

EFFECTIVENESS OF RADIO IN DISSEMINATION OF
AGRICULTURAL INFORMATION FOR IRRIGATED
FARMING IN SRI LANKA

By

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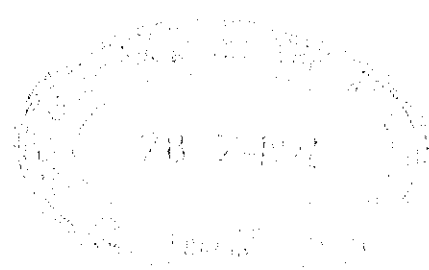
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A B S T R A C T

The purpose of this study was to determine the effectiveness of radio as a medium for disseminating agricultural information in an irrigation settlement project. Specific objectives were to determine the coverage of agricultural radio programmes and the factors influencing their effectiveness.

The survey technique was utilized to collect data from randomly chosen 240 farmers in four selected blocks of system "H" of Mahaweli development programme during mid 1988. The results indicate that majority of farmers owned a radio set and almost all of them were aware that agricultural radio programmes were broadcast over the radio. Of the agricultural radio programmes, those of "Rajarata" service were listened most by farmers in system "H". Although most of the farmers were regular listeners to agricultural radio programmes, they could not listen to those programmes during harvesting period. Farmers could recall the agricultural radio programmes mostly by the time of broadcasting. However, popular programmes could be recalled by names. Farmers were generally satisfied with the duration of these programmes and the time of broadcast. However, they preferred two to four good agricultural radio programmes per week.

Farmers were generally satisfied with the content of agricultural radio programmes because the latter disseminate

required information. However, farmers need more information on new farming technology. Use of highly technical words and interruption in broadcasting were mentioned as major factors which limit the understandability of messages. The extent to which the messages were adopted was greatly dependent upon riskiness and cost involved, suitability to the area and technical advancement of the messages.

Drama and interview were reported as the satisfactory modes to disseminate agricultural information in the study area. There was no significant relationship between age, education and income level of farmers, and number of agricultural radio programmes per week, programmes length, mode of Broadcasting and content of programmes. Recommendations were made to help enhance the effectiveness of agricultural radio programmes.

