footprint in every district of Assam. But it is mostly seen that the farmers obtain relevant information from informal sources like radio, television, newspaper etc. Very few studies are conducted in this regard to see the real situation in the farming community to know wherefrom the farmers of Assam get information to take the required decisions in agriculture

sector.

Therefore, present study was conducted with the objective to see the relative efficiency of the extension networks utilized by the commercial fish Producers and vegetable growers in Sivasagar district of Assam.

Methodology

A total of 200 respondents comprising of 100 commercial fish producers and 100 commercial vegetable growers were randomly selected from different parts of Sivasagar district of Assam for final data collection. Relevant information were collected through personal interview method with the help of pretested questionnaire.

Results and Discussion

A) Socioeconomic characteristics of sample farmers:

It was observed that majority of the sample commercial fish producers (76 percent) as well as the commercial vegetable growers (69 percent) fall to age group of 25-65 years. Similarly, majority of the sample fish producers (59 percent) as well as the commercial vegetable growers (62 percent) were graduate. On the other hand, most of the commercial fish producers and vegetable growers are small farmers with an average land holding of 2.03 and 1.86 ha. Thus, majority of the respondents were educated youths who are involved in fish and vegetable farming.

Table 1: Socioeconomic characteristics of sample fish producers and vegetable growers of Sivasagar district of Assam

Variables	Commercial fish producers (Percentage of total)	Commercial vegetable producers (Percentage of total)
A) Age category		
Less than 25	17	23
25-65	76	69
More than 65	7	8
B) Literacy		
Illiterate	0	3
Below HSLC pass	0	7
HSLC pass	19	23
Graduate	59	62
Post graduate	3	5
Technical	2	0
C) Land holding		
Marginal(Less than 1ha)	22	19
Small (1.01 to 2ha)	43	51
Semi medium (2.01 to 4 ha)	31	29
Medium (4.01 to 10ha)	3	1
Large(More than 10ha)	1	0
Average land holding (ha)	2.03	1.86
D) Annual Income		
Less than 1 lakh	39	17
1lakh-5lakh	56	83
More than 5 lakhs	5	0

B) Information needs of the sample farmers

The study reveals that the majority of the sample fish producers seek information on disease management (79percent) followed by source of inputs like fingerlings, feed material etc (66percent), nutrient management (53 per cent), pond management etc. Whereas majority of the commercial vegetable growers seek information on plant protection (83

percent), marketing (79 percent), fertility management (69 percent), nursery management (57 percent) etc. Thus, in both the cases of fish and vegetable farming major information required by the farmers is health management or protection from disease and pest. For vegetable growers marketing was also a matter of concern, while for fish farmers inputs mainly fish seed and feed were very much important factor.

Table 2: Information needs/demands identified for the commercial fish producers and vegetable growers of Sivasagar district of Assam

Commercial fish producers		Commercial vegetable growers	
Information needs	Percentage of sample respondents	Information needs	Percentage of sample respondents
Species selection	19	Source of Inputs /Variety selection	17
Source of inputs like fingerling, feed material etc.	66	Land Preparation	11
Pond management	49	Nursery management	57
Nutrient management	53	Plant protection	83
Disease management	79	Fertility management	69
Marketing	3	Marketing	79

C) Sources of Information

The information sources can be classified into three categories like public, private and massmedia. Public source includes Krishi Vigyan Kendras, State departments, State Institute of rural development, research stations etc. Whereas, private sources include input dealers, fallow farmers and NGOs. On the other hand, mass media sources may be radio, television, newspaper, farm magazines etc. In the present study it was observed that 51 per cent of the fish producers obtained information from all the sources like public, private and mass

media, whereas the rest 49 per cent obtained from private and mass media only. In case of commercial vegetable growers it was found that 69% of the vegetable growers obtained information from private and mass media whereas the rest 31% obtained information from all the sources like public, private and mass media. Thus, it has been observed that all the channels had a substantial impact on information dissemination towards fish and vegetable farmers in the district.

Table 3: Information Sources of the sample commercial fish producers and vegetable growers of Sivasagar district of Assam (%)

Sources of Information	Commercial Fish producers	Commercial Vegetable producers	Average
Private and mass media	49	69	59
Public, private and mass media	51	31	41

D) Degree of use of information channels by the sample farmers

Among the regular used extension networks 53 percent of the fish producers obtained information from input dealers, whereas 47 percent and 36 Percent obtained from radio broadcasting and Krishi Vigyan Kendra. Eighty-nine (89)

percent and 86 percent of the fish farmers often obtained information from fellow farmers and radio. Eighty-two (82) percent, 65 percent, 49 percent and 38 percent of the farmers never obtain information from farm magazines, research stations, state department and KVK.

Table 4: Degree of use of information channels by the sample commercial fish producer and vegetable growers (%) of Sivasagar district of Assam

Source of information	Regularly used		Often used		Seldom use		Never use	
	Fish farmer	Vegetable growers	Fish farmer	Vegetable growers	Fish farmer	Vegetable growers	Fish farmer	Vegetable growers
KVK	36	23	4	4	22	29	38	44
State department	0	0	10	10	41	41	49	49
Research Station	0	0	30	0	5	0	65	100
Input dealer	53	51	36	38	7	7	4	4
Fellow farmers	0	7	89	68	10	10	1	15
News paper	14	14	86	56	0	8	0	22
Radio	47	47	24	24	23	23	6	6
TV	0	0	0	0	76	76	24	24
Farm magazine	0	5	8	8	10	10	82	77

Whereas, in case of commercial vegetable growers among the regular use extension networks 51 percent of the farmers obtained information from input dealers whereas 47, 23, 14 and 5 per cent of the farmers obtained information regularly from radio, KVK, newspaper and farm magazines, respectively. Sixty-eight (68) percent and 46 percent of the sample vegetable growers often obtained information from fallow farmers and newspaper. 100 percent, 77 percent, 24 percent, 49 percent, 44 percent and 22 percent of the sample farmers never obtained information from Research station, Farm magazine, TV, State department., KVK and Newspaper. It is evident from the results that although the formal extension machineries are active in the district but, the informal extension network and the radio network has played

the pivotal role in disseminating the information to the fish and vegetable famers in the district. Among all the formal extension machineries KVK is playing a vital role in dissemination of information to some extent in the district. Adio, Emmanuel Olorunnishola *et al.* (2016) ^[1] while studying “Use of Agricultural Information Sources and Services by Farmers for Improve Productivity in Kwara State” also reported that majority of the farmers rely on informal sources of information from neighbors, friends and colleagues rather than from the extension workers. Farmers have a little information on animal husbandry, live stock production and fishing.

Summary

From the present study it has been observed that the major concern for both fish and vegetable farmers was the health management for which they need information. For fish farmers fish seed and feed were second important concern while marketing was another major concern for vegetable farmers. The study also revealed that the major source of information for the farmers are private sources like input dealers and mass media like radio, TV, newspapers etc. Input dealers are the regular source of information for both fish producer as well as the vegetable producers of the district. The information received by the farmers from formal extension machinery was very minimal and the role of radio is still prominent in the era of digitalization. Therefore, it is evident from the study that the formal extension system or the government departments or the other developments agencies have to do a lot to prove their existence among the farming community and bringing overall economic development of the country as a whole.

References

1. Adio Emmanuel Olorunnishola, Abu Yusufu, Usuf Sheriff Kunle Y, Nansoh Shehu. Use of Agricultural Information Sources and Services by Farmers for Improve Productivity in Kwara State Library Philosophy and Practice (e-journal). 2016 Jul 12;14561-14516. <http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/libphilprac/1456>
2. Kursat Demiryurek, Huseyin Erdem, Vedat Ceyhan, Savas Atasever, Osman Uysal. Agricultural information systems and communication networks: the case of dairy farmers in the Samsun province of Turkey, iR information Research. 2008 Jun 1;13(2):13-2
3. Malekani, Andrew, Mubofu, Christian. Agricultural information sources, channels and strategies for sharing agricultural research findings among farmers in Iringa district in Tanzania. Library Philosophy and Practice (e-journal). 2020 Mar 1:1-4.
4. Röling NG. Extension science, information systems in agricultural development. Cambridge University Press; c1988.
5. Surudhi M, Arunachalam R, Ashokhan Murugan. Utilization pattern of extension tools and methods by Agricultural Extension Agents, Journal of Extension Education. December 2017. DOI: 10.26725/JEE.2017.2.29.5838-5849
6. Yaseen M, Xu S, Yu W, Hassan S. Farmers' Access to Agricultural Information Sources: Evidences from Rural Pakistan, 2016. Journal of Agricultural Chemistry and Environment. 2016 Apr 7;5(1):12-9.