

**DETERMINE THE FACTORS AFFECTING
PESTICIDE USE DECISION OF VEGETABLE
FARMERS IN NUWARA ELIYA,
BANDARAWELA AND WELIMADA AREA**

A dissertation submitted to the
Faculty of Animal Science and Export Agriculture
Uva Wellassa University
in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the award of the
Degree of Export Agriculture

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2011

ABSTRACT

Sri Lanka has an area of 6.4 million hectares. Out of that 20% of agricultural lands located in the up country wet zone of Sri Lanka. Vegetable cultivation in the upcountry areas of Sri Lanka is highly commercialized and farmers use large amounts of pesticides to control the pests damages (Wijewardena, 2010). Similarly, number of agrochemical companies involves in distributing pesticides and the companies follow several product promotion techniques to stimulate the farmers to buy their pesticides. The purpose of this study is to identify the factors affecting pesticide use decision of farmers. Knowledge on farmer's pesticide use decision is very important in selecting appropriate promotion methods to promote the pesticide products. The study was conducted in three divisional secretariat divisions in upcountry wet zone covering 120 vegetable farmers.

This study employed the Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) to gauge farmers' Attitudes, Subjective Norms and Perceived Behavioural Control towards pesticides use decision. According to the analysis, it was revealed that the Theory of Reasoned Action explained 35.5% of variation of the farmer's pesticide using behavior. Subjective Norms and Perceived Behavioural Control are the most important factors influencing farmers' pesticide use behavior. Perceived Behavioural Control showed negative influence over pesticide using behaviour and recorded the largest coefficient (- 0.82) and therefore this should be highly considered when developing appropriate and effective dissemination techniques. Second highest coefficient was recorded for Self Control (- 0.439) in decision making and showed negative relationship over pesticide usage.

The results further revealed that, neighbor farmers and field demonstration programs recorded negative influence over pesticide usage. It seems that, the field demonstration programs can be used to reduce indiscriminate pesticide usage. Product promotion campaign, advertisements and product dealers positively influence farmer's decision and increase pesticide usage.

Keywords: Vegetable farmers, Theory of Reasoned Action, pesticides, Product promotion methods