Indian Journal of Extension Education
Vol. 48, No. 3 & 4, 2012 (112-114)

Training Needs of Agricultural Supervisors in Jaipur District of Rajasthan

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ABSTRACT

The present investigation was carried out in Jaipur district of Rajasthan. Thirty per cent agricultural supervisors from each of the thirty *panchayat samities* constituted the total sample of 67. They were drawn from each *panchayat samiti* through random sampling technique. Face - to - face method of interview was employed for data gathering. Emperical findings of the study revealed that supervisors needed in-service training in order of priority in the areas like drip irrigation systems and water saving techniques in agriculture, sprinkler irrigation, preparation of farm production, plan and budgeting, dryland farming, pests and diseases control in high yielding varieties, soil moisture conservation techniques, extension and communication techniques, fertilizer and their application in high yielding varieties (HYVs), package of practices of HYVs evaluation techniques, vegetables and fruits preservation for off-season, crop rotation and intercultural operations, soil and seed treatment, organic farming to enhance the qualitative agriculture production without degradation in soil environment. It is strongly recommended that the grass root level agricultural supervisors (VEWS) must be regularly trained in the areas of water conservation and irrigation techniques.

Key words: Drip irrigation, HYVs, In-service training, Agricultural supervisors

INTRODUCTION

Training has been accepted as a very important activity of the extension programmes since the inception of new strategy of agricultural production in India. During recent years, there has been significant development of agricultural technologies and these technologies have undoubtedly increased the food grain production in our country. But, if the extension personnel are not properly educated regarding these technologies, the expected ambitious targets of high agricultural production might not be achieved and sustained. Thus, more development of new technologies in the field of agriculture is not enough, but what it is more important is their effective and proper use by the farmers in their fields. The extension personnel should be updated and well informed about the techniques as the national agricultural economic growth depends on them.

The capacity building of the extension personnel through effective training programmes has become an integral part of the agricultural strategies in India as well as in the state of Rajasthan. Extension training is one of the central concerns of agricultural extension. It has two phases, training to agricultural supervisors (VEWS) and training to farmers. The first phase is predicated that the farmers can not be trained without prior training of the agricultural supervisors. Training has gained wide acceptability for upgrading the professional competence of different levels of agricultural supervisors. The training scheme as a whole seems to be the gigantic one. The main objective of training programme is to develop skill and related knowledge of the agricultural supervisors in a shortest possible period, enabling them to utilize the technologies for agricultural production effectively. Keeping this facts in view, the present investigation was undertaken with the objective to identify in-service training needs of agricultural supervisors as perceived by themselves.

METHODOLOGY

The study was conducted in Jaipur district of Rajasthan, India. For the selection of trainees (VEWs / Agricultural Supervisors) a list of total agricultural supervisors in Jaipur district was prepared with the help of the officials of Department of Agriculture, Government of Rajasthan. Jaipur district, comprised 13 *panchayat samities*. The number of agricultural supervisors varied from *panchayat samiti* to *panchayat samiti*. Hence, 30 per cent of agriculture supervisors from each of the *panchayat samities* were selected by random sampling method in such a way that a total of 67 agricultural supervisors constituted total sample size for the study.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Data in Table 1 revealed that as many as 66 out of 67 Agricultural supervisors desired to have training about water saving techniques and drip irrigation in agriculture. The mean score for drip irrigation system was 2.98 which occupies first rank in the needs hierarchy. The next in order was the sprinkler irrigation. As many as 65 out of 67

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respondents desired to undergo training in this aspect. (Mean score 2.97), While preparation of farm production plan and budgeting obtained third rank (mean score 2.95) and dryland came at fourth place, with mean score 2.94, the mean scores of practices such as pest and disease control of high yielding varieties of crops (2.91), soil moisture conservation techniques (2.88); extension and communication techniques (2.86), fertilizers and their application in high yielding varieties (2.80) and package of practices of high yielding varieties (2.71) occupied almost the middle positions in the need hierarchy. These were ranked as 5th, 6th ,7th ,8th and 9th, respectively.

Table1: Extent of training needs as perceived by the agricultural supervisors

Subject / item of training needs	Most needed (3)	Needed (2)	Not needed (1)	Mean score	Rank
Preparation of farm production plan and budgeting	64	3	-	2.95	III
Extension and communication techniques (this includes, selection, use and handling of extension teaching methods (and audio-visual aids)	58	9	-	2.86	VII
Evaluation techniques (this means how to assess the success, failure, strong and weak points of a programme implemented in the village)	49	18	-	2.73	X
Production techniques of improved varieties / high yielding varieties	36	31	-	2.53	XIV
Soil sampling techniques	27	40	-	2.40	XVI
Package of practices of high yielding varieties (this includes preparation of land, seed rate, sowing time, depth of sowing, interculturing etc.)	51	16	-	2.71	IX
Pests & disease control in high yielding varieties of crops (this includes identification of pests, preparation of pesticides, time and methods of application)	61	6	-	2.91	V
Fertilizers and their application in high yielding varieties	56	9	2	2.80	VIII
Post harvest technology and save grain i.e. storage, processing, value addition and marketing etc.	35	32	-	2.52	XV
Dry land farming	64	2	1	2.94	IV
Handling and maintenance of farm implements	8	55	4	2.04	XXIII
Care and maintenance of bovine / ovine	12	55	-	2.11	XXI
Kitchen gardening	21	46	-	2.31	XX
Vegetables and fruits preservation for off-season i.e. preserved and dried vegetables, squash, jam, jelly, pickles etc.	46	21	-	2.68	XI
Organic farming to enhance the qualitative agricultural production without degradation in soil environment	39	28	-	2.58	XIII
Reclamation of problematic soils	27	39	1	2.38	XVII
Drip irrigation system	66	1	-	2.98	I
Sprinkler irrigation system	65	2		2.97	II
Cultivation of aromatic and spices crops	26	40	Î	2.37	XVIII
Ecological farming	4	35	28	1.64	XXIV
Value addition of agricultural products	16	41	10	2.08	XXII
Weed management	24	43	-	2.35	XIX
Soil and seed treatment	42	25	-	2.62	XII
Soil moisture conservation techniques	59	8	-	2.88	VI
Crop rotation and intercultural operations	42	25	-	2.62	XII
Water saving techniques	66	1	-	2.98	I

The last few ranks in the need hierarchy were occupied in decreasing order by the aspects like, evaluation techniques (2.73), vegetable and fruits preservation for off-season *i.e.* preserved and dried vegetables, squash, jam jelly, pickles etc. (2.68); crop rotation and inter-cultural operations and soil and seed treatment (2.62), organic farming to enhance the qualitative agriculture production without degradation in soil environment (2.58), production techniques of improved varieties / high yielding varieties (2.53), post harvest technology and save grain i.e. storage, processing, value addition and marketing etc. (2.52), soil sampling technique (2.40), reclamation of problematic soils (2.38), cultivation of aromatic and spices crops (2.37), weed management (2.35), kitchen gardening (2.31), care and maintenance of bovine / ovine (2.11), value addition of agricultural products (2.08), handling and maintenance of farm implements (2.04), and ecological farming (1.64). Result shows that agricultural supervisors required training almost in all of these aspects.

Thus, the need hierarchy, based on mean score rendered the relative urgency with which the agricultural supervisors would like to be trained in different subject matter areas. This also points out the relative discrepancy in knowledge of the agricultural supervisors about different areas of training. From the above findings (Table 1), it is evident that all the agricultural supervisors needed to be imparted training in the aspects - water saving techniques in agriculture and drip irrigation system followed by sprinkler irrigation, preparation of farm production plan and budgeting dryland farming pest and diseases control in high yielding varieties and soil moisture conservation techniques. These aspects acquired I to VI places in terms of prioritization for acquiring training by the agricultural supervisors. Most of the agricultural supervisors also required training in extension and communication techniques (this includes, selection, use and handling of extension teaching methods and audio-visual aids), fertilizers and their application in high yielding varieties, package of practices of high yielding varieties, evaluation techniques (this means how to assess the success, failure as well as strong and weak points of a programme implemented in the village). These aspects got almost the higher ranks which showed that these areas are important in which training for agricultural supervisors is needed.

Least important aspects as perceived by the agricultural supervisors for training needs were ecological farming, handling and maintenance of farm implements, value addition of agricultural products, care and maintenance of bovine/ovine and kitchen gardening. The findings with respect to training needs are in line with the findings reported by Ganeshan and Perumal (1980), Ram (1992); and almost similar results were also reported by Sharma (2000) and Meena (2001).

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings, it is concluded that the agricultural supervisors needed in-service training in order of priority in the areas like drip irrigation systems and water saving techniques in agriculture, sprinkler irrigation, preparation of farm production plan and budgeting, dryland farming, pests and diseases control in high yielding varieties, soil moisture conservation techniques, extension and communication techniques, fertilizer and their application in high yielding varieties, package of practices of HYVs, evaluation techniques, vegetables and fruits preservation for off-season, soil and seed treatment, crop rotation and intercultural operations and organic farming to enhance the qualitative agricultural production without degradation in soil environment. These were further followed by training needs of agricultural supervisors in the aspects of production techniques of improved high yielding varieties, post harvest technology and save grain, soil sampling and reclamation of problematic soils. Ecological farming, handling and maintenance of farm implements and value addition of agricultural products were less needed aspects as perceived by the agricultural supervisors.

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