**Impacts of Changing the Policy on Fertilizers and Other Agro -Chemicals during 2019 - 2022 for the Paddy Cultivation in Imbulpe DS Division in Sri Lanka**

**WHSD Madusanka1\*, SHP Malkanthi1**

*1Department of Agribusiness Management, Faculty of Agricultural Sciences, Sabaragamuwa University of Sri Lanka, Belihuloya, Sri Lanka*

*\*sudeerasac@gmail.com*

In many Asian countries, paddy cultivation plays an important role in social and economic development. In Sri Lanka, paddy is cultivated in almost all districts of the country as a wetland crop. Rice is the staple food of the people of Sri Lanka. Supplying the nation's rice requirement is the first and leading role of domestic paddy cultivation. However, compared to the year 2019, Sri Lanka’s paddy production has fallen by 13.9% in 2021-22 (April-March) and the average yield per hectare by 14.4%. Thus, imports have soared to a five-year high. This could be due to the banning of chemical fertilizer and agrochemicals imports on May 6, 2021. This study was conducted to assess the impact of the sudden banning of chemical fertilizers and other agrochemicals on the paddy cultivation in Imbulpe DS Division in Rathnapura District. A sample of 120 paddy farmers was randomly selected from three Grama Niladhari divisions namely Muththettuwegama, Seelagama and Kubalgama. Data collection was done using a household survey from October to November 2022. Descriptive statistics and paired t-tests were used to analyze the data. According to the results, male farmers were more prominent in paddy cultivation than females. Farmers belonging to the 56-65 years age group have highly participated in paddy cultivation. The majority of farmers had senior secondary education. The size of most of the paddy lands was between 0.5-1 acre. The average paddy production before the banning of chemical fertilizer was 1106.875Kg per acre. However, at present average paddy production is 434.79Kg per acre. The majority of the farmers (73.3%) had an average seasonal income of LKR 101332.50 per acre before the ban. However, at present average seasonal income is LKR 75,120.33. The average seasonal cost of production before the banning of chemical fertilizer was LKR 25,550.00 per acre. However, at present, the average seasonal cost of production is LKR 55,891.66 per acre. According to the review of overall findings in the current situation, the farmers' income has decreased significantly compared to the previous situation. As a result, food safety issues have arisen among the farmers in this DS division. Therefore, the situation needs to be remedied by a systematic use of chemical fertilizers and agrochemicals or some suitable alternative instead. These findings will help the government and other responsible parties to implement measures to overcome this problem.

**Keywords:** *agrochemicals, chemical fertilizers, paddy cultivation, rathnapura district*