



‘Farmers Love Safety’ TV Reality Contest, An Awareness Raising Campaign for Sustainable Production in Thailand

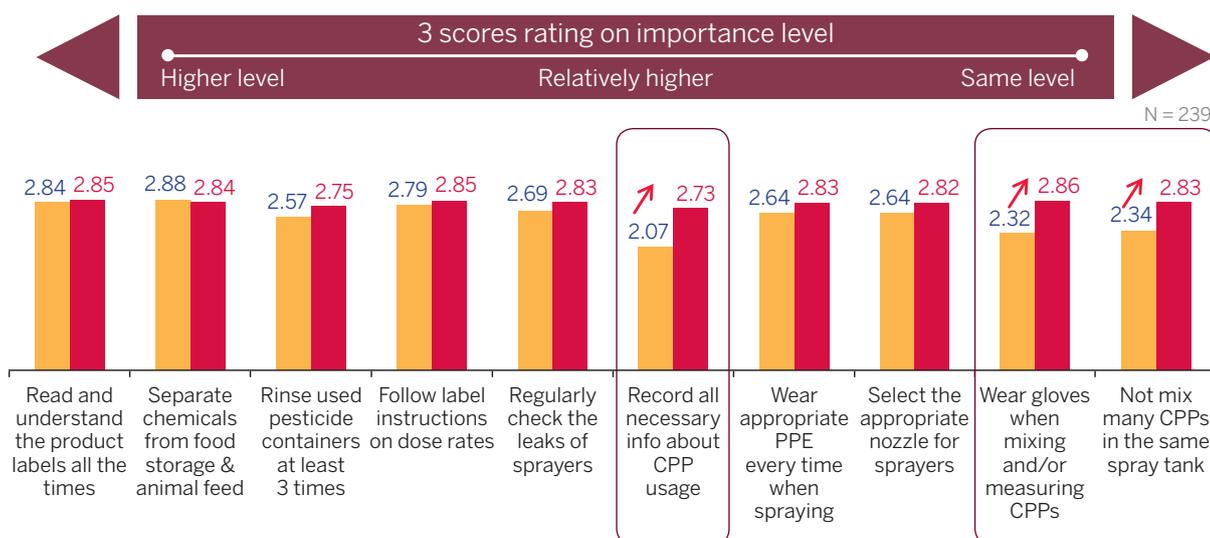
Last year, BRIA and BASF (Thai) Limited in collaboration with the Rice Department under the Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives and Farm Channel (Thailand) Co., Ltd. launched “Farmers Love Safety,” an edutainment TV reality contest, featuring two teams of farmers from Suphanburi and Ayutthaya, two major rice producing provinces in the central region. They competed in sharing knowledge with farmers in the surrounding communities. All the activities were recorded and edited in such a way as to be both informative and entertaining. The final production was aired on SMILE Farmers program on Farm Channel, which is popular among farmers, on Thursday, from 17:30-18:00 pm, from October 2 to December 18, 2014.

The participating farmers were selected based on their ability to train their peers. Each needed to have a network of members in their communities. They are all rice farmers, open to modern agricultural techniques and willing to be taped for future airing.

The members of the two teams were trained in responsible and judicious use of crop protection products (CPPs) at the Rice and Farmer School inside the Rice Department. The training topics included understanding risks and effects of improper use of CPPs, reading product labels, basic principles to effectively protect oneself and the environment while using CPPs, effective and proper use of application equipment and CPPs in the field, guidelines on proper personal protective equipment (PPE) for farmers.

According to the contest rules, each team was required to further train no less than 150 farmers in neighboring communities in two assignments. A panel of four judges evaluated and gave live feedback to the two teams. Their assessment criteria were based on the effectiveness of the training and presentations, collaboration of the team members and their management ability.

Pre and Post Training Evaluation of 10 Aspects Related to Safe and Effective Use of Crop Protection Products.



Willingness to Change Behaviour

57% perceive their current behaviour is safe and effective.

96% are willing to change for proper safe and effective use of CPPs after training.



The farmers participating in the training were asked to complete the questionnaires both before and after training to learn about their profiles, current usage of CPPs, current practices related to CPPs, knowledge about responsible use of CPPs, overall satisfaction with the training, willingness to change their improper behavior and inclination to share the knowledge from the training with others.

A total of 276 farmers joining the training sessions. 62% were more than 50 years old and 77% had an annual income of less than or equal to 180,000 Baht. The majority owned 30 rai (12 acres) of rice field.

The participants displayed higher awareness of the safe and effective use of CPPs after the training and most were willing to change for proper safe and effective use of CPPs. 78% opined the knowledge from the training was useful and 97% were willing to share the knowledge with others.

The TV broadcast was expected to reach at least 10,000 farmers in these two strategic provinces as well as others who could watch Farm Channel.

To reach larger viewers, a telephone survey of a random sample of 200 farmers living in the and nearby districts, with the name list provided by the Department of Agricultural Extension (DoAE), during the middle of this TV programme suggested that more suitable airing times should be from 8-9 pm in the evening or from 5-6 am in the morning when farmers are available. Local DoAE officers and lead farmers at the community rice centers are beneficial sources that can promote an activity or a programme.

The team from Ayutthaya Province was voted as the winner by the attendees at the closing ceremony held on December 12, 2014 and was presented with an award by Mr. Chanpithya Shimphalee, Director General of the Rice Department. The team from Suphanburi was the runner-up.

“The knowledge the participating farmers have, personally, gained is more important because it will help raise yield, protect health and benefit the country,” commented Dr. Apichart Pongsrihadulchai, Vice Minister of the Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives.

Assessment of Level of Knowledge from Training

78% say the knowledge gained from the training is very useful and

97% are willing to share the knowledge from the training with others.

