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## Analysis of Farmers’ Demand for Rice Varietal Attributes in the Terai Region of Nepal

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### Abstract

Much of the efforts of breeding programs in Nepal have been focused on generating varieties with high yield potential. It is now a well established fact that farmers’ selection criteria for varieties to adopt encompasses many varietal attributes with some of them considered more important than yield potential.

The main objective of this paper is to assess the farmers’ preference for varietal technology attributes and identify their determinants. Non-parametric tests were employed to test for the statistically significant differences between/among the farmers’ categories with regard to ratings for an attribute. An ordered probit model was used to identify the determinants for major attributes.

Farmers’ preference are driven by the need for production, tolerance to stress, consumption, marketing and management considerations. Farmers have rated many of the listed varietal attributes between very important and some how important. This suggested that farmers demand varietal diversity since it is unlikely that a single rice variety will be good at supplying all of the attributes they value. Hence, many subsistence farmers usually mix several varieties because of the impossibility to find all desired varietal attributes in one single variety.

There are important variation in the demand for attributes depending upon the economic status of the farmer, his/her farming objective, and the ownership of the land. A beneficial characteristics for one farmer may be a negative one for other, or the balance between positive and negative traits may be acceptable for the farmers. These facts need to be considered while developing new varieties in order to meet multiple requirements of different categories of farmers.

**Keywords:** Attributes, farmers, Nepal, preference, variety