

Original Research Article

Suggestions Given by Awardee Farmers for Improving the Agriculture in Marathwada Region of Maharashtra State, India

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ABSTRACT

The present investigation was carried out in eight districts of Marathwada region with specific objective to study the “Suggestions given by awardee farmers for improving the agriculture in Marathwada region of Maharashtra state”. In all 120 farmers awarded by state government constitute the study sample and interviewed during the study through ‘Ex-post facto’ research design. Majority of the awardee farmers were old age, educated upto Higher Secondary (intermediate) level, having 20 to 35 years farming experience, belong to big and irrigated land holding category, having agriculture as a major occupation, medium annual income, received 3 to 4 days training, all of them received state level awards, having medium information seeking behavior, high management orientation and medium productivity level of cultivated crops, having dairy and nursery as major subsidiary occupation and followed Soybean-Wheat-Vegetable-Fruits cropping pattern. Maximum number of the respondents suggested for ‘training about new technology should be provided’, ‘government should provide minimum support prices to all the crops’. Another important suggestions were ‘need of proper irrigation facilities’, ‘subsidised prices of fertilizers, pesticides etc’, ‘crop insurance scheme should provide for all crops’, ‘credit institutions should be made available to farmers’, and ‘proper marketing network should be established in rural areas’ for the improvement of the crop production.

Keywords

Awardee farmers, agriculture, Marathwada region

Introduction

Agriculture is the predominant occupation of two-third of working population for their livelihood and the major source of income for about three-fourths of India's populations who live in villages. Agriculture provides not only food but also raw materials to industries like textiles, sugar, vegetable oil, jute and tobacco etc. India is a vast country with varied climate, soils, and ecological conditions. There are many more opportunities for the farmers to utilize those natural conditions and schemes and policies announced by the government to improve the condition of Indian agriculture and their

status (Khandave and Suryawanshi, 2015). In order to encourage effective transfer of proven technology to the farming community in the jurisdiction of the Government and also to create a healthy competition among farmers/farm women in obtaining higher productivity in agriculture and allied fields different competitions are organized and awards are being given to the farmer. This is the recognition given for an individual's contribution in particular crop. This is no doubt, satisfies the need for recognition but besides these individuals aspire for recognition from the government

as such type of recognition brings them into limelight. In this context, the Government of Maharashtra has introduced the awards viz. 'Shetinishtha Award', 'Vasantrao Naik Krushibhushan Award', 'Jijamata Krushibhushan Award', 'Udyanpandit Award' and 'Shetimitra Award' etc. for motivate and encouraging the progressive farmers from different categories in the state. Taking into account all these factors the study entitled, "Suggestions given by awardee farmers for improving the agriculture in Marathwada region of Maharashtra state" was carried out.

Materials and Methods

The present investigation was conducted with specific objective to study the "Suggestions given by awardee farmers for improving the agriculture in Marathwada region of Maharashtra state".

For the study purpose, the list of all 120 awardee farmers belongs to eight districts of Marathwada region of Maharashtra state namely, Aurangabad, Jalna, Parbhani, Beed, Nanded, Latur, Osmanabad and Hingoli who received awards during year 2003 to 2015 was obtained from the office of Joint Director of Agriculture (JDA), Latur and JDA, Aurangabad. All of them were honored with the title of 'Shetinishtha Award', 'Vasantrao Naik Krushibhushan Award', 'Jijamata Krushibhushan Award', 'Udyanpandit Award' and 'Shetimitra Award' by the Government of Maharashtra. 'Ex-post facto' research design is worthy to apply when the independent variables have already acted upon. Hence, this design was used in the present study.

Profile of the awardee farmers

The Profile of the respondent awardee farmers presented and discussed hereunder.

It is revealed from the Table 1 that, majority (78.33%) of the respondents belonged to 'old' age category; while 15.83 per cent were in 'middle' category and 5.83 per cent respondents were in 'young' category.

It is noticed from Table that, maximum number (35.00%) of the respondents had 'higher secondary' education, followed by 'secondary' (23.33%), 'graduate' (19.00%), 'primary' (13.33%), 'post graduates' (9.33%) and there were no respondents found in 'pre-primary' and 'illiterate' category.

It is observed from Table that, nearly three-fourth (70.00%) of the respondents had 'medium' experience in farm cultivation, while remaining 18.33 per cent of the respondents had 'low' and 11.67 per cent of the respondents had 'high' experience in farm cultivation. The average experience of respondents was 29.8 years.

It is evident from Table that, 40.00 per cent belonged to 'large' category, 30.83 per cent of the awardee farmers belonged to 'medium' category of the land holding, and 26.67 per cent belonged to 'semi-medium' category, while 2.50 per cent respondents belonged to 'small' category and there were no respondents found in 'marginal' category. The average land holding of the respondents was 15.20 ha.

The data presented in Table shows that majority (70.00%) of the respondents had 'medium' area under irrigation, whereas, 18.33 per cent and 11.67 per cent respondents possessed 'small' and 'large' area under irrigation, respectively. The average area under irrigation of the respondents was 13.40 ha.

It is apparent from Table that, 43.33% of respondents were engaged in cultivation.

Table.1 Distribution of the respondents according to their Characteristics (N=120)

| Sr. No. | Characteristics | Respondents | |
|------------------------------|--|-------------|------------|
| | | Number | Percentage |
| Age | | | |
| 1 | Young (up to 30) | 7 | 5.83 |
| 2 | Middle (31 to 45) | 19 | 15.83 |
| 3 | Old (46 and above) | 94 | 78.33 |
| Education | | | |
| 1 | Illiterate (No education) | 0 | 00.00 |
| 2 | Pre-primary (up to 4 th) | 0 | 00.00 |
| 3 | Primary (5 th to 7 th) | 16 | 13.33 |
| 4 | Secondary (8 th to 10 th) | 28 | 23.33 |
| 5 | Higher Secondary (11 th to 12 th) | 42 | 35.00 |
| 6 | Graduate | 23 | 19.00 |
| 7 | Post graduates | 11 | 9.33 |
| Farming experience | | | |
| 1 | Low (up to 19) | 22 | 18.33 |
| 2 | Medium (20 to 35) | 84 | 70.00 |
| 3 | High (36 and above) | 14 | 11.67 |
| Land Holding | | | |
| 1 | Marginal (up to 1.00) | 0 | 00.00 |
| 2 | Small (1.01 to 2.00) | 03 | 2.50 |
| 3 | Semi-medium (2.01 to 4.00) | 32 | 26.67 |
| 4 | Medium (4.01 to 10.00) | 37 | 30.83 |
| 5 | Big (above 10.00) | 48 | 40.00 |
| Area under irrigation | | | |
| 1 | Small (up to 2 ha) | 22 | 18.33 |
| 2 | Medium (3 to 10 ha) | 84 | 70.00 |
| 3 | Large (11 ha and above) | 14 | 11.67 |
| Occupation | | | |
| 1 | Agricultural labour | 3 | 2.50 |
| 2 | Caste occupation | 8 | 6.67 |
| 3 | Business | 33 | 27.50 |
| 4 | Cultivation | 52 | 43.33 |
| 5 | Service | 24 | 20.00 |
| Annual Income | | | |
| 1 | Low (Up to 8,04,404 /-) | 43 | 35.83 |
| 2 | Medium (8,04,405 /- to 22,14,029 /-) | 59 | 49.17 |
| 3 | High (22,14,030 /- and above) | 18 | 15.00 |
| Training received | | | |
| 1 | Short Duration (1 to 2 days) | 28 | 23.33 |
| 2 | Medium Duration (3 to 4 days) | 56 | 46.66 |
| 3 | Long Duration (5 days and Above) | 36 | 30.00 |
| Award received | | | |

| | | | |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-----|--------|
| 1 | National level | 09 | 7.50 |
| 2 | State level | 120 | 100.00 |
| 3 | District level (Zilla Parishad) | 39 | 32.50 |
| 4 | Tahsil level (Panchayat Samiti) | 72 | 60.00 |
| 5 | Other (Private organization, NGO's) | 78 | 65.00 |
| Information seeking behaviour | | | |
| 1 | Low (up to 76) | 14 | 11.67 |
| 2 | Medium (77 to 97) | 82 | 68.33 |
| 3 | High (98 and above) | 24 | 20.00 |
| Management Orientation | | | |
| 1 | Low (up to 31) | 12 | 10.00 |
| 2 | Medium (32 to 35) | 32 | 26.67 |
| 3 | High (36 and above) | 76 | 63.33 |
| Productivity level | | | |
| 1 | Low (up to 1.67) | 07 | 5.83 |
| 2 | Medium (1.68 to 3.02) | 101 | 84.16 |
| 3 | High (3.03 and above) | 12 | 10.00 |
| Subsidiary enterprises | | | |
| 1 | Dairy (milk production) | 39 | 32.49 |
| 2 | Nursery | 38 | 31.67 |
| 3 | Fruits and vegetables processing | 15 | 12.49 |
| 4 | Agro tourism | 12 | 10.00 |
| 5 | Vermicompost | 11 | 9.37 |
| 6 | Fish farming | 5 | 4.16 |

Table.2 Suggestions offered by the awardee farmers (N=120)

| Sr. No. | Suggestions | Respondents | |
|---------|--|-------------|------------|
| | | Frequency | Percentage |
| 1 | Training about new technology should be provided | 112 | 93.33 |
| 2 | Government should provide minimum support Prices to all the crops. | 104 | 86.67 |
| 3 | Need of proper irrigation facilities | 94 | 78.33 |
| 4 | Subsidised prices of fertilizers, pesticides etc. | 82 | 68.33 |
| 5 | Crop insurance scheme should provide for all crops | 74 | 61.67 |
| 6 | Proper marketing network should be established in rural areas | 62 | 51.67 |
| 7 | Credit facilities should be made available to farmers | 56 | 46.67 |

While 27.50 per cent respondents were business. The percentage of respondents engaged in service, caste occupation, and agricultural labour were 20.00 per cent, 6.67 per cent and 2.50 per cent respectively. It is noticed from Table that nearly half (49.17%)

of the respondents belonged to 'medium' income category, whereas 35.83 per cent and 15.00 per cent farmers were found in 'low' and 'high' income category. The average annual income of the respondents was Rs. 14,09,216/-.

It is revealed from Table that, (46.66%) of the awardee farmers received 'medium duration' (3 to 4 days) and 'short duration' (1 to 2 days) trainings (23.33%) of the respondents received 'long duration' (more than 5 days) training (30.00%). The average training received score was '3' and multiple responses obtained.

It was noticed from Table that, all the respondents received 'State level awards', whereas two third (65.00 per cent) of them received 'Other awards' from private organization, NGO's etc., followed by 'Tahsil level awards' (60.00%), 'District level awards' (32.50%), and 'National level awards' (7.50%) and multiple responses obtained.

It was seen from Table that, more than two-third (68.33%) of the respondents had 'medium' level of information seeking behaviour while, 20.00 per cent had 'high' and 11.67 per cent had 'low' level of information seeking behaviour. The average score of information seeking behaviour of the respondents was 88.

The data presented in Table depict that, more than half (63.33%) of the awardee farmers belonged to 'high' management orientation category followed by 'medium' (26.67%) and 'low' (10.00%). The management orientation of awardee farmers average score was 33.

It is observed from Table that, majority (84.16%) of the awardee farmers were belonged to 'medium' productivity level category, followed by 'high' (10.00%) and 'low' (5.83%). The average score of productivity level of the respondents was 2.35.

The results presented in the Table revealed that, most of the awardee farmers are

practicing dairy (32.49%), nursery (31.67%) and fruits and vegetables processing (12.49%) as subsidiary enterprises. Whereas, some of the awardee farmers are also engaged in agro- tourism (10.00%), vermicompost (9.37%), fish farming (4.16%). These subsidiary enterprises created employment opportunities to the rural people and also giving considerable income.

Suggestions of the awardee farmers for improving the agriculture in Marathwada region

Suggestions were invited from the respondents to improve their production of farm produce and improving agriculture. The suggestions offered by awardee farmers presented in Table 2.

It is observed from Table 2 that, the majority (93.33%) of the respondents suggested for 'training about new technology should be provided', whereas, 86.67 per cent of them suggested 'government should provide minimum support prices to all the crops'. Another important suggestions were 'need of proper irrigation facilities' (78.33%), 'subsidised prices of fertilizers, pesticides etc' (68.33%), 'crop insurance scheme should cover all the risk involved in cultivation' (61.67%), 'proper marketing network should be established in rural areas' (51.67%), and 'credit institutions should be made available to farmers' (46.67%) for the improvement of the crop production.

Above findings are in line with the findings of Shilpashree (2011), Sharnagat (2008), Patil (2011).

Implications

Agricultural extension agency should focus on organization of 3 to 4 days occasion

training for the farmers those who are purely engaged in agricultural as a major occupation. Government agency also takes care for procurement of agricultural produce with minimum support prize.

Most of the respondents practicing dairy and nursery as subsidiary enterprises which helps them to have sustainable income and enabled them to receive award. These activities to be popularized by agricultural Extension personnel.

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