FARMERS PREFERENCES FOR DIFFERENT CROPS IN IVLP VILLAGES OF BUNDELKHAND

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Farmers have been growing several crops since centuries & change/shifts the crops as per changing their needs & priorities and try to sustain their farms within limited resources available with them. However at large the farmers depend upon nature especially in rainfed area like Bundelkhad & several factors affects the production & their livelihood. Nature has created a variety of species to suit different agro climatic conditions and to withstand adverse situations but, in the situations like Bundelkhand where mono cropping is still in practice in many pockets, several factors affects the production potential in the area. Among number of factors, soil type, megre resources of irrigation, undulating topography, erratic rainfall pattern, low water holding capacity, imbalance use of fertilizers, use of traditional varieties, poor Institution village linkages, insufficient technical know how, lack of proper awareness, weed problem, free range grazing and no control measures were few of them. Farmers prefer & grow the crops as per their needs & priorities keeping the prevailing situations at their farms & local market in view. Approximately one decade back the Kharif was dominated by sorghum + Pigeon pea & now the total scenario has been changed & replaced by Groundnut, like wise other traditional crops replaced by new crops/ varieties.

Until recently, most agricultural research in developing countries was conducted in the laboratories, on stations & experimental farms. Scientist controlled the research conditions; choose what to study, and how to study it but poor farmers who cultivate rain fed land, do not have the luxury of such control. They face diverse, complex agro-ecological & socio - economic conditions & high level of risk. If research is to generate technologies that such farmers can adopt, then it should be designed & implemented based on a farming systems perspective. Recognizing that, the farmers' conditions cannot easily be reproduced on station, scientist-starting doing adaptive research in farmers fields using log frames to monitor & review Farmers Participating Research.

METHODOLOGY

Participatory research methodology was adopted. A cluster of villages namely Algi, Sanora, and their hamlets and Garera and Dhobia in Datia district of M.P. were selected and it was increasingly realized that focal point for research objectives with local agricultural and resources management practices through participatory approach found necessary for development of appropriate farmers oriented technologies. This has been particularly important if the farmers belong to risk prone & low-income categories. It was only through active participation of such farmers that their needs & aspirations in development technologies could be adequately fulfilled.

Eventually, the investments in the agricultural research likely to fall short of expectation, in terms of output, if the results have poor take off and impact. Technologies

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developed at the research stations were put at farmers' fields under technology transfer program without understanding their real life situations & farmers happen to be passive participants in such top bottom approach.

Keeping these aspects in view the project was started by giving desired focus to the resources specific & location specific needs of the farmers. The farmers treated as active partners in development & TOT for both decision-making & implementation right from the beginning of the program and use research information in such way that could fit well in their situations. The cluster of villages is situated at the distance between 35-40 kms from the Institute head quarters. In the beginning the sufficient time was allowed for village entry and building up rapport with local community. This involved meeting & discussion with a wide cross section of the community participation in village event & conduction of PRA. The PRA techniques such as group & individual interview, mapping of local resources, matrix ranking, transect analysis were used. The triangulation among various types of farmers & key informants with each other was also facilitated by the team of scientists & recorded the data.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1. clearly indicated the preferences of farmers for different crops. The Groundnut preferred by the farmers & put up at 1st rank followed by Soybean, Urd/ Moong and Til in Kharif. Table also reveals that better yield potential, more resistant to insect pest & diseases, less weed menace, ample domestic use and sufficient profitability are the prominent characteristics, which decide the preferences of the farmers.

While Putting insight on table 2. regarding preferences of Rabi crops, it has clearly spelt out that wheat is occupying the 1st rank

followed by gram, mustered and peas. The similar trend with regards to various crop characters was also observed in Rabi crops and found the same decisive characters.

Table 1. Crop preferences by the farmers based on different characters in Kharif in various 1 VLP villages.

Characters	G.nut	Soybean	Urad/Moong	Til
Yield	***	****	**	*
Resistant against insect/pest and diseases	***	***	***	*
Weeds	***	**	***	**
Domestic use	***	*	***	***
Profitability	***	***	*	**
Preferences	I	II	III	IV

Table 2. Crop preferences by the farmers based on different characters in Rabi in various IVLP villages

Characters	Wheat	Gram	Mustard	Pea
Yield	****	***	*	**
Resistant against insects/Pest diseases	****	**	**	**
Weeds	***	***	**	**
Domestic use	****	***	**	*
Profitability	****	***	*	**
Preferences	I	II	IV	III

As regards to Table 2. is concerned regarding crop preferences in Rabi by the farmers, it is quite obvious that wheat is given 1st preference by the farmers followed by Gram, Mustard and peas. The crop characters like yield potential, resistant to insect pest & diseases; domestic use, profitability and level of weed menace played a vital role in deciding the crop preference. Almost similar trend has been noticed in Rabi also.

Although the farmers in Kharif & Rabi also grew several other subsidiary crops but they did not figure in terms of several aspects, even acreage & changes have been so frequent as per immediate needs or grown at very small scale.

CONCLUSION

The study concluded that during kharif, Groundnut followed by Soybean, Urd/ Moong and Til was preferred by the farmers and different crops. wheat followed by Gram, peas and mustard in Rabi based on various crop characteristics as Ist, IInd, IIIrd & IVth rank respectively. The situations prevailing in this tract of Bundelkhand also affects the production potential of the

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