

**AN EVALUATION OF FARMERS ATTITUDES ON THE PERFORMANCE  
OF THE COMBINE THRESHER IN PADDY HARVESTING IN THE  
NORTH CENTRAL PROVINCE**

S.R.K. Dehigama<sup>1</sup>, P.H.P. Prasanna<sup>1</sup>, K.H.R. Wijayawardana<sup>2</sup>

*<sup>1</sup>Department of Agricultural Systems, Faculty of Agriculture, Rajarata University of Sri Lanka, Anuradhapura, Sri Lanka.*

*<sup>2</sup>Faculty of Management Studies, Rajarata University of Sri Lanka, Mihintale, Sri Lanka.*

The labor cost is one of the major problems in present paddy industry. Labor demand is at its peak during the harvesting period. The combine thresher was introduced to Sri Lanka in year 2000 and it gained popularity within a short period than the other threshers. A technical evaluation of the thresher was carried out by FMRC joined with CIC, but the need for an attitude evaluation still remained. Present study was conducted to evaluate the farmers' attitudes on the performance and the socio economic impact of the combine thresher. Sixty farmers and sixty owners of combine threshers in selected areas of the North Central Province were identified using cluster sampling technique for the study. Two different questionnaires were used and each respondent was personally interviewed. Attitudes were analyzed by Likert scale.

Inferences were drawn comparing the combine thresher with the power driven thresher. The Chi - Square analysis revealed that there were significant differences ( $P < 0.05$ ) on the farmers' attitudes on safety, efficiency, cost, mobility, paddy collection and grain purity between the two machines, but not the attitude on operator's skills and paddy storage life. The study also revealed that both the farmers and owners were satisfied about the head rice yield and seed germination. The average cost, number of laborers and the

time taken per hectare were lower in combine thresher compared to the four-wheel tractor and the power driven thresher.

It can be concluded that there is a positive attitude among the farming community on the use of combine thresher, based on the above quality parameters, though mobility of the combine thresher was less impressive than the power driven thresher. Frequent respiratory diseases and improper training among the thresher operators and loss of grains with straw particles were identified as performance weaknesses.

*Key words* - Combine thresher, Power driven thresher, Attitude