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THE PERFORMANCE OF IMPROVED RICE VARIETIES OF LONG, MEDIUM, AND SHORT AGED GROUPS IN CULTIVATORS' FIELDS OF BOLGODA, BENTOTA LEFT BANK, AND KIRALAKELLE DRAINAGE AND RECLAMATION SCHEMES—YALA 1974, MAHA 74/75 AND YALA 1975.

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The Bolgoda, Bentota Left Bank and Kiralakelle Drainage and Reclamation Schemes situated in the Histosols of the Low country Wet Zone districts of Kalutara, Galle and Matara respectively, are part of the South West Sector Drainage and Reclamation Project. These schemes are designed to increase rice production by effecting improvements to the rice growing environment.

Improved varieties, of 5-6½ months (photoperiod sensitive), 4-4½ months, and 3 & 3½ months duration, were evaluated for yield and adaptability, along with indigenous varieties, using recommended fertilizer and management practices.

In the long Aged Group Bg 3-5, an improved photoperiod sensitive variety, was well adapted to the *Maha* season. In the Medium Aged Group the best yielder was Bg 11-11 followed by H_4 and Bg 90-2, BW 78 too was a promising variety. In the Short Aged Group Bg 34-8 (3 months), Bg 94-2 and Bg 94-1 (3½ months) were the outstanding varieties. It is noteworthy that Bg 94-2 gave more stable and higher yields than the preferred Bg 94-1. The improved varieties, of all age groups, were superior to the indigenous varieties.

The data revealed a considerable variation in acre yields of varieties between schemes. This indicates differences in production potential, owing to difference in climate, hydrology and flood patterns, and suggests the need for recommending varieties and inputs to suit the specific needs of individul schemes.