

## A study on knowledge of farmers towards sericulture

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Sericulture is a cottage industry par excellence, with its agricultural base, industrial super structure and labour intensive nature. It is remarkable for its low investment, quick and high return, which makes it an ideal enterprise that fits well into the social-economic fabric of the country. India has unique distinction of being the only country in the world bestowed by nature with all the four varieties of silk namely, mulberry, *tasar*, *eri* and *munga*. Mulberry, the best known of the silk, is the product of *Bombyx mori*, a silkworm found in different voltinisms, but monophagous consuming only the leaves of mulberry (*Morus alba*).

Till recently, sericulture was considered as a subsidiary occupation. But now-a-days with introduction of new technologies in sericulture has led to make the industry a highly remunerative cash crop, as reflected in increasing acreage being brought under mulberry cultivation and the step-up in the raw silk output being witnessed every year. Keeping the facts in mind a research study has been undertaken in tribal area of Udaipur district of Rajasthan.

The present research study has been conducted in Udaipur district of Rajasthan State during 2007-08. Two Tehsils namely; Mavli and Jhadol of Udaipur district were selected purposively because of having maximum number of sericulture adopters in the district. The list of villages along with the name of adopters including year of adoption of sericulture of selected Tehsils was obtained from the voluntary institute 'Rajasthan Vidyapeeth' working specially on sericulture in these two Tehsils. From the list of sericulture adopters of the selected village, 70 adopters (35 from each Tehsil) who were engaged in sericulture since last 2-3 years, were selected for the present investigation as the respondents.

The knowledge test developed by Kothari (1984)

was used to measure the knowledge of adopter farmers about sericulture. The knowledge test consisted of 45 questions about different aspects of sericulture. Each correct answer was marked by 1 and wrong answer by 0 score. The knowledge index for each respondent was calculated by using the following formula:

$$K1 = \frac{K}{P} \times 100$$

where, K1= Knowledge index

K= Knowledge score obtained by respondents

P= Possible maximum score

The knowledge of a farmer was assessed on the basis of the total score a farmer could obtain. The maximum and minimum score which a farmer could obtain on knowledge test was 45 and zero, respectively. The knowledge score was grouped into three categories based on the mean (33.83) and standard deviation (5.89). Farmers securing 1 to 27 knowledge score on the test were kept under "low knowledge group" (less than mean minus standard deviation), farmers securing 28 to 39 knowledge score were kept under "medium knowledge group", whereas, the farmers securing 40 and above knowledge score were kept under "high knowledge score" about the sericulture.

The data presented in Table 1 reveal that majority of the respondents (55.71%) possessed medium knowledge about sericulture and 22.86 per cent of the respondents possessed higher knowledge followed by

**Table 1 : Distribution of adopters according to their knowledge score**

Sr. No.	Categories	Score range	Frequency	Percentage
1.	High	39.72 and above	16	22.86
2.	Medium	27.95 to 30.71	39	55.71
3.	Low	27.97 and below	15	21.43
	Total	--	70	100.00

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