

**FARMING ALTERATIONS IN HOME GARDENING DUE TO
COVID –19 PANDEMIC IN *IBBAGAMUWA* DIVISIONAL
SECRETARIAT OF *KURUNEGALA* DISTRICT, SRI LANKA**

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Different media reported that COVID-19 pandemic situation has created tensions among farmers and food insecurity status in households in Sri Lanka due to disturbances in food supply chains, shocks in food production, and decline in family income. With these circumstances, home gardening was rebooted of residents under lockdown areas. Hence, this study examined the alterations that happened in home gardening due to the COVID-19 pandemic in *Ibbagamuwa* Divisional Secretariat Division in *Kurunegala* district. Through a field survey, data were collected from 150 randomly selected home gardeners and analyzed using quantitative and qualitative methods. Results revealed that the mean age of the respondents was 48 years. Among them, the majority (49.3%) were educated up to the tertiary level while 54.7% were government employees and 74% of them had a monthly income between LKR 10,000-50,000. The respondents experienced home gardening for 8 years on average. Increased family labour utilization (100%), increased organic fertilizer usage (96.7%), production of own compost (92.7%), cash cropping (91.3%), increased manual weeding (90.7%), increased time spent for home gardening (82.7%), increased the number of varieties cultivated (82%), use of mulching (80.7%), and decreased pesticide usage (76.6%) were the main alterations that the community of the research area followed during the COVID-19 pandemic situation. Thematic analysis revealed that having more free time to the family members due to the travel restrictions, concerns about consuming healthy foods which improve the immune system of the households, lack of willingness to travel to supermarkets to buy vegetables, less availability of vegetables and spices like turmeric, and high prices of commodities were identified as the main reasons for the alterations. This study concludes that all home gardeners altered at least one of their home gardening patterns due to the COVID-19 pandemic in *Ibbagamuwa* Divisional Secretariat of *Kurunegala* district, Sri Lanka.

Keywords: Alterations, COVID – 19 pandemic, Home gardening