

Human Element of the Ceylon Cinnamon Value Chain: Functions and Role

CK Amadoru, BMRL Basnayake and DAM De Silva

Department of Agribusiness Management, Faculty of Agricultural Sciences,
Sabaragamuwa University of Sri Lanka
#ruwinibasnayake@gmail.com

The quality of the Ceylon cinnamon has created a unique place in international market for its products. To retain in the market position, it is essential to address the labor scarcity of this labor intensive industry. The objectives of the study were to identify the key human resource elements in Ceylon cinnamon value chain, to develop the map of human resources: geographical distribution of human resources, to identify the critical issues in human resource management and to explore the strategies to manage human resources. Three hundred respondents were selected randomly from Galle, Matara, Rathnapura and Kalutara administrative districts. To obtain primary data, interviewer administered questionnaires and focus group discussions were used. Results revealed that upstream of the Ceylon cinnamon value chain consisted of growers, processors under two main processing systems such as kalli system and line system. Downstream consisted of collectors, traders, value added processors and exporters. The map of the human resource elaborates the distribution of value chain members and cinnamon cultivated areas in each districts. Cinnamon processors were a key element in value chain where their knowledge and skills decide the returns to all actors of the cinnamon value chain. Cinnamon, the only the plantation crop that shares its harvest with laborers, had sharing values from one half to one third in cinnamon growing districts. Limited number of skilled processors were key barrier to value chain performances. Traditional on the job training, poor working environment, lack of recognition and inadequate job security drive youth and female employees away from the work. Off the job training with NVQ level 3 certificate for trained processors, better working environment with accommodation and meal options were identified as strategic interventions. Job recognition and issuing identify card for trained processors, medical insurance and pension scheme based on earnings will secure the employment status of cinnamon processors.

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