

Identification of Factors Affecting Compliance with the GAP Standard in Sri Lanka

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ABSTRACT

Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) is one of the accepted field level food safety protocols that is in place to ensure safety and healthiness of food while contributing to ecological, economic and social sustainability of farming. The Department of Agriculture of Sri Lanka inaugurated special agricultural consultancy service for GAP (SL-GAP) in 2015 to provide proper guidance on GAP implementation to farmers. However only half of the applicants were able to get the SL-GAP certificate.

This study was carried out to find out the criteria that led farmers to comply with SLS 1523 GAP Standard developed for GAP farm auditing. Audit check lists and noncompliance reports available in GAP Certification Division were examined to find out the main critical and major compliance criteria that farms were unable to compliance with. The criteria given in those reports were categorized in to eight. Accordingly, it was revealed that, only 54% out of total number of requested farms (410) were certified and out of all uncertified farms, 38% of farms were not certified due to incomplete documentations. Twenty eight farms were not certified due to poor water quality management and 9% of the farms were rejected due to improper pesticide storage (9%). Eight percent of farms were not issued with certificate due to their lack of concern with respect to pre harvest interval. For four percent, three percent and two percent of farms, the refusal factors were respectively the improper fertilizer management, improper substrate management, and inappropriate harvesting hygiene. This study revealed the major noncompliance criteria that should be given more attention when GAP field implementation. The study further emphasize the importance of motivating of farmers and the provision of correct guidance to increase the number of SL-GAP certified farms in Sri Lanka.

Key words: GAP standard, Noncompliance, Record keeping, SL-GAP auditing, SL-GAP certification.

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