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## Constraints faced by the beneficiaries of farmers field school in adoption of rice cultivation practices and their suggestions to minimize the constraints

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### Abstract

This study was conducted in Dapoli, Mandangad and Khed tahasils of Ratnagiri district of Konkan region. The sample constituted of 120 i.e., 60 beneficiaries and 60 non-beneficiaries' farmers from 12 villages. The respondents were interviewed with the help of specially designed schedule. Collected data was classified, tabulated, and analyzed by using statistical method. It was observed that problems faced by the beneficiaries in rice cultivation practices were high cost of inputs like seeds, fertilizers (83.33 per cent), non-availability of inputs at proper time (51.67 per cent), shortage of labour during peak period (75.00 per cent), lower market price to produce (41.67 per cent) and unawareness of financial assistance (78.33 per cent). It was observed that the maximum respondents suggested that institutions need to provide financial support at right time (90.00 per cent), reduction in cost of inputs like seeds and fertilizers (88.33 per cent), availability of inputs at proper time (63.33 per cent), selected FFS time should be convenient to all (51.67 per cent).

**Keywords:** farmer field school, constraints, adoption, suggestions, Ratnagiri district

### Introduction

The Farmer Field School (FFS) approach is based on the idea that the best learning comes from experience, and in the case of farmers, from field observations. The FFS combines ecology and non-formal education to enable farmers to learn more about their crops, share their experiences, and learn from one another. Farmer Field School (FFS) is based on "learning by doing" to motivate communities and increase their capacity for making informed decisions. It gives farmers a place to share their experiences and expertise to enhance their existing methods through experiential learning processes that lead to sustainable agriculture development. Through a discovery-based approach, farmers are given the ability to choose their production methods. It's a "school without walls" made up of groups of farmers who get together regularly during the growing season to try out new production methods as a group. FFS seeks to improve groups of farmers' abilities to test emerging innovations in their fields, evaluate the findings, and determine their suitability to their specific circumstances. They engage with researchers and extension staff on a more demand-driven basis, and they seek assistance in most situations when they are unable to solve a particular problem between themselves. In general, the FFS aims to provide farmers with the information and skills that will enable them to become experts in their fields; to improve farmers' ability to make important and educated decisions that will make their farming productive and sustainable; to educate farmers about new ways of thinking and problem solving, and to assist farmers in learning how to organize themselves and their communities. As a result, a farmer field school is a process rather than a goal.

**Objective:** Constraints Faced by the Beneficiaries of Farmers Field School in Adoption of rice cultivation practices and their suggestions to minimize the constraints.

**Methodology:** The study was purposively conducted in Ratnagiri district of the Konkan region of Maharashtra state. Three tahsils from Ratnagiri district were identified for investigation because the large numbers of beneficiary farmers who provide large area under rice crop were present in these tahsils. On the basis of participation of villagers in Rice Farmers Field School four villages were selected from each tahsil on random basis and thus, the total twelve villages were selected. A total of 120 rice farmers were considered as respondents for present study out of which 60 were beneficiaries of FFSs.

The respondents were interviewed with the help of specially designed schedule. Collected data was classified, tabulated, and analyzed by using statistical method. The Ex-post facto research design was used for the present study.

## Result and Discussion

### Constraints encountered by the beneficiaries of FFS

An attempt was made in the present investigation to

understand the problems experienced by the beneficiaries of FFS in the use of recommended rice cultivation practices taught in FFS. The important problems expressed by the beneficiaries were tabulated and presented in Table 1. Frequency and percentage for each problem was calculated and presented hereunder in Table 1.

**Table 1:** Problems encountered by the beneficiaries of FFS

Sl. No.	Problems	Respondents (N=60)	
		Frequency	Percentage
1.	High cost of inputs like seeds, fertilizers	50	83.33
2.	Non-availability of inputs at proper time	31	51.67
3.	Shortage of labour during peak period	45	75.00
4.	Lower market price to produce	25	41.67
5.	Unawareness of financial assistance	47	78.33
6.	Loss of rice crop due to wild animals	28	46.67
7.	Difficulty in calculating the pesticide doses	36	60.00

Problems faced by the beneficiaries in rice cultivation practices were high cost of inputs like seeds, fertilizers (83.33 per cent), non-availability of inputs at proper time (51.67 per cent), shortage of labour during peak period (75.00 per cent), lower market price to produce (41.67 per cent), unawareness of financial assistance (78.33 per cent), loss of rice crop due to wild animals (46.67 per cent), and difficulty in calculating the pesticide doses (60.00 per cent).

The constraints analysis revealed that the major problems were related to inputs. If we analysed these constraints, it can be said that most of the problems are situational in nature. The concerned development agencies and extension agencies may undertake suitable steps to reduce the problems.

Further, the present findings suggest to undertake the appropriate research and development activities so that, the problems experienced by the beneficiaries will be minimized.

### Suggestions of the beneficiaries for increasing the effectiveness of FFS on rice.

Suggestions were requested from for increasing the effectiveness of FFS on rice and also to overcome their difficulties in carrying out FFS. The suggestions are given in Table 2.

**Table 2:** Suggestions of the beneficiaries for increasing the effectiveness of FFS on rice

Sl. No.	Suggestions	Respondents (N=60)	
		Frequency	Percentage
1.	Reduction in cost of inputs	53	88.33
2.	Availability of inputs at proper time	38	63.33
3.	Selected FFS time should be convenient to all	31	51.67
4.	Need to increase the minimum support prize of rice	27	45.00
5.	Availability of bio-control agents at village level	33	55.00
6.	Institutions need to provide financial support at right time	54	90.00
7.	Proper protection of rice crop from wild animals should be followed	28	46.67
8.	Easy ways to solve the pesticide doses	39	65.00

To minimize the constraints in adoption in recommended rice cultivation practices majority of the respondents suggested that institutions need to provide financial support at right time (90.00 per cent), reduction in cost of inputs' (88.33 per cent), availability of inputs at proper time (63.33 per cent), selected FFS time should be convenient to all (51.67 per cent), need to increase the minimum support prize of rice (45.00 per cent), availability of bio-control agents at village level (55.00 per cent), proper protection of rice crop from wild animals should be followed (46.67 per cent), and easy ways to solve the pesticide doses (65.00 per cent). In the present investigation beneficiaries had suggested that there is need to increase the minimum support prize of rice.

### Conclusion

It was observed that problems faced by the beneficiaries in rice cultivation practices were high cost of inputs like seeds, fertilizers (83.33 per cent), non-availability of inputs at proper time, shortage of labour during peak period, lower market price to produce, unawareness of financial assistance, loss of rice crop due to wild animals and difficulty in calculating the pesticide doses. It was observed that the maximum respondents suggested that institutions need to provide financial support at right time (90.00 per cent), reduction in cost of inputs like seeds and fertilizers, availability of inputs at proper time, selected FFS time should be convenient to all, need to increase the minimum support prize of rice, availability of bio-control agents at village level, proper protection of rice crop from wild animals should be followed and easy ways to solve the pesticide doses.

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