THEMATIC FIELD SCHOOL OF SHALLOT COMMODITY AS AN AGRICULTUREAL EXTENSION METHODE TO IMPROVE FARMERS, KNOWLEDGE, ATTITUDES, SKILLS AND PRODUCTIVITY

Setyo Rahyunanto[1*], Bimoseno Sepfrian[2]
Duta Bangsa University[1], Duta Bangsa University[2]
*Correspondence Email:srahyunanto25@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

Extension agriculture have important role for development source Power man agriculture in development agriculture that aims For increase knowledge, attitude, skills And product activity results. Various method extension Already implemented in activity the including school roomy thematic based approach participatory. Study This aim For know school roomy thematic commodities shallot as method counseling agriculture For increase knowledge, attitude, skills And productivity result. Method study is qualitative descriptive. Informant on study This a total of 30 farmers participant school field. Results study show that school roomy thematic commodities shallot cause a number of matter namely, farmers shallot show category very agree that school roomy increase knowledge And previous skills they Not yet understand or know. In improvement attitude And productivity results, showing category agree. Recommendation results study is implementation extension agriculture based on participatory with method school roomy thematic more developed again with adapt need farmer .

KEYWORDS Thematic field school, shallot, agricultureal extension methode

INTRODUCTION

The development of agricultural human resources is a very important part of the activities in agricultural development and is implemented through education and training as well as empowerment for officers (agricultural extension workers) and key actors (farmers). Agricultural extension workers in implementing agricultural extension have a very important role in order to increase the capacity of human resources of key actors and

business actors, namely knowledge, attitudes and skills in carrying out agricultural businesses. As a non-formal learning process to change the behavior of key actors, namely farmers, so that they know, want and are able to apply innovations to achieve improvements in the quality and quality of their lives, therefore, the implementation of agricultural extension requires methods and techniques that are adapted to the extension targets who have diverse individual characteristics, diverse physical and social needs, their motivations and desired goals (Anonymous, 2013). With the right method approach, extension can improve knowledge, attitudes and skills in managing resources optimally, implementing sustainable agricultural practices and adopting technologies that can increase productivity.

Various extension methods have been applied in development activities, including participatory approaches which according to Bachtiar, et al (2025) actively involve farmers in the learning process, so that they can share experiences and find solutions together. Extension methods with a participatory approach by Mardikanto and Pertiwi (2019) can be in the form of *Rapid Rural Appraisal* (RRA), *Participatory Rapid Appraisal* (PRA), *Focus Group Discussion* (FGD), *Participatory Learning and Action* (PLA), Participatory Training and *Farmers Field School* or known as Field School.

The potential for shallot development is inseparable from the problems experienced by farmers both internally and externally. Internal problems are generally a factor of lack of knowledge and ability to apply innovative cultivation technology, while external factors are control of attacks by plant pests. (Kurniati, 2019). In addition to these problems, the factor of still limited access to agricultural information experienced by shallot farmers in Glesungrejo Village, Baturetno District, Wonogiri Regency, resulting in a reduced level of knowledge, attitudes and skills of farmers in managing shallot farming. (Anonymous, 2024)

Based on these problems, this study aims to determine the thematic field school for onion commodities as an agricultural extension method to improve farmers' knowledge, attitudes, skills and yield productivity.

RESEARCH METHOD

This research was conducted from April to July 2025 in Glesungrejo Village, Baturetno District, Wonogiri Regency. This study used a qualitative approach that emphasized objective measurement and qualitative descriptive analysis based on the collected data. The research informants were shallot farmers in Glesungrejo Village, Baturetno District, Wonogiri Regency. The informant criteria included 30 participants in the shallot commodity thematic field school. Data collection techniques were carried out through questionnaires and interviews. Meanwhile, to test the validity of the data, source triangulation was used.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Thematic field schools are a group-based extension method that provides opportunities for farmers to learn collaboratively with the guidance of agricultural extension workers (Nuzuliyah and Irawan, 2022). In this method, farmers not only receive theory but also directly apply agricultural practices on their land. The advantage of this approach lies in the active interaction between farmers, which allows for the exchange of experiences and solutions to various agricultural problems. Furthermore, the group learning system allows agricultural extension workers to provide more intensive guidance, making it easier for farmers to understand and adopt introduced innovations .

Amanah et al (2021) further explained that the thematic field school for shallot commodities as an agricultural extension method is not only a one-way extension activity *in* studying shallot commodities but there is interaction between farmers and agricultural extension workers as companions, so that a process of behavioral change is built which is a manifestation of knowledge, attitudes and skills as well as increasing productivity.

The thematic field school for shallot commodities includes stages of socialization, farmer discussions, farmer courses, farm field days (FFD), supervision and mentoring (Anonymous, 2025), so that farmers as participants will gain a deeper understanding, thus facilitating the transfer of information and adoption of innovations, especially for shallot commodities.

Thematic Field Schools to Enhance Knowledge

Thematic field school of shallot commodity as an agricultural extension method to increase knowledge is included in the strongly agree category. The material presented in the thematic field school provides knowledge about shallot cultivation technology needed by farmers, provides knowledge about soil processing as a planting medium and land preparation, provides knowledge about selecting seeds that have high germination power, provides knowledge about planting distance, provides knowledge about fertilization and irrigation, provides knowledge about integrated control of plant pests that are environmentally friendly, provides knowledge about good post-harvest handling, provides knowledge about marketing, provides knowledge about making botanical pesticides.

Thematic field schools teach many new things that participants previously didn't know or understand. This aligns with research by Nuzuliyah and Irawan (2022), which found that participants' knowledge increased after attending field schools.

Thematic Field School to Form Attitudes

Attitude has a positive relationship with the opportunity for farmers to adopt shallot cultivation innovations. The more open (positive) the farmer's attitude towards new innovations, the greater the opportunity to adopt the material presented in the thematic field school. The thematic field school for shallot commodities as an agricultural extension method to change attitudes is included in the agree category, meaning that the farmer's attitude is positive. Farmers have more confidence in developing shallots so they feel happy and agree to adopt cultivation technology innovations after getting the material learned according to their needs, during the activity they always receive assistance from agricultural extension workers when attending the thematic field school. Thematic field schools are considered an appropriate extension method because farmers feel involved in participating in this activity.

Thematic field schools involving agricultural extension workers provide guidance and assistance to transfer technology to farmers and provide direct opportunities to practice the material learned, making farmers feel that thematic school activities are very beneficial. This is consistent with the results of research by Nuryanti, et al. (2020), which explains that activities that provide opportunities to use technology that is appropriate for extension activities will provide direct benefits to members of traditional communities such as farmers. Furthermore, Rahyunanto, et al. (2020) explained that by involving farmers in the extension process from planning, implementation, and evaluation, their attitudes are positive, and this influences their behavior in following up on extension activities.

Thematic Field Schools to Improve Skills

Farmer skills are the ability of farmers to cultivate shallots related to their farming expertise. The thematic field school for shallot commodities to improve farmer skills is included in the agree category. Farmers assess that the thematic field school for shallots makes them more skilled in land processing using agricultural machinery, thereby reducing expenses for manual labor costs, treating shallot seeds before planting, applying recommended planting techniques, making biological pesticides to control plant pests, applying appropriate control techniques for plant pests so that they are more effective and efficient, and applying shallot harvesting techniques to reduce the risk of crop damage.

Thematic field schools, which provide participating farmers with the opportunity to directly participate in activities ranging from outreach to evaluation, provide farmers with ample time and opportunity to try out materials related to mastering skills in shallot farming. This aligns with research by Kusuma et al. (2023), which found that field schools were able to improve the skills of participating farmers compared to before participating in the program.

Thematic Field Schools to Increase Productivity

The shallot thematic field school provides participating farmers with increased knowledge, positive attitude changes and better skills through a learning or education process on best practices, new technological innovations, effective management of plant pest control so that shallot farmers are able to manage their farming businesses more efficiently, effectively and increase productivity so as to gain profits.

The thematic field school for shallots to increase productivity was categorized as agreeable by participating farmers. Farmers assessed that the thematic field school for shallots provided knowledge and skills that, when applied, could increase the productivity of their shallot crops. With land management technology, recommended planting distances, appropriate fertilizer dosages, pest and disease management, and proper harvest handling, shallot productivity could be increased. This is consistent with the research results of Prihono and Mardani (2020), which stated that farmers participating in the field school training had a positive attitude towards the implementation of the field school program, which had a positive correlation with crop productivity, as indicated by increased yields after attending the field school.

CONCLUSION

The shallot thematic field school is a participatory agricultural extension method that can improve knowledge, attitudes, skills, and productivity. To motivate and foster farmer interest in implementing a technology sustainably, a participatory approach is needed, implemented from the initial implementation or socialization stage to the evaluation stage. It is hoped that it will influence farmer participation in adopting technology that can improve yields and sustainability.

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