AWARENESS AND ADOPTION OF RECOMMENDED TECHNOLOGIES AND MANAGEMENT PRACTICES BY THE TEA SMALL HOLDERS

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ABSTRACT

Like any other sector, application of scientific agricultural knowledge and technology adaptation in the tea is a vital investment to enhance the productivity and overall performance of the tea industry. The degree of adaptation of recommended technology is a crucial factor in the tea small holding sector. In view of this, a study was conducted in Badulla region in 2014 to assess the awareness and level of adaptation towards recommended technologies and management practices. As well as to identify the factors affect to the level of adaptation and the relationship between those factors and the level of adaptation on recommended technologies and management practices.

The sample for the research study was selected using simple random sampling technique and Multi Stage Sampling technique. The sample size was 150 small holders. Data were collected using structured questionnaire and interviewing the small holders at their places. Awareness and adaptation levels measured mainly under five categories as Machinery usage, Improved planting materials, Field practices, Standards tests and Consulting services.

According to the results of the analysis small holders have higher awareness regarding consulting services (100 %) and Field practices (Shade trees – 95.3 %, Pruning methods – 90.7 %, Soil conservation methods – 93.3 %) than others. The awareness regarding Machinery usage and E-consulting services recorded the lowest awareness respectively 26 % and 36 %. From the small holders 53 % have highly adopted on recommended technologies while 9 % having medium and 38 % having low adaptation. For the above adoption levels, Gender, Age level, Education level, Land extent and Experience is affected. Land extent and Education level positively affect while Gender, Age level and Experience affecting negatively.

Key words : Awareness, Level of adaptation, Management Practices