

HOUSEHOLD FOOD SECURITY OF A FARMING COMMUNITY IN MIHINTALE DIVISIONAL SECRETARIAT AREA

S.M. Aroos and Y.M. Wickramasinghe

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

Food security in farming communities in Sri Lanka has not yet being investigated, though it is very important for policy formulation. The purpose of this study was to assess the status of household food security of a farming community in *Mihintale* Divisional Secretariat area, and it was aimed at identifying and quantifying the status of food security and identifying factors influencing the present status. The study was conducted in five villages of *Mihintale* Divisional Secretariat area. Fifty households were selected using the proportionate random sampling method. The Aggregate Household Food Security Index was estimated using the survey data where zero value indicates total famine and hundred indicates full food security. Graphical descriptive analyses were to find the factors influencing the level of food security. Procedures adopted by the household during severe food insecurity periods were also analyzed.

Results revealed that the Aggregate Household Food Security Index of the sample population was 81.20 and sufficient level of food security was indicated according to the classification of the Food and Agriculture Organization. There was no significant impact of annual expenditure of the household on the level of food security. The credit use, livestock ownership and age of the household head had positive impact whereas the literacy rate and the household size had negative impact on the level of food security. Females are more concerned about food security than males. The households of the *Mihintale* Divisional Secretariat area have sufficient level of food security and the levels were not affected with expenditure patterns. The survival mechanism of the community was traditional and they depend on interest free informal credit during the food shortage periods.

Key words: Aggregate household food security index, Farming community, Food security, Survival mechanisms