

**PESTICIDE USAGE PATTERN AND ASSOCIATED HEALTH
IMPACTS AMONG VEGETABLE FARMERS IN BADULLA
DISTRICT**



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SRI LANKA

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ABSTRACT

Pesticides have become inevitable ingredients in vegetable cultivation with green revolution technologies. There is a higher risk in pesticide usage due to hazardous nature of them and indiscriminate use of pesticides causes health hazards to humans and long lasting bad effects to the environment. But nowadays only very less consideration was given to the health impact of farmers in pesticides handling. Present study was conducted to assess the pesticides usage pattern and associated health impacts among vegetable farmers in Badulla district. 100 vegetable farmers were selected by using proportionate sampling method.

Descriptive statistics provide frequency distribution and percentage of the response in each variable and standard deviation were analyzed. Result revealed that mean family size of farmers was 4.21 per family and the average annual income from vegetable cultivation was Rs.182700. Almost all the farmers depended on the chemical pesticide for the management of weeds, pest and diseases. Cabriotop (Pyraclostrobin 5%+ Metiram 55% WG) was considered as one of the extremely hazardous fungicide used by 68.18% of farmers and among them 67.06% used this fungicide above the recommended dosage. 43% of farmers used a moderately hazardous weedicide namely Sencor (Metribuzin 70% w/w) above the recommended dosage.

About 75% of respondents were affected by any type of acute disease due to pesticide application. Only 16% of farmers got treatment from hospital. Average health cost for treatment was Rs.542.13 per treatment among the farmers in Badulla district.

An independent-samples t-test was done to compare occurrence of acute diseases among the respondents with selected independent variables. The result showed that usage of mask ($P < 0.05$) was significantly affect on occurrence of Acute disease. But, usage of gloves was not significantly effect on the occurrence of acute disease.

Most of the negative issues at the user's level were related to lack of awareness, negative attitudes and behaviors of farmers and weaknesses in the extension system. Thus, there is a need for strong awareness campaign through all possible means including print and electronic media to educate farmers and change their attitudes and to empower the farmer organizations on pesticide related issues at the farmers' level.

Keywords: Acute disease, Health cost, .Health impacts, Pesticides.

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