



Application of information and communication technology in floriculture sector: a case study in Bandarawela and Nuwaraeliya

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Application of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) in floriculture is an important strategy, when concerning the development of floriculture as an emerging agricultural business sector in Sri Lanka. This study was carried out to identify the current status of ICT usage in floriculture, the most convenience ICT tools which are used by floriculturists, competitive advantages of ICT usage and to recognize barriers, which effect on ICT usage. The study was conducted in Bandarawela and Nuwaraeliya area. As the sample 35 floriculturists were selected by using simple random sampling technique. Study revealed that the majority of farmers (65%) don't have the ICT knowledge. Phones and Television have become the most convenience ICT tools among floriculturists. The important purposes of ICT usage in floriculture are gaining knowledge, sharing knowledge advertising and marketing. From those purposes marketing is the major purpose (28%) of ICT usage in floriculture. Higher profits are the major competitive advantage of ICT usage in floriculture, followed by more market opportunities. Floriculturists are interested to get information through conventional information sources like Agricultural Instructors, Govijanasewa Niladhari, Extension Officer, colleagues and middleman than ICT. From those conventional sources farmers highly prefer colleagues and middleman. The major factors, which keep farmers away from ICT are time limitations, knowledge gaps and technological barriers. To overcome these barriers and improve ICT usage giving awareness to farmers about ICT, improving infrastructure facilities and ICT access are recommended.

Keywords: Information Communication Technology, floriculture, ICT tools