EXTENSION CONTACT AND ITS RELATIONSHIP WITH THE LEVEL OF KNOWLEDGE OF BANANA GROWERS ABOUT INTEGRATED PEST MANAGEMENT

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ABSTRACT

Extension contact refers to the frequencies of contact made by the farmers with different extension agencies or extension workers, either local or outside the village. It also plays an important role in influencing the level of knowledge of banana growers about integrated pest management (IPM) technologies in banana cultivation. Keeping this in view, an attempt has been made to study extension contact and its relationship with the level of knowledge of banana growers about IPM. The result of study revealed that a great majority (88.00 per cent) of the banana growers had medium to high and very high level of extension contact. It was also found that extension contact of banana growers had positive and highly significant correlation ($r = 0.328^{**}$) with their level of knowledge about IPM.

Keywords: Extension contact, knowledge, Integrated Pest Management (IPM), banana growers

INTRODUCTION

Banana becomes one among the most popular fruits due to its low price and high nutritive value. Insect pests of banana can cause significant damage to fruits. Integrated pest management is a system approach to pest control which combines biological, cultural and other novel approaches with the judicious use of pesticides. The prime intent of IPM is to maintain pest levels below economically damaging levels while minimizing detrimental effects of pest control on human health and environmental resources.

Extension contact refers to the frequencies of contact made by the farmers with different extension agencies or extension workers, either local or outside the village. With the selfless support and assistance from various extension contacts, banana growers might have come to know many new things which may influence in shaping their knowledge about integrated pest management technologies in banana cultivation. Keeping the above facts in view, an attempt has been made to study extension contact and its relationship with the level of knowledge of banana growers about IPM.

OBJECTIVES

(1) To study the extension contact of banana growers

(2) To ascertain the relationship between the extension contact of banana growers and their level of knowledge about integrated pest management practices

METHODOLOGY

The present study was undertaken in Anand district of Gujarat state. The level of knowledge of banana growers about IPM was studied with the help of the developed test. Five villages having fairly good number of banana growers adopting IPM practices were selected from each of the Anand and Petitad taluka, purposively. 10 banana growers adopting IPM practices were randomly selected from each village. Thus, total sample size was 100 banana growers adopting IPM.

Extension contact

Extension contact was operationally defined as the frequency with which a farmer comes in contact with extension agent’s viz. village level workers, taluka level extension workers, district level extension workers, scientists of agricultural university, agro service centre, fertilizer depot and progressive farmers to get the information about agricultural technology for adopting IPM in banana cultivation.

Two score for frequently, one score for occasional and zero score for never in contact were assigned for extension contact. Maximum score one could obtain was 16 and minimum could be 0. The scoring technique was followed as under.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sr. No.</th>
<th>Extension contact</th>
<th>Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Frequently</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Occasionally</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Never</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Pragmatic Perspectives of Agricultural Development Programmes in Present Scenario

On the basis of arbitrary method, the respondents were grouped into the following five categories:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sr. No.</th>
<th>Extension contact</th>
<th>Score range</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Very Low</td>
<td>Up to 3.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>3.21 to 6.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>6.41 to 9.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>9.61 to 12.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Very high</td>
<td>12.81 to 16.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Karl person coefficient of correlation (r) was calculated to find out the relationship between extension contact and the level of knowledge of banana growers about integrated pest management.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Extension contact

Extension contact refers to the frequencies of contact made by the farmers with different extension agencies or extension workers, either local or outside the village. With the selfless support and assistance from various extension contacts, banana growers might have come to know many new things which may influence in shaping their knowledge about integrated pest management technologies in banana cultivation. According to this in view, this variable was studied and the data in this regards are presented in Table 1 and graphically represented in Figure 1.

Table 1: Distribution of the banana growers according to their level of extension contact  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sr. No.</th>
<th>Extension contact</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Per cent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Very low (Up to 3.20)</td>
<td>01</td>
<td>01.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Low (3.21 to 6.40)</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>11.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Medium (6.41 to 9.60)</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>32.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>High (9.61 to 12.80)</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>48.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Very high (12.81 to 16.00)</td>
<td>08</td>
<td>08.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A glance at Table 1 indicates that slightly less than half (48.00 per cent) of the banana growers had high level of extension contact, followed by 32.00 per cent, 11.00 per cent and 08.00 per cent of them had medium, low and very high of extension contact, respectively. Only 01.00 per cent of the banana growers had very low level of extension contact.

Thus, it can be concluded that a great majority (88.00 per cent) of the banana growers had medium to high and very high level of extension contact.

The probable reason might be the higher level of education of most of the banana growers which might have enabled them to comprehend the relevance of extension contact which resulted in seeking more information through various extension contacts. As the survey area is nearer to the Anand Agricultural University, most of the farmers have contact with the scientists of the university to gain information about new farming technologies and to clarify the doubts pertaining to the current farming practices. Through discussions with farmers, it was also understood that farmers were actively involved in frequently contacting with progressive farmers, village level workers, persons in fertilizer depo, agrochemical companies, agro service centers, staffs of ATMA project and SMS of KVK which helped them for easy accessing and updating of useful and needy agricultural information as well as farming technologies.

This finding partially supported by the findings of Patel et al. (2017c) and Sondarva (2017).

Figure 1: Distribution of banana growers according to their level of extension contact

Extension contact and Knowledge

Extension contact of banana growers had positive and highly significant correlation (r = 0.328**) with their level of knowledge about IPM. Thus, the null hypothesis that “there is no relationship between extension contact of the banana growers and their level of knowledge about IPM” was rejected.

Thus, it can be concluded that extension contact played a significant role in increasing the knowledge of banana growers about IPM.
The probable reason might be due to the frequent contacts and interaction of banana growers with scientists of AAU, progressive farmers, village level workers, persons in fertilizer depo, agrochemical companies, agro service centers, staffs of ATMA project and SMS of KVK which might have helped them to acquire more and more information, exchange ideas and thoughts regarding IPM. These things would have helped them to clear their doubts related to integrated pest management practices which might have further resulted in harnessing better understanding and knowledge about IPM.

This finding has been supported by the findings of Mulewa (2007), Manjunath (2010), Patel et al. (2015), Patel et al. (2017) and Gamit (2018).

CONCLUSION

From the above study, it is revealed that a great majority (88.00 per cent) of the banana growers had medium to high and very high level of extension contact. It was also found that there was positive and highly significant correlation ($r=0.328^{**}$) between extension contact of banana growers and their level of knowledge about IPM.

REFERENCES


