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FARM POWER USE PATTERNS IN INTERCROPPING UNDER COCONUTS
A CASE STUDY : KURUNEGALA DISTRICT

Rohana Ulluwishewa
Dept. of Geography, Sri Jayewardenapura University

Intercroppers chosen from small, medium and large coconut holdings in 3 agrarian service divisions in the Kurunegala district were interviewed in order to identify farm power use patterns and farmers motives. Use patterns of the major farm power types- hand labour, 2 wheel tractors and 4 wheel tractors were found to have close relationship with holding sizes, crop types, family income, occupation and soil type. While large holders widely used 4-WT, 2-WT tractor were preferred by medium-size holders. Smallholders almost exclusively relied on hand labour. For lucrative export oriented crops, almost all cultivators used tractors regardless of the size of holdings whereas hand labour was the main source of power for most of the traditional food crops. Part-time cultivators occupied in non-farm white-collar jobs were found to have exclusively relied on tractors. On the other hand in hard-soil areas the principal source of power was tractors, while hand labour was widely used in soft-soil areas.

These observed characteristics of the farm power use patterns can largely be accounted for by labour savings, timeliness, convenience and scale economies.

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References

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