ABSTRACT

KRISHNARINI MATINDAS, Communication Strategies of Organic Vegetable Farmers in Seeking and Using Gender-Based Agricultural Information. Under the supervision of AIDA VITAYALA S. HUBEIS as the Head of Supervisory Commission; AMIRUDDIN SALEH and HARSONO SUWARDI as the Members.

People begin to give attention to the quality and safety of vegetable product they consume, because of the desire for the food that is free from synthetic chemicals. Organic farming is the work of male and female farmers and they need information to develop their farming activities. From the communication activities, the differences between male and female organic farmers can be identified from the responses of agricultural information they receive. This research aims: (1) to analyze of farmer’s characteristics, work division pattern, gender relation, communication factors and use of agricultural information, (2) to analyze the relationship of work division pattern, relationship of gender relation to the use of agricultural information, relationship of communication factors to the use of agricultural information, relationship of farmer’s characteristics to the use of agricultural information, (3) to design a gender-based agricultural information strategy. This research conducted in the Sub-District of Pacet, District of Cianjur and Sub-District of Megamendung, District of Bogor in the West Java Province. The study was survey to explain and explore the farmer’s communication activities in seeking and using agricultural information. By disproportionate stratified random sampling, 134 farmers were selected, consisting of 67 male and 67 female. The quantitative data was obtained from the questionnaires given to the farmers and supported by the qualitative data collected by in-depth interviews. The results indicate that male and female organic farmers are active in seeking and discussing the information they received. The control of information is dominant on male as heads of families. Women also have the right to determine agricultural information, but they prefer to discuss first with their husbands. Men often seek for information on environmental aspects and seldom seek other aspect. Women often seek information on harvest aspect but seldom seek other aspect. The personal channel is still dominant for men and women to find agricultural information, while group channel and media would useful for them. Male and female farmers were critical in evaluating the information and would say the quality of agricultural information they get is often relevant, easy to understand, can solve a problem and useful. The quality of communication channels according to men and women is often reliable, competent, and friendly but seldom attractive. Women and men were like to access and control information on postharvest. Men with the activities on land look for information through the media. Besides men also use the group channel in social activities to get agricultural information. Meanwhile, women control the information they get from the group channel. Women access the agricultural information that can solve a problem and bring benefits. Men like to get information from friendly communication channel and interesting channel. For men, the information that is useful for themselves is the one from reliable, competent, friendly and interesting communication channel. Women who having the right to control information, would compare it with other people have done, and disseminate the information they control to families or friends. For men, education would make them able to compare the information they get, age and farming experience would also make them able to discuss and disseminate the information they received. For women, education would also make them able to discuss and disseminate the information they get. The prioritized strategies are two-way communication channels to promote the gender equality and trainings on organic farming for male and female farmers.

Keywords: Communication strategy, seeking and using information, gender.