PROFILE CHARACTERISTICS, INVENTORY OF THE CROP SPECIES AND FARMING MECHANISMS IN HOMESTEAD FARMING OF KERALA FOR AGROBIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION

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ABSTRACT
Homestead farming is a traditional practice of multiple and mixed cropping in small holdings in Kerala. Home gardens are an integral part of the livelihood systems, and could contribute to the family food, income and the conservation of biodiversity. Home garden is one of the components of agro biodiversity. This study was undertaken in Thrissur district of Kerala. From three panchayats 15 homesteads were selected purposively based on elevation making a total sample size of 45. The results of the study indicates that majority of them were aged category, has high category in terms of education, monthly income and farming experience and had low level of innovativeness, where as majority of the seek information from news paper in case of mass media and small family size of below four members. Regarding inventory of crop Inventory of crop and other plants was prepared for 45 homesteads and divided into different categories with the percentage occurrence of each crop. It was noted that 100 per cent occurrence is obtained for coconut crop. Regarding farming mechanisms crop rotation (90 per cent) is the main important farming mechanism for agro-biodiversity conservation. The home garden agro ecosystem is an important area for effectively implementing programmes geared towards biodiversity conservation, food security and sustainable development.

KEYWORDS: Farming mechanisms, Home gardens, Inventory and Profile characteristics