

Attitude of Government Agricultural Officers towards Organic Agriculture in Sri Lanka

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Organic agriculture is a method of farming, which leads to the sustainable agriculture. Before educating farmers on organic agriculture, relevant government agricultural officers should have better knowledge and positive attitude towards it. The main objectives of this study were to study the level of knowledge of agricultural officers on organic agriculture and their attitude towards it. A sample of 120 agriculture officials was randomly selected from Badulla and Ratnapura districts for the study. A field survey was conducted using a pre-tested questionnaire to gather information from the sample, during the period of April 2017 to May 2018. A few descriptive statistical methods and Chi-square test were used to analyze the data. Results revealed that, majority of the agricultural officers are male, educated up to GCE advance level and have certain level of experience on organic agriculture. While, most of them (81.6%) have a general level of knowledge about organic agriculture, a few of them (29.2%) have a better knowledge on it. According to the mean analysis, most of the officers have a positive attitude towards organic agriculture depending on five important factors *viz.* existing knowledge on organic farming ($x=3.83$), environment protecting ($x=4.16$), health enhancing ($x=4.33$), marketing potentials ($x=3.59$) and social enhancing ($x=4.30$). According to Chi-square test, there was no association between demographic factors and the attitude of the agricultural officers. However, they have lack of awareness on organic agricultural policies. But, promotion of organic agriculture mainly depends upon the knowledge and skills of agricultural officers. Therefore, motivating them to acquire more knowledge and education on organic agriculture is timely important to establish a sustainable organic agricultural systems in the country.

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