

**AWARENESS AND ADOPTION TO THE RECOMMENDED  
MANAGEMENT PRACTICES OF BIG ONION GROWERS  
(CASE STUDY IN DAMBULLA D.S. DIVISION)**

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## ABSTRACT

Big onion is considered as an important cash crop in Sri Lanka. Within few decades big onion production has increased significantly along with the increasing demand for consumption. Though the production has increased, productivity is not satisfactory as only average of 17 MT/ha where the potential productivity lies at 30-37 MT/ha. Therefore, it is imperative to know the knowledge level and their adoption behavior regarding the recommended cultivation practices.

The study interviews 65 big onion growers in Matale District who has not less than five years of big onion farming experience. Sample was selected randomly and data were collected using structured questionnaire. Total of seventeen DOA recommended practices are considered initially but only seven management practices are correlated with each of awareness and adaption states. They are considered for further analysis which is regarding recommended varieties, nursery sterilization procedure, seed treatment, spacing, seedling treatment, pre emergence herbicide application, correct harvesting stage and providence of optimum storage conditions.

Results show that awareness on pre emergence herbicides and optimum harvesting stage has comparatively higher awareness level which is 98.5% and 89% respectively. Awareness on the correct procedure of seed treatment holds the lowest awareness level which accounts for 53%. Consideration of spacing while transplanting holds the highest number of respondents which accounts for 76.9% who are not at all adapted followed by providence of optimum conditions for storage which counts 75%. Though the respondent's have high awareness on optimum harvesting stage only 27.7% extremely adapted to practice it.

Factors affecting on adoption is analyzed by using a multiple linear regression and 5 factors are found significant. Respondent's age and off farm employment has negatively affect on the adaption level whilst education level, big onion farming experience and community leadership which have positive influences.

*Key words:* Big onion, Management practices, Awareness, Adoption level