

ABSTRACT

LIVESTOCK FARMING SYSTEMS IN NORTH ANTIGUA AND ALTERNATIVE
AGRICULTURAL EXTENSION APPROACHES

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The study sought to identify a set of factors which influence farmers' knowledge/adoption behaviour in the production of livestock in North Antigua and utilized two separate survey approaches (a Rapid Reconnaissance Survey and a detailed field survey).

A farmers' decision-making process model was developed by the researcher. There are four distinct phases: needs assessment; planning; implementation; and reinforcement.

According to the model a farmer may try an innovation and subsequently incorporate it fully into his/her farming system or may reject the innovation and revert to his/her old farming methods.

To investigate the extension, policy and other support systems, a random sample (n=75) was selected from a base line population of 600 livestock farmers. A similar percentage of crop farmers was interviewed to confirm the farming system types and to identify differences which may exist between crop and livestock farmers.

The Rapid Reconnaissance Survey (RRS) identified eight types of farming systems. The field survey identified nineteen types.

The data revealed: (i) that livestock farmers' decision making behaviour is influenced by exogenous and endogenous factors; and (ii) that farm size, farmers stated agricultural problems, group membership index and family help are significantly related to livestock farmers knowledge/adoption behaviour.

In concluding it was recommended that all extension officers receive some minimum training in general livestock husbandry and that a livestock production specialist be attached to the extension division.

The use of a Farming Systems Research/Extension methodology is recommended since it is envisaged that Farming Systems Extension (FSE) will be done by an interdisciplinary team of extensionists, subject matter specialists and farmers.

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