

Communal attitude towards waste management practices: A case study in Faculty of Agriculture, University of Ruhuna.

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The reduction, reuse and recycling (3R) of institutional waste have been identified as the key components of waste management strategies throughout world. This paper explores the attitudes of a community of tertiary education institute. All possible parties such as academic staff, non academic staff, students and cleaning service personals were interviewed. Questionnaire survey and informal discussions were carried out to gather information regarding their attitude toward and the present status of the waste management practices of the faculty of Agriculture, University of Ruhuna. Majority of the faculty community agreed that there should be a balance between development and environmental pollution. Ninety six percent of respondents expressed that environmental pollution as a serious threat. Even after introduction of 20 microns polythene policy by the government, 31 % of the community used lunch sheets daily, and 29 % used in five days a week. If recyclables are available 77 % of the faculty community was ready to pay extra money for them and 68 % of them liked to pay up to 5 Rupees per sheet. Most of the faculty members (66 %) were unaware of the fate of waste produced by them in the faculty. Majority (89 %) of them were ready to cooperate or participate in future waste management plans of the faculty, indicating the potentials to implement a community based sustainable waste management system. (CBSWMS) Many believed that the current waste management system is not an effective enough. Strong awareness program is needed to develop and strengthen CBSWMS. Eighty one percent of respondents identified that the higher education lead by the community is most important strengthen for implementation of CBSWMS. It was concluded that CBSWMS could be successfully incorporated in to the community of a Tertiary education system.

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