

RESPONSE OF IMPROVED RICE VARIETIES OF DIFFERENT AGE GROUPS (LONG, MEDIUM, SHORT) TO FERTILIZERS IN SOUTH WEST SECTOR DRAINAGE AND RECLAMATION SCHEMES—1974 - 1975

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The response of improved rice varieties to the Department of Agriculture recommendation, which includes NPK 5 : 15 : 15 pelletised Fertilizer was evaluated in the low lying poorly drained flood prone areas of the Bolgoda, Bentota Left Bank, Bentota Right Bank and Kiralakelle Schemes.

Considering the possibility that pelletised Fertilizer may be unavailable, the effect of using NPK Straight Fertilizers (ie. urea, concentrated super phosphate and muriate of potash) was also tested, at the same nutrient levels, for the respective age groups.

In all schemes, the varieties tested gave a highly significant yield response to the application of fertilizer at half the recommendation, full recommendation and even at a higher level, when compared with the "No Fertilizer Control." The response to half Departmental Recommendation, was comparatively large in all instances. The investigations revealed beneficial effects of applying fertilizers, along with good management, where traditionally farmers use low levels of fertilizer.

The performance of straight fertilizer was as good or even better than that of the NPK 5 : 15 : 15 pellets. However, in these areas (Histosols) pelletised Fertilizer has definite practical advantages. Restricting the use of pelletised fertilizer to the histosols of Colombo, Kalutara, Galle, Matara and Ratnapura districts, could result in considerable savings in the cost of fertilizer.