

DIFFUSION OF INFORMATION AND FARMERS' RESPONSE IN RELATION TO AN IMPROVED FARM PRACTICE (HYBRID MAIZE)

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Problem

Hybrid maize is a new practice introduced among farmers. This requires change in many aspects of the old method of maize cultivation as well as change in food habit. It has been observed that though the villagers are conscious of some improved farm practices, still only a handful of literate and well-to-do persons respond favourably to the various innovations. The present study was to know the relative importance of different information sources and problems of acceptance of hybrid maize cultivation.

Findings

Higher the education of the farmer, greater is the interest in reading various kinds of literature. Agricultural magazines are least preferred by the farmers. Adopters of the new ideas have favourable attitude towards Govt. programme. But older ones are more prejudiced against Govt. programme than younger ones.

Size of holding and education are positively related to information seeking habits, but size is not effective in case of highly educated farmers. Greater the number of information sources sought, greater is the extent of adoption.

Demonstration is the most important activating source for adoption. Younger farmers are more influenced by demonstration than older ones. Seed producer is an important source of information and activates farmers to adopt hybrid maize. Majority of farmers seek information from him.

Education and size of holding are positively

associated with the time of awareness of a new idea. Education is positively related to time of adoption. Illiterate farmers adopt practice in the later part of the time sequence while the educated adopt earlier. But the response of middle standard educated farmers is slightly more than farmers highly educated.

Age of the farm-operator has no relation to adoption but education and size of holding are positively related to adoption of improved practices. Increase in size of farm shows increase in dissatisfaction towards hybrid maize. Among various maize varieties, 'Bhuj Ganga No. 1' is mostly preferred for 'Bhuj Ganga No. 101' is not preferred for any purpose.

Farmers of lower economic status adopt hybrid maize for food while big cultivators don't like its taste. Bad taste, unpleasant colour and hard grain of hybrid maize are stated to be main reasons against using hybrid maize as food. Main factors mentioned for non-adoption were less preference by labourers, need for more fertilizers, difficulty in procuring seed, high price of hybrid seed and possibility of failure of the crop.

As regards attitude towards hybrid maize among farmers as well as extension workers, there is an unfavourable attitude towards hybrid maize.

Majority of farmers have reverted to old hybrid maize cultivation. Education and size of the farmers are not related to reversion. Bigger farmers tend to revert more frequently than small farmers. Bad taste, less preference by labourers, need of more fertilizers and low net-return are main reasons for reversion.

*Rai H.N., Diffusion of Information and Farmers' Response in Relation to an Improved Farm Practice (Hybrid Maize), M.Sc. Thesis, Bihar Agriculture College Sahour, 1964.