

Factors associated with the variability of chilli yields in the Mahaweli System 'H'

A survey was conducted at Nelliagama, Malbeligala, Meegassegama, Kalagama and Eliyadivulwewa of the Mahaweli system 'H' area to find out factors related to very high chilli yields reported during Yala 1996 season.

A sample of 28 farmers who had obtained high yields were used for this survey. Of the sample farmers, 18, 33, 28 and 21% have obtained 2-3, 3-4, 4-5 and 5 t ha⁻¹ of dry chilli yield respectively. Factors contributing to higher yields, included, use of quality seeds of recommended varieties (78%), adoption of higher plant density (86%), application of heavy dose of basal fertilizer (84%), top dressing fertilizers (86%) pre planting application of basal fertilizers (86%), earthing up (79%), and better control of pest and diseases.

From these results it can be concluded that some farmers of Mahaweli system 'H' have obtained very high yield of dry chilli (3-5 t ha⁻¹) and it could be due to the individual or combined effect of these factors. However, most of these practices differ from the recommendations given by Department of Agriculture and this need to be investigated further.