

## **Pesticide Use and Health Behaviour of Farmers' in Rajanganaya**

**Kumarasinghe M A N<sup>1</sup>, Nanthakumaran A<sup>2</sup>, Kayanan S<sup>3</sup>**

<sup>1,2,3</sup>Department of Bio Science, Vavuniya Campus, University of Jaffna  
n\_ananthi@hotmail.com

Excessive pesticide usage is progressively affecting the well-being of the farming community and the environment. The objective of this study is to investigate the pesticide use and its impact on farmers' health. The primary data were collected in 2016 using constructed questionnaire from fifty farmers selected randomly in Rajanganaya area of Anuradhapura district where the households highly depend on agriculture for their living. The results revealed that almost 98% farmers used pesticides in their agricultural fields and nearly 80% of them used more than that of the quantity recommended by the Department of Agriculture. In general, farmers used hand derived sprayer machines for pesticide application. Farmers who were engaged in agricultural practices for more than ten years were suffering most from various types of health problems. Though 42 % of the farmers had the knowledge on protective measures during pesticide application, 85% of the total farmers had not taken any protective measures while only 10% had used face mask and gloves and only 5% had used long sleeve shirts and boots during pesticide application. About 10%, 28% and 8% of the farmers involved in pesticide application reported that they were suffering from dizziness, headache and vomiting respectively. 20% of the farmers were not well aware of the long-term and short-term effects of improper pesticide usage. Improvement in the intensive awareness and the training programs on the safe use of pesticides are essential to avoid potential health hazards. The action taken towards educating the farmers on safe handling of pesticides during application is essential for the public health as well as for the environmental sustainability.

**Key words:** *Awareness, Pesticides, Hazards, Poisoning*