

## **MOBILE PHONE AS A MODE OF INFORMATION PROVIDENT TO UP COUNTRY VEGETABLE FARMERS IN SRI LANKA**

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This study explores the status of mobile usage as a mode of providing information to the agriculture community in the upcountry region in Sri Lanka. The objectives of the study were to find out the awareness level, usage, attitudes of upcountry vegetable farmers about the mobile phone based information systems and services, to find out the factors affecting on mobile usage by farmers and their willingness to pay for mobile phone based information systems and services. Primary data were collected using an interviewer administrated questionnaire (n=120).

Findings reveal that the access to mobile phones was considerably higher among the study group, while income had an effect on using a mobile phone. Most of the farmers use mobile phones to communicate with family, friends and relatives. Only few farmers use them effectively to obtain agriculture related information. Awareness and usage of mobile phone based information systems and services are at a lower level. Attitudinal barriers and less awareness are the major reasons for this situation. There is a positive relationship between the usage of mobile phone based information systems and services and farmers attitudes on its impact on knowledge and income. Farmers who are using the mobile phone based information systems and services highlighted that the services are very much helpful for agriculture development.