

Dehkan Farmers' Perception on the Greenhouse Farming Innovation in Urabulok, Uzbekistan

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Agriculture, one of the most important economic sectors in Uzbekistan, has been limited by its monocropping of cotton and wheat for the last three decades. However, the environmental conditions of the country are preferable for fruit and vegetable production. The current agricultural strategy of the government is to promote export-oriented horticulture by implementing innovative farming methods. It is believed that the adoption of greenhouse farming by the main agricultural producers, dehkan farmers, can accomplish the present agricultural strategy as well as ameliorate the economic situation of the farmers.

Despite the active encouragement of the government, greenhouse farming has been not widely spread among the dehkan farmers across the country. There are regions in which dehkan farmers are still employing traditional farming practices. The reasons for the non-adoption of greenhouse farming are not clear.

This study aimed to determine the factors that are preventing the dehkan farmers from adoption of greenhouse farming innovation.

According to Rogers' Diffusion of Innovation Theory, certain components which are innovation itself, communication channels, time, and social system impact the adoption of innovation. The rejection of greenhouse farming innovation by the farmers was expected to be linked with those elements in this research.

To investigate the reasons for the non-adoption with the connection of diffusion of innovation theory, the semi-structured questionnaire was used to interview the dehkan farmers in Urtabulok village. Purposive sampling was used to select the respondents. The interviewees were divided into "applied" and "non-applied" groups due to their experience of greenhouse farming. The collected data were analyzed by implementing thematic analysis.

The results showed that uncertainty, lack of knowledge, shortage of heat energy, inappropriate support of the government, and low level of financial risk tolerance were the main factors for the non-adoption. Those elements were evaluated to have a connection with the several diffusion of innovation sub-elements which are observability, trialability, social structure, types of decision making, and relative

advantage. The poor internet infrastructure is assumed as an additional cause to deaccelerate the adoption in correspondence with the communication channels element.

The study suggests that certain preventing factors can be resolved by the provision of sufficient natural gas resources, establishing favorable credit management, and enhancing internet infrastructure.

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