

ADOPTION OF SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE PRINCIPLES BY POTATO FARMERS IN THE SOUTH-EASTERN POLAND

Summary

This study aimed to identify the personal, social, economic and communicative characteristics of the farmers in the region of south-eastern Poland, determining the adoption of sustainable agriculture principles by potato cultivation, ranking domains of scale of the adoption of sustainable agriculture principles and their items, the variation in the adoption level of sustainable agriculture principles according to some of farmers' social, economic and communicative characteristics, the role of agricultural extension in the adoption of sustainable agriculture principles by potato farmers, and finding the relationship between the adoption of sustainable agriculture principles and a set of independent variables. To achieve the set aims, the researcher applied statistical hypotheses that there is no significant correlation between the level of adoption of sustainable agriculture principles by potato farmers and the role of agriculture extension in the adoption of sustainable agriculture principles, and no significant correlation between the level of adoption of sustainable agriculture principles by potato farmers and their independent variables.

This research was based on the primary data collected between 2014-2016 by a representative sample of 152 potato farmers in two regions (Lubelskie and Mazowieckie Regions), south-eastern part of Poland. A standardized structured questionnaire was used to gather field data through personal interviews. The questionnaire consisted of three parts: The first part included the independent variables (Age, Education level, Marital status, Occupation, Gender, Source of income, Type of tenure, Family size, Agricultural experience, Agricultural information sources, Implementation of agri-environmental programs, Farm size, Farm size of potatoes cultivation, Kind of farm land, Structure of farm land, Soil quality class, Soil fertility, Chemical properties of soil, Main scope of farm, Livestock production, Farm success, Storage and packaging, Sale of potatoes, and Investments). The second part included the role of agricultural extension in the adoption of sustainable agriculture principles by potato farmers, while the third part included the scale to measure the adoption of sustainable agriculture principles by potato farmers.

The results carried out in central and eastern part of Poland showed that the farmers' adoption of the sustainable agriculture principles is medium with tendency for low. The results indicate that farmers' adoption in the domain of Fertilizers and fertility was the highest, the domain of Seed production came in the second place, following the domains (Control of harmful organisms) and (Management of Production) respectively. Also the results showed that there were significant differences between the average adoption of sustainable agriculture principles according to the variables in the categories (Age, Education level, Marital status, Source of income, Type of tenure, Agricultural information sources, Soil fertility, Main scope of farm, Livestock production, Storage and packaging, Sale of potatoes).

Keywords: implementation of farmers, knowledge, potato, sustainable farming