

## ABSTRACT

This study was conducted to determine the socio-cultural, socio-economic and socio-psychological factors which are responsible for the decline in carrot production in St. Vincent.

The study utilizes a hybridized model (The Behavioural - Innovation - Decision Process model) developed from (1) The Behavioural model (advanced by J.P. Leagans) which states that the adoption behaviour of farmers is influenced by the interaction of two sets of opposing forces called incentives and inhibitors which exert 'pull' or push effects; one opposing the other; and, (2) The Innovation - Decision - Process model by Rogers and Shoemaker which is an extension of the traditional five-stage Adoption - Process model. According to Rogers the process seldom ends with adoption, as further information seeking may occur to confirm or reinforce the decision, or the individual may later switch from adoption to rejection (a discontinuance).

The model as postulated by Rogers has three major divisions:

- (a) Antecedents which include the individual's personality characteristics such as high general attitude toward change, his social characteristics and the strength of his perceived need for the innovations.
- (b) Communicational process (transfer of information relevant to the innovation).
- (c) The consequences.

A random sample of 150 carrot farmers was selected from a base line population of 1100 carrot farmers. A further thirty farmers who do not grow carrots were matched with every fifth farmer in the first sample. Matching was done on the basis of farm location, farm size and age of the farmer.

The Extension system was also investigated. Other information concerning the carrot industry was obtained from interviewing the Chief Agricultural Officer, the Manager of the St. Vincent Marketing Corporation and the St. Vincent Agricultural and Co-operative Bank.

The analysis of the data revealed that the communicational factors which involved contact with the Extension Officer and person sought for information, were the most important barriers to the adoption behaviour. Other barrier factors include situational factors such as distance to market and cost of inputs. The personal factors were found to be insignificantly related to adoption behaviour.

The data also revealed that the adoption behaviour could be negatively influenced by the Extension system and the governmental policies toward the Agricultural Sector.

In concluding, it was recommended that the ratio of farmer to Extension Officer be reduced, and a positive effort made to utilize the radio since a large proportion of farmers have radios and listen to the Agricultural programme. It was also recommended that some attention be given to improving credit facilities to farmers, giving consideration to the possibility of providing inputs on a deferred payment basis.