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Scenario Analysis of Cardamom Growers in Cardamom Hill Reserves of Kerala

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ABSTRACT

The study was conducted to analyse various characteristics of cardamom growers in Idukki district of Kerala. Sixty farmers engaged in cardamom cultivation were selected based on landholding of not less than one acre. Fifteen independent variables were selected based on judges' relevancy rating. Majority of the cardamom growers belonged to low to medium level of adoption of good agricultural practices. Education status and credit orientation were found to be significantly and positively related to adoption of good agricultural practices.

Keywords: *Adoption; Cardamom growers; Kerala.*

Small cardamom (*Elettaria cardamomum*) is traditionally grown in the Indian Cardamom Hill Reserves (ICHR) area of Kerala. Cardamom was cultivated in an area of 40,867 ha in 1997 and it declined to 39,080 ha by the year 2017. Productivity of cardamom in cardamom hills of Kerala has been spectacular for the last 20 years (1997-2016) period with 4 fold increase from 130 kg to 400 kg ha-1 (Spices Board of India, 2017). For attaining sustainable yield, timely execution of the recommended package is essential. But majority of the farmers are not adopting the recommended package of practices for cardamom. With this background, the study was undertaken with the following objectives.

1. To study the adoption of good agricultural practices by the cardamom growers.

2. To study the relationship of profile characteristics of growers with adoption.

METHODOLOGY

From the eight block *panchayats* of Idukki district in Kerala State, three blocks coming under the Cardamom Hill Reserves (CHR) area with maximum productivity were selected. The selected blocks were Nedumkandam, Kattappana and Adimali. From Nedumkandam, Udumbanchola and Pampadumpara; from Kattappana, Kanchiyar and Vandanmedu; and from Adimali, Bisonvalley and Konnathady were selected. These six *panchayats* coming under the CHR area were purposively selected for the study.

From each *panchayat* ten cardamom growers were selected based on land holding

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size of not less than one acre. Thus a total of 60 respondents were selected. To study the rate of adoption of good agricultural practices in cardamom, package of practices recommendation of KAU (2016) was considered. The extent of adoption was calculated by percentage analysis.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Nearly half (48.33 %) of the respondents had low level of adoption of good agricultural practices in cardamom cultivation followed by medium (38.33 %) and high (11.67 %) level of adoption.

Most of the farmers were having a farming experience of more than twenty years so they mostly prefer their own local practices than adopting good agricultural practices. Relationship between Profile Characteristics and Adoption

The relationship between the profile characteristics of the cardamom gowers and adoption of good agricultural practices was done and presented in Table 1.

Table 1.
Relationship between the Profile Characteristics of the Respondents and adoption of Good Agricultural Practices

Sl. No.	Independent variables	Correlation coefficient
1.	Age	-0.355**
2.	Educational status	0.424**
3.	Family size	-0.158
4.	Occupation	-0.211
5.	Farming experience	-0.413**
6.	Annual income	-0.171
7.	Extension agency contact	-0.066
8.	Mass media utilization/ ICT	-0.212
9.	Economic motivation	-0.095
10.	Risk orientation	-0.095
11.	Scientific orientation	-0.219
12.	Innovation proneness	-0.057
13.	Decision making ability	-0.229
14.	Credit orientation	0.282*
15.	Market orientation	0.179

** Significant at 5 per cent level* *** Significant at 1 per cent level*

Adoption of good agricultural practices was positively correlated with educational status at 1 per cent level. Through level of education, knowledge of the farmer respondents were enhanced, which resulted in the adoption of good agricultural practices. So we can say that direct and indirect effect of education might have contributed to the positive and significant relation with adoption.

Farming experience was found to be negatively and significantly correlated with adoption of good agricultural practices. Majority of the farmers belonged to middle age category and the growers were having more than 20 years of experience in cardamom cultivation. It is assumed that experienced farmers have a higher probability of using their own local practices than compared to those with little experience in farming was found to be medium. Adoption of good agricultural practices could be improved by providing the farmers proper training which would help them in improving the productivity.

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