

Buying DVDs, not pesticides

IMPACT
STUDY

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Introduction

Videos can be distributed through commercial DVD sellers. In 2015, Gérard Zoundji compiled a DVD in five languages, with nine different videos on growing vegetables. Zoundji distributed the DVD through the private sector, mainly through agro-input dealers and mobile vendors who sell movie DVDs.



Video stores that sell music and movie DVDs can be engaged to sell DVDs with farmer learning videos

Feedback from viewers

Zoundji gave the vendors the DVDs for free, in exchange for their cooperation, but allowed them to keep the money collected from each sale. He put a sticker in the DVD jacket, with a note inviting the recipients to phone in if they had questions. Of 562 people who bought the DVD, most (341) phoned Zoundji. Nearly 20% of them had been so eager to watch the videos that they bought their own DVD player. The interviewees said that they appreciated watching videos in their own language, featuring experienced farmers. 51% said that they shared the videos with friends and family.

Others called to ask where they could buy the drip irrigation equipment featured on one of the videos. The six agro-input dealers who were selling the DVD were also impressed with the video on drip irrigation, and the interest it inspired in farmers. Two of these dealers actually began to stock drip irrigation supplies themselves. Although the DVDs were only sold in southern Benin, they reached a wide audience; about a third of the respondents rang from faraway places like Togo, Nigeria, Niger and northern Benin.

Impact on production and pesticides

The farmers learned complex information from the DVD: three fourths of the interviewees said that they learned to recognize and manage nematodes by watching the videos. In follow up visits to 120 vegetable farmers in southern Benin, Zoundji found that they had been over-spraying pesticides to manage nematodes. After watching the videos, farmers realized that pesticides were harmful for the environment and their health. Over three seasons of watching the videos, the vegetable farmers adopted various control tactics. E.g. previously only 16% practiced crop rotation, but 92% did so afterwards. Planting pest-resistant crop varieties increased from 39% to 99%. After watching the videos, 86% of the interviewees spent less money on pesticides.

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Summary &
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