

**SOCIO ECONOMIC ASPECTS OF RICE CULTIVATION IN PROBLEM
SOILS OF SRI LANKA**

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ABSTRACT

Although Sri Lanka achieved substantial growth in rice production in the last few decades, the contribution of Problem Soil Areas (PSA) incorporating all Wet Zone districts and parts of Intermediate Zone, was less than anticipated. PSA is constrained by physical, technological and socio-economic problems inhibiting growth in productivity and incomes.

The paper described the trends in rice production and adoption of technology in the PSA in comparison with the Dry Zone. It also examines the major socio-economic and structural constraints that affect productivity and incomes.

The growth in paddy production in PSA is largely due to increase in per hectare yields. Lesser utilization of tractors for land preparation, and chemicals for weed and pest control and lesser use of material inputs per hectare were observed in PSA. The yield per hectare and net incomes per hectare were less while the labour costs were higher.

The low productivity and incomes could also be attributed to constraints such as the smaller size of holdings, prevalence of part time farming and large number of farms primarily producing for home consumption. The paper highlights the need for reducing cost of production primarily through reducing the labour cost and the importance of socio-economic constraints.