

FARM BROADCASTING

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1. Wake up your audience:

The last thing you want to do to your listener is to put him to sleep with a long dull broadcast. How can you get your message across when your listeners have turned off their ears - or worse yet their "Radio".

Listeners boredom is a danger to be avoided at all cost. A radio programme on agriculture if it is a one man show well almost always prove boring, when the host talks non stop in a 30 minute programme (information overload). Unfortunately it is often difficult for a broadcast with limited time and facilities to create the kind of programme that awakens the listeners interest. Yet even with limited facilities there are many ways of making a more interesting programme.

(1) Choose an Effective Format:

(a) MINI DRAMA: There is a common format for an agricultural radio broadcast. Dialogue between fictitious characters can raise questions; your listeners may have and the tension created by different view points held by the characters is a great attention grabber. Radio dramas can be highly entertaining and a radio drama series often have regular listeners.

(b) Short radio reports:

To create an effective radio spot isolate one idea from your message. Say it simply and concisely and broadcast it over and over again. The same message can be repeated in the same words at different times, during the day over a period of several days. People are more likely to remember something which they hear repeatedly. Please keep it short! Any thing more than one minute is too long. Some of the best radio spots get the message across in one simple sentence. Radio spots can be inserted in the middle of programs to which the target group regular listeners. This is a particularly effective technique, often used as part of a campaign.

(c) Jingles:

If you have a talent for song writing you should

try your hand at a jingle. A jingle is a musical radio spot. Again take one simple message and make it into a song. If you set this message to a popular time, it can have tremendous listener appeal.

(d) Interview:

An interview with a person known by the listeners will raise curiosity and maintain interest. Although experts may have good insights and sound advice about the subject they are not always the best people to interview. Much more effective is an interview with a local farmer, who is known by the listeners and who shares their concerns.

(2) Choose your target audience:

Direct the same message to different audience groups, who are supposed to benefit from your message? Who is listening? Children? Women? Men? Did you ever stop to think about the influence that children can have on their parents? Might there not (some of us think). There may be some advantage in trying to reach parents through their children or similarly in educating men about issues concerning women and children? Women too can influence their husbands. If you are trying to get a message through to men, it is often effective to direct your broadcast to women. This indirect method of education can be particularly effective for issues that involve the whole family.

(3) Add some lively sounds :

(a) Effects - Any program can be made more interesting with the addition of sound effects.

The best sound effects are recorded on the spot with a portable tape recorder.

(b) Music - Music makes any program more appealing. It can be used at the beginning, the end, and in the middle of the program. Music can be used to create moods, introduce characters, or just to return the listeners interest. However, be careful not to overuse music. Don't let it distract from the message.

An effective broadcast must be designed to appeal to a very specific audience and you - the agricultural broadcaster knows your audience best. We hope that some of the above suggestions will help you to make your programme lively and stimulating to your listeners.

PYRETHROID INSECTICIDES IN SRI LANKA

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Considerable interest has been shown in our country in the past few years on a relatively new group of insecticides called synthetic pyrethroids. These are synthesised in the laboratory based on the natural pyrethrins extracted from pyrethrum plants. Pyrethrins are a particularly interesting family of insecticides. They are highly toxic to insects, and at the same time, very safe to mammals. Such unique features are not found in the organochlorine, organophosphate or carbamate insecticides. But these pyrethroids are very unstable in nature. They are easily destroyed by sunlight, air, moisture, heat and alkalis. In synthesising pyrethroids, attempts are made to improve their stability such that the newer pyrethroids are as persistent as some of the common insecticides used in Sri Lanka. Pyrethroids act as contact poisons, without stomach or systemic action.

If this group of insecticides has such good characteristics, a question that could arise is: Why don't we make the best use of them? It is true these insecticides do possess good features; may be even better than the conventional insecticides. But their demerits outweigh their merits.

Pyrethroids are highly toxic to insects. On the average their insecticidal activity is four to five times higher than those of the other insecticides. As an example permethrin is said to be 10 to 15 times more toxic than methyl parathion. Thus, not only do they kill the pest insect effectively but also their natural enemies. Pyrethroids are well documented to be toxic to parasites and predators of insect pests. They are also highly toxic to honey bees and fish.

Such destruction of natural enemies of crop pests could lead to an increase in pest population. There are several reports on this aspect. A very good example is the