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Research Paper

BRIDGING OF GAPS IN ADOPTION OF DROUGHT MANAGEMENT TECHNOLOGIES IN MULBERRY CULTIVATION IN DROUGHT PRONE AREAS OF SOUTH INDIA

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ABSTRACT

Sericulture is an agro-based cottage industry substantially contributing for the rural development in south India. Mulberry cultivation is the basement of the industry. Of late, the impacts of climatic changes have been severely affecting the production and productivity of mulberry gardens in several sericultural clusters in south India. This demands for adoption of recommended drought management technologies in mulberry cultivation for quality leaf production and successful silkworm rearing. A study was conducted with the sericulture farmers of south India to find out the gaps in adopting these technologies with an intention to bridge the gap. Farmer-wise data on adoption gaps were collected for 12 identified technologies of mulberry cultivation. Even though 84 % of the farmers were affected by water shortage, the adoption gaps of the required technologies were high. Eighty, 20 and 56 per cent of farmers of Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu state clusters, respectively have recorded high adoption gap (>66 %). The frequency of technology-wise adoption gap presented a range of 14 to 100 %. Hence, different extension communication programmes were conducted among the farmers for two years to increase the awareness and bridge the gaps in adoption, which in fact helped to bridge the gaps to the extent of 4 to 100 per cent and brought resultant improvements in leaf production. The impact of the programme on bridging of adoption gaps for all technologies in all states was statistically highly significant at 5 % level. Hence, the study suggests for taking up suitable efforts to increase the awareness among the farmers on drought management technologies and bridge the adoption gaps to enhance and sustain the quality linked silk production in the drought prone areas.

Key words: Bridging of gaps, drought management, mulberry cultivation, technology adoption gaps.