



Case study I

Effectiveness of researcher- extension worker- farmer interlinkage through ICTs in solving the farmers' problems- Case studies

Mr. Khem Raj Pandey, aged 48 (Mobile No.: 9851098248) of Belkotgadhi-13, Nuwakot has been engaged in commercial vegetables cultivation for last two decades. He was one of the participants in the orientation training on tomato farming technology, insect pest management and value chain from RATES project supported by RDA/AFACI.

As far as the use of ICT is concerned, Mr. Pandey is an active member of the WhatsApp group comprising local level extension staffs, farmers and the scientists/experts. Within this group, he frequently communicates regarding the disease-pest problem with local level extension staffs and experts regarding the problems that arises in his farming practices. He sends the pictures of different infected plants and get back the suggestions for appropriate management from the concerned scientist/specialist/ expert. For instance, he had cultivated Soybean in 6 ropani of land that started showing symptoms of yellow patches on the leaves causing them to dry and wrinkle. He sent the photo on WhatsApp and quickly received effective management technique and the problem was resolved within 72 hours of applying the recommended management practices. He expressed high satisfaction with this interconnected linkage between farmers and scientist/expert in coordination with municipal agricultural section through ICT. Finally, he gets the good price of the soybeans produced in his farm having total sales of nearly NPR 0.17 million.



Currently, his annual income from vegetable production is NRS 2 million. Last season, he



had cultivated tomatoes in 0.66 ha of land. The tomato crop was planted in March 2023 and started harvesting from May until June, 2023. Mr. Pandey possesses a very good knowledge in the tomato production and disease-pest management with judicious use of pesticide. After getting training from RATES and joining the interlinked forum, his confidence to use ICT has been enhanced; he has been consulting with the experts regarding issues faced on vegetable farming and insect-pest management through ICT very conveniently. He was able to control Tuta to great extent in his tomato farm by acquiring the appropriate pesticide. Despite having a good production

in tomato, Mr. Pandey faced challenges in obtaining favorable market prices for his tomatoes and looked for different alternatives markets. This year his total tomato production was 1600 crates (1 crate = 23kg). Out of this total production, 100 crates were used for home consumption and distributed to neighbors while the remaining 1500 crates were sold to the market. The selling prices ranged from NPR 500 to 700 per crate. He sold the tomatoes worth NPR 0.35 million to Rasuwa district after deducting the transportation costs of NPR 100 per crate. He has selected the variety considering the harvesting time, thickness of fruit (to reduce post-harvest loss) and other attributes which helps for easy marketing of the tomato. He felt that the training and regular interaction with the experts facilitated by RATES/NARC/AFACI and local government has important contribution to enhance his technical knowledge regarding varietal selection, farming practices and access to market information. He is excited to use new varieties, production technologies consulting with the experts via local government in the coming days too.