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**Gargi Paliwal**  
Research Scholar, Department of  
Agricultural Communication,  
Govind Ballabh Pant University  
of Agriculture & Technology,  
Pantnagar, Uttarakhand, India

**Amardeep**  
Associate Professor, Department  
of Agricultural Communication,  
Govind Ballabh Pant University  
of Agriculture & Technology,  
Pantnagar, Uttarakhand, India

## Perceived satisfaction of contract farmers with extension services offered under contract farming system in Kumaon division of Uttarakhand

**Gargi Paliwal and Amardeep**

### Abstract

Contract farming is defined as an agreement between farmers and processing marketing firms for the production and supply of agricultural products under forward agreements, frequently at pre-determined prices. The arrangement also involves the purchaser in providing a degree of production support through supply of inputs and the provision of technical advice. The basis of such arrangement is a commitment on the part of farmer to provide a specific commodity in quantities and at quality standards, determined by the purchaser and a commitment on the part of company to support the farmer's production and purchase commodity. For success of contract farming, provision of extension services plays a crucial role. Moreover how contract farming is influencing different aspect of farmers and farming conditions. It's a matter to be explored. Thus, a study was conducted to analyse an aspect of contract farming i.e. perceived satisfaction of contract farmers with extension services under contract farming system in Kumaon Division of Uttarakhand. Total 200 contract farmers constituted the sample for the study selected from two districts of Kumaon Division i.e. Udham Singh Nagar district and Nainital district. It was reported that majority of respondents (71.50%) were satisfied with the extension services, followed by 20.00 percent of the respondents who were highly satisfied with extension services and only (8.50%) of the respondents were not satisfied with the extension services provided under contract farming system. Farmers were satisfied with the extension services as it provided them relevant market information, promoted eco-friendly and sustainable technology transfer. Therefore, the overall finding of the study suggests that providing more enhanced and skilled capabilities of extension service providers may prove more beneficial to farmers for enhance production and livelihood security.

**Keywords:** Contract farming, vertical co-ordination, extension services, livelihood security

### Introduction

Agriculture is the backbone of Indian economy as 54.6 percent of Indian population depends directly on agriculture and allied activities. Contract farming is defined as a form of vertical coordination between producers and the contractor where the company directly influences the production decisions and exercises some control at the production point under the obligation of purchasing certain quantity of produce at specific price from the producers. The quantity and price relate to delivery of specific quality produce at designated location and for a period of time. Asokan (2005) <sup>[1]</sup>. In general, contractual arrangement between parties varies according to the depth and complexity of the provisions in each of the following three areas, i.e. market provision in which the grower and buyer agree to terms and conditions for the future sale and purchase of a crop or livestock product, resource provision where in conjunction with the marketing arrangements the buyer agrees to supply selected inputs, including occasional land preparation and technical advice and management specifications where the grower agrees to follow recommended production methods, input regimes, cultivation and harvesting specifications.

### Material and Methods

Two districts from Kumaon Division of Uttarakhand, i.e. Udham Singh Nagar district and Nainital district were selected for the presented study. Total 200 contract farmers constituted the sample for the study selected from two districts. The scale developed by Saravanan (2004) <sup>[3]</sup> was used for present study to measure the perceived satisfaction of contract farmers with extension services. Descriptive Research Design was used for the present study. Data was collected through pre-tested interview schedule.

**Corresponding Author:**  
**Gargi Paliwal**  
Research Scholar, Department of  
Agricultural Communication,  
Govind Ballabh Pant University  
of Agriculture & Technology,  
Pantnagar, Uttarakhand, India

## Results and Discussion

The results of the present study as well as relevant discussions have presented under following sub heads:

### 1. Relevance of Extension services

It was found that maximum number of respondents (39.50%) were found extension services relevant, followed by 37.50 per cent of the respondents who found extension services not relevant, and remaining 23.00 per cent found them highly relevant.

### 2. Quality of extension service

In terms of satisfaction level of quality of extension services it was found that maximum number of respondents i.e. (59.50%) found quality of extension services as satisfactory, followed by 25.50% who found them highly satisfactory and 15.00 per cent of the respondents found quality of extension services as unsatisfactory.

### 3. Usefulness of Extension service

From data it is clear that majority of respondents (52.50%) found extension services as useful, followed by 32.00 per cent

of the respondents who found them highly useful and only 15.50% of the respondents found them not useful.

### 4. Customer services of agency

It was found that majority of the respondents (62.50%) found customer service of agency good, followed by 21.00 per cent of the respondents who found them excellent and only 17.00% of the respondents found customer services of agency as poor.

### Overall perceived satisfaction with extension services

It is the degree of satisfaction of the farmers with the extension services and was measured in terms of relevance, quality, usefulness and customer service provided under contract farming system. It is evident from the data that majority of respondents (71.50%) were satisfied with the extension services, followed by 20.00 percent of the respondents who were highly satisfied with extension services and only (8.50%) percent of the respondents were not satisfied with the extension services provided under contract farming system.

**Table 1:** Distribution of respondents on the basis of perceived satisfaction of contract farmers with extension services.

S. No.	Components	Respondents		
		Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1.	Relevance of extension services	Not Relevant(<5)	75	37.5
		Relevant (5-8)	79	39.5
		Highly Relevant (>8)	46	23.0
2.	Quality of extension service	Unsatisfactory (<4)	30	15.0
		Satisfactory(4-8)	119	59.5
		Highly satisfactory (>8)	51	25.5
3.	Usefulness of extension service	Not useful (<5)	31	15.5
		Useful(5-9)	105	52.5
		Highly useful (>9)	64	32.0
4.	Customer services of agency	Poor(<5)	34	17.0
		Good (5-11)	125	62.5
		Excellent (>11)	41	20.5
	Overall perceived satisfaction with extension services	Not satisfied (<18)	17	8.5
		Satisfied (18-34)	143	71.5
		Highly satisfied (>34)	40	20.0

From perusal of table it is clear that proportion of contract farmers who were satisfied and highly satisfied with the extension service were more, that indicates that by and large, extension service being provided by the contract farming companies was up to the mark and farmers were deriving satisfaction out of these services.

## Conclusion

Contract farming is commonly seen as a promising means of linking poor farmers to markets, which will help in improving household welfare, and promote the modernization of the agricultural sector. For success of Contract farming extension and advisory services provided by contract farming company play crucial role more over how contract farming is influencing different aspect of farmers and farming conditions. Hence, from the above results it can be concluded that farmers were satisfied with the extension services received under contract farming system and it might be due to the reason that services provided under contract farming system helped contract farmers to solve problems related to farming and avail the benefits of sustainable technology transfer. Hence, it can be concluded that contract farming can play an important role in providing sustainable livelihood to

farmers.

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