

## SOME ASPECTS OF ADOPTION OF INNOVATIONS ON RUBBER HOLDINGS IN SRI LANKA

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The adoption of improved practices and materials on individual rubber holdings are of great significance in increasing the production of natural rubber. These innovations which showed a varying degree of adoption by private rubber growers are investigated. Among those analysed are the use of two material inputs namely planting materials and artificial fertilizers and several other practices such as the tapping of rubber, bark consumption and renewal density of planting, growing of cover crops and the rate of girdling of rubber trees in a stand.

The clone PB 86 has shown to be the widely adopted type of planting material by most rubber growers and the spread of other improved clones among the rubber growers is poor. This has been so because of the lack of knowledge of the growers on the merits of these clones. Only a minority of rubber farmers use fertilizers and its application reduces as rubber becomes older.

Poor bark renewal associated with careless tapping was observed and this was more so on smaller rubber holdings. The tapping intensities were found to be higher than recommended mostly in rubber small holdings. The density of rubber trees in a plantation was found to be poor on smallholdings in the late years. Similarly the rate of girdling of rubber trees on a stand was poor under smaller units of management than on larger units.