

FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH FINANCIAL CONSEQUENCE OF PREMATURE HARVESTING OF NUTMEG IN KANDY DISTRICT

R.A.H.V. Perera¹, M.A.P.K. Seneviratne² and Y.M. Wickramasinghe¹

¹*Dept. of Agricultural Systems, Faculty of Agriculture, Rajarata University of Sri Lanka, Puliyankulama, Anuradhapura, Sri Lanka.*

²*Dept. of Export Agriculture, 1062, Kandy Road, Peradeniya, Sri Lanka.*

Nutmeg (*Myristica fragrans*) is an important spice crop in Sri Lanka. It is unique among the spice crops since it produces two distinct products viz. kernel of the seed (Nutmeg) and the mace. This study investigated the factors that motivated farmers to practice premature harvesting of Nutmeg and the associated financial consequences (losses/ gains). A random sample of 150 nutmeg growers was selected from five Divisional Secretariat Divisions in Kandy district to cover 70% of the Nutmeg extent of the country. Data was collected through a questionnaire survey and a binary logistic model was fitted. Age of the respondent, education level, number of family members, land extent, monthly family income, nature of respondent's contribution, participation in training programs and pilferage (theft) problem were considered as the independent variables.

The yield losses of Nutmeg seeds and mace due to premature harvesting were 25.71 and 47.72 percent respectively. The financial losses incurred due to premature harvesting of Nutmeg seeds and mace was 58.04 and 100 percent respectively. Regression analysis revealed that variables such as the number of family members, land extent, nature of contribution of the respondent and pilferage problem have impacted significantly (-1.003, -5.419, -1.044 and 1.621 respectively) on the decision of premature harvesting. However, regression analysis did not explain the influence of variables such as age of the respondent, education level, monthly family income and participation in training programs on the decision of premature harvesting.

Key words: Financial consequences, Nutmeg, Premature harvesting