

**EVALUATION OF THE 1958-59 RABI CROPS CAMPAIGN
IN PUNJAB, RAJASTHAN AND UTTAR PRADESH, 1960**

1. The Study

The study was undertaken by the PEO at the instance of the Ministry of Food and Agriculture to evaluate the Rabi crop campaign which was initiated on August 5, 1958. Among the programmes stressed under the campaign, the main emphasis was laid on the building up of an efficient organisation at all levels, the coordination of the departmental arrangements for timely supply of seeds, manures, improved implements, etc. and the mobilisation of cultivators. The area of investigation was restricted to certain parts of the three major states of Punjab, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh in respect of production of Rabi Crops.

2. Objectives

- i) To assess the plan of the campaign, the acceptance of the agricultural practices sponsored under it and the reasons for their non-acceptance, wherever noted; and
- ii) To indicate the role of the campaign in influencing the production of Rabi Crops, particularly, wheat in the areas selected for the study.

3. Sample Size/Criteria for Selection of Study

The Study was conducted in Amritsar, Ludhiana & Hissar districts in Punjab, Sri Ganganagar, Bharatpur and Kota in Rajasthan and Muzzafarnagar, Rai Bareli and Deoria in Uttar Pradesh. The selection of districts was determined keeping in view the personnel resources of the PEO and the distribution of the selected rabi crops in the States. In each district, a representative block and non-block area with comparable agricultural conditions were selected for 'intensive study in consultation with Distt. Agriculture officers and Dy. Commissioners. Ten villages were selected at random from each of these districts, five each from the Block and the non-block areas. In each of these villages 15 respondents from three-groups of cultivators big, medium & small in proportion to their numbers were selected for the collection of detailed information about the campaign.

4. Reference Period

The information was collected during three periods, October-November, 1958, December 1958 - January 1959 and April-May 1959 covering the three phases of the rabi crop calendar, viz. pre-sowing and sowing, maturing and harvesting.

5. Main Findings

Punjab

1. About 70% of the cultivators had simply heard of the campaign. The proportion who had the detailed knowledge of the improved agricultural practices recommended and the proportion who actually adopted them were smaller.

2. The campaign was virtually directed to the wheat crop/ only. In Hissar, where the campaign was to cover gram and barley crops also, no attention was given to them. There was no improvement in the practices reported by the cultivators in respect of these crops.

3. The campaign had little or no effect in inducing timely sowing and weeding of wheat crop.

4. The impact of the campaign was restricted mainly to Ludhiana where a sizable proportion of the cultivators were induced by it to adopt improved practices.

5. Difficulties of supply and finance were the most important reasons for the low level of adoption of plant protection measures. Lack of knowledge mainly hampered the dissemination of seed treatment and basal application.

6. In Ludhiana, the Deputy Commissioner took a keen interest in the campaign. Inter-departmental coordination was very good. The staff were very active at the district as also at lower levels. The revenue officers helped in distribution of seed. The drainage section of the Irrigation Department pumped out surplus water from flooded areas.

7. In Amritsar, in both the block and the non-block areas, the conduct of the Campaign was disturbed by floods resulting from heavy rains in September-October.

8. In Hissar, there was a lack of a sense of urgency or enthusiasm for the campaign in the block as well as the non-block areas of the crops selected for rabi drive, gram and barley in particular did not come under any programme in the selected areas.

9. In both the block and the non-block areas the non-adoption of seed treatment was equally extensive, reported by about 88 per cent of the cultivators. The most important reason was lack of knowledge, reported by the 42 per cent of the wheat growers in the blocks and 48 per cent in the non-block areas. The second reason in importance in the block was lack of interest reported by 38 per cent and not needed in the non-block areas reported by 20 per cent.

6. Major Suggestions

1. It was suggested that while evolving and recommending improved agricultural practices, the seasonal factors should be carefully studied and taken into account.

2. In future campaigns, a selective approach suited to the needs of different areas should be adopted.

Rajasthan

1. For the first time Cooperatives and Panchayats were drawn on a large scale into the arrangements for the supply of seeds, fertilizers, etc to the cultivators. This had a very good effect and the office bearers of these institutions played an important part in spreading the knowledge of the campaign.

2. About 60 per cent of the sample cultivators reported knowledge of the campaign. District-wise, the knowledge was higher in Sri-Ganganagar where it was reported by 81 per cent of the respondents followed by Bharatpur and Kota in which 75 per cent and 24 per cent respectively reported it.

3. Camps were organised for Gram Sahayaks to make them the spearheads of the campaign among cultivators. The level of adoption of improved practices was better among them than non-Gram Sahayaks, but it was not distinctly better. About 50 per cent of them had not adopted most of the sponsored practices.

4. The campaign had impact in two areas, in Bharatpur Block and in Sri Ganganagar non-block area; Bharatpur non-block area and Ganganagar block were also

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influenced by it to a smaller degree, while in Kota the campaign had no impact at all.

5. A few items-of the campaign had been already known and adopted on wide scale and their inclusion in the drive did not make much difference.

6. Accurate assessment of the impact of the campaign on the yield of wheat was not possible. The information collected from sample cultivators indicated that the campaign had a good impact in Bharatpur. But in both-the block and non-block areas, the yield per acre declined in the campaign year. The next best impact was in Sri Ganganagar, but there too, the yield per acre did not increase significantly. The cultivators in all the areas except Sri Ganganagar block reported that the season was unfavourable for Rabi Crops.

7. The State Government laid great emphasis in making seeds, fertilizers, implements and loans available to the cultivators. Unfortunately, the plans for the supplies were drawn up in the month of August, which was rather late. As a result, in some places they did not reach the cultivators in time.

8. As a result of the decision to distribute seeds and fertilisers through cooperatives and Panchayats, the outlets for distribution increased in the rabi season 1958-59. But the blocks had smaller quantities of seeds for distribution than in 1957-58.

9. The reason why the cultivators could not **adopt sponsored** practices for different items were; inadequate supply in the case of improved seed, lack of finance and a variety of factors for other practices reflecting in some parts the special problems of individual cultivators or areas.

10. All the wheat growers had knowledge of preparation of soil, line sowing, irrigation as many times as recommended by the Agricultural Department and weeding. There was, therefore, no scope for further dissemination of knowledge about them during the campaign.

11. Knowledge of improved seeds spread from 66 per cent to 100 per cent of the farmers in Bharatpur, and 86 percent to 91 per cent in Kota. In Sri Ganganagar, it had already reached to all farmers prior to the campaign.

Uttar Pradesh

1. Quite significant proportion of the cultivators in both block and non-block areas were influenced by the campaign. But the impact was particularly significant in Deona block.

2. In all the blocks adoption of improved practices registered good advance, the progress recorded **agalust dibbler** sowing, roguing basal application and top dressing largely attributed to the drive.

3. Improved seed, line sowing and irrigation as recommended had been adopted by about 70 per cent of the cultivators in 1957-58. On the other hand, cultivators reporting adoption of preparation of soil, weeding and inter culture and top dressing were respectively 46 per cent, 22 per cent & 15 per cent in 1957-58.

4. About 82 per cent of the wheat cultivators had used improved seed in 1958-59 and sown it in time. About 53 per cent had prepared their soil by ploughing it as many times as recommended by the Agriculture Department. But only 30% to 40% of the cultivators followed instructions regarding basal application of fertilizers, top dressing and weeding and interculture.

5. As compared with the 1957-58 rabi season, all improved practices were more widely adopted in 1958-59.

6. About 80 per cent of the wheat cultivators had used improved seed in 1958-59 and sown it in lines. About 53 per cent had prepared their soil by ploughing it as many times as recommended by the Agriculture Department.

7. All cultivators had knowledge about preparation of soil and improved seed in the 1957-58 season. Basal application of fertilizers was a new practice and none reported its knowledge in 1957-58.

8. As between Gram Sahayaks and non-Gram Sahayaks, the former did considerably better than the latter in adopting advanced practices.

9. Among the reasons given by farmers for not adopting various practices, difficulty of supply was the chief one in the case of improved seeds. This difficulty was mentioned particularly by the growers of gram, peas, and barley. Lack of knowledge was not a very important reason except in the case of roguing and dibbler sowing which were new techniques.

Major Suggestions

In suggesting certain improved practices for adoption in an area, the seasonal factor should be taken fully into account so as to eliminate the influence of these factors.