

Socio-personal characteristics of farmers and adoption of improved farm practices in saffron

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ABSTRACT

The study was conducted in block Pampore district Pulwama, Kashmir during 2006-07, to assess the knowledge and adoption of improved practices by saffron growers (n =120). The results revealed that majority of saffron growers (55.83%) were in age group of 31 – 50 years, 40 % had education level upto High school and 51.66 % had land holding size of 0.75 – 1.5 hectares. The study further revealed that 44.16 % respondents had medium extension contacts and 40.83 % had medium scientific orientation. Majority of saffron growers (56.66%) had medium knowledge and 28.33 % had low knowledge status regarding improved saffron technology. Majority of the respondents (95.83%) had not adopted the irrigation pattern, 87.50 per cent and 75 % of them had not maintained the corm to corm and row to row distance, respectively. 85 % saffron growers had not adopted corm treatment before planting, but 53.33 % of them had adopted plant protection measures after planting of corms in their fields. Majority of respondents (73.33%) had applied lesser doses of manures/fertilizers and 60.83 % had not adopted intercultural operations/weeding in their respective fields.

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INTRODUCTION

Nature has bestowed Kashmir some rare crops which are scarcely found in rest of the world and saffron is one among them that is fast vanishing from the fields of Kashmir with technical inefficiency as well as non adoption of recommended technologies being responsible for its decline. From record, 170 quintals production in 1997 to only 48 quintals in 2006, the production of world's costliest spice, the saffron, has drastically gone down in last decade. Not only the production, per hectare yield of saffron also decreased from 4–5 kilograms to below 2 kilograms per hectare (Anonymous, 2007). The decline was also experienced even in traditional saffron growing areas of the valley like Pampore. Like elsewhere, efforts are on to improve saffron production through the adoption of recommended technologies in terms of agronomic practices among the saffron growers from time to time. Considering all these facts in view, it was felt essential to find out the knowledge of saffron growers regarding improved technology of saffron and important agronomic practices which govern the differences in production and saffron cultivation. Hence, the present study was undertaken with the specific objectives to identify the socio-personal characteristics of saffron growers, to ascertain the knowledge

of respondents regarding improved saffron technology and to study the adoption of technology by saffron growers for cultivation of saffron.

METHODOLOGY

The study was conducted in district Pulwama of Jammu and Kashmir state. From selected district one block (Pampore) having maximum area about 3 thousand hectares under saffron was selected. From the selected block Pampore six villages viz., Chadhara, Lethpora, Konibal, Dussu, Kruchoo and Ladhu were selected randomly. From each selected villages, 20 saffron growers were randomly selected, thus making a sample of 120 respondents. The data were collected with the help of pre- tested structured schedule by personally interviewing the respondents. Level of knowledge was measured with the help of knowledge test, based on the procedure followed by Jha and Singh (1997). Adoption was measured as the full use of improved cultivation practices of saffron as recommended by Sher-e-Kashmir University Agricultural Sciences and Technology (K).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Socio-personal characteristics of saffron growers:

The perusal of data in Table 1 indicates

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