

Farmers' Attitudes Towards Fertilizer and Pesticide Use in Enhancing Agricultural Yields



Soleman Imbiri¹, Hermantoro², Ludia Theresia Wambrau³

Program Studi Agribisnis, Fakultas Pertanian, Universitas Papua, Indonesia^{1,3}

Institut Pertanian Stiper, Indonesia²

Email: solemanimbiri@yahoo.com.au, hermantoro@indtiperjogja.ac.id, wambrau@unipa.ac.id

KEY WORDS	ABSTRACT
Farmers' Attitudes, Fertilizer Use, Pesticide Application, Agricultural Productivity, Sustainable Farming	Agriculture plays a critical role in ensuring global food security, with fertilizers and pesticides serving as essential inputs to enhance crop productivity. However, farmers' attitudes toward the use of these agrochemicals significantly influence their effectiveness and environmental sustainability. This study aims to explore farmers' perceptions, knowledge, and behavioral patterns regarding the use of fertilizers and pesticides in improving agricultural yields. Employing a qualitative research approach, this study utilizes a literature review and library research methodology to analyze existing academic sources, policy reports, and case studies related to farmers' perspectives on agrochemical usage. The findings indicate that while fertilizers and pesticides contribute to increased crop yields, farmers' attitudes vary based on factors such as economic considerations, environmental awareness, government policies, and access to education. Some farmers perceive fertilizers and pesticides as indispensable for achieving high productivity, whereas others express concerns about soil degradation, water pollution, and human health risks. Additionally, studies suggest that knowledge dissemination, sustainable agricultural practices, and regulatory frameworks play crucial roles in shaping farmers' decisions. The study highlights the need for integrated approaches that balance productivity and environmental sustainability through farmer education, government support, and the promotion of eco-friendly alternatives. By synthesizing insights from various sources, this research provides a comprehensive understanding of the factors influencing farmers' attitudes toward fertilizers and pesticides. Future research should further investigate regional differences and the long-term implications of agrochemical use on agricultural ecosystems.

1. INTRODUCTION

Agriculture remains the backbone of global food production, with fertilizers and pesticides playing a pivotal role in ensuring high crop yields and food security (FAO, 2021). These agrochemicals enhance soil fertility, control pests, and reduce crop losses, contributing to increased agricultural productivity (Sharma et al., 2020). However, the indiscriminate use of fertilizers and pesticides has raised

environmental and health concerns, including soil degradation, water contamination, and human health hazards (García-González et al., 2022). Farmers' attitudes toward these inputs significantly influence their adoption patterns, application methods, and overall impact on agricultural sustainability (Mitra & Yadav, 2021). Understanding these attitudes is essential for promoting responsible and efficient use of fertilizers and pesticides in modern farming systems (Khan et al., 2020).



Despite extensive research on the benefits and risks associated with fertilizers and pesticides, limited studies focus on farmers' perspectives and decision-making processes regarding their usage (Nguyen et al., 2021). Previous studies have predominantly analyzed the technical efficiency of agrochemical applications, overlooking the socio-cultural, economic, and psychological factors that shape farmers' choices (Hossain et al., 2022). Furthermore, while governmental and non-governmental organizations promote sustainable agricultural practices, there is inadequate empirical evidence on how farmers perceive these initiatives and integrate them into their traditional farming methods (Rahman & Zhang, 2020). Addressing this gap is crucial for developing policies that align with farmers' needs while mitigating environmental risks.

The increasing global population and demand for food necessitate a balance between high agricultural yields and sustainable farming practices (Tilman et al., 2021). Excessive dependence on chemical fertilizers and pesticides has led to long-term soil degradation and biodiversity loss. Policymakers and agricultural extension services require empirical data on farmers' attitudes to design targeted interventions that encourage the adoption of eco-friendly alternatives while ensuring optimal productivity (Patra & Samal, 2020). This study is timely as it contributes to the ongoing discourse on sustainable agriculture by examining farmers' perspectives on agrochemical use and its implications for agricultural resilience.

Several studies have explored the impact of fertilizers and pesticides on crop yields. For instance, Kumar et al. (2020) examined the role of nitrogen-based fertilizers in enhancing wheat

production but did not assess farmers' perceptions of their sustainability. Similarly, Ahmed et al. (2021) analyzed pesticide resistance among crops but failed to consider farmers' awareness and decision-making. Additionally, a study by Lee et al. (2022) emphasized the economic benefits of pesticide application but neglected its environmental trade-offs. While these studies provide valuable insights into agrochemical effectiveness, they lack a comprehensive analysis of farmers' attitudes and behavioral patterns in adopting fertilizers and pesticides.

This research contributes to the existing literature by bridging the knowledge gap regarding farmers' perceptions of fertilizer and pesticide use. Unlike previous studies that primarily focus on technical efficiency and environmental consequences, this study explores the socio-economic, cultural, and psychological dimensions of farmers' decision-making processes. By employing a qualitative approach through literature review and library research, this study synthesizes diverse perspectives to offer a holistic understanding of the factors influencing agrochemical adoption.

The primary objective of this study is to analyze farmers' attitudes toward fertilizers and pesticides in enhancing agricultural yields. Specifically, this study aims to:

1. Examine farmers' knowledge and perceptions of agrochemical benefits and risks.
2. Identify socio-economic and cultural factors affecting fertilizer and pesticide usage.
3. Evaluate the role of government policies and extension services in influencing farmers' decision-making.
4. Provide policy recommendations for

promoting sustainable and responsible agrochemical use.

Significance of the Study

This study holds significance for multiple stakeholders, including policymakers, agricultural extension workers, and farmers. By understanding farmers' attitudes, policymakers can formulate regulations that balance productivity and environmental sustainability. Agricultural extension programs can tailor their training to address farmers' concerns and encourage the adoption of best practices. Farmers, in turn, can benefit from improved awareness and access to sustainable alternatives that enhance productivity while minimizing ecological harm. Ultimately, this study contributes to the broader goal of achieving sustainable agricultural development.

Farmers' attitudes refer to their perceptions, beliefs, and behaviors regarding the use of fertilizers and pesticides in agricultural practices (Nguyen et al., 2021). These attitudes are shaped by multiple factors, including economic conditions, environmental awareness, and traditional farming practices. Positive attitudes toward fertilizers and pesticides often correlate with increased adoption rates, whereas negative perceptions may lead to resistance or alternative approaches, such as organic farming (Hossain et al., 2022). Understanding these attitudes is crucial for designing effective agricultural policies and extension programs that align with farmers' preferences and needs.

Fertilizers are chemical or organic substances that provide essential nutrients to plants, enhancing soil fertility and crop productivity (Sharma et al., 2020). Pesticides, on the other hand, are substances used to control pests and diseases that threaten crops (García-González et

al., 2022). While these inputs contribute to high agricultural yields, excessive or improper application can lead to environmental degradation and health hazards (Rahman & Zhang, 2020). This study examines how farmers perceive the effectiveness, affordability, and risks associated with fertilizers and pesticides in their daily farming activities.

Agricultural yield refers to the output of crops per unit area, which is a critical indicator of food security and economic stability (Tilman et al., 2021). Fertilizers and pesticides play a significant role in increasing yields by improving soil nutrients and reducing crop losses due to pests and diseases (Kumar et al., 2020). However, the sustainability of yield improvement depends on responsible agrochemical use, adoption of integrated pest management (IPM) strategies, and soil conservation techniques. This study explores the relationship between farmers' attitudes, agrochemical application, and the sustainability of agricultural yields.

2. METHOD

This study employs a qualitative research approach with a literature review (library research) method to explore farmers' attitudes toward the use of fertilizers and pesticides in enhancing agricultural yields. A literature review is a systematic examination of existing academic sources, including journal articles, books, policy reports, and case studies, to analyze patterns, trends, and gaps in knowledge on a specific topic (Snyder, 2019). This research method is particularly relevant as it synthesizes diverse perspectives from previous studies, enabling a comprehensive understanding of the socio-economic, environmental, and psychological factors influencing farmers' decision-making regarding agrochemical use.

practices."

For data analysis, this study applies the thematic analysis method, which involves systematically identifying, categorizing, and interpreting recurring themes within the selected literature (Braun & Clarke, 2019). The analysis follows a three-stage process: (1) data familiarization, where collected studies are reviewed in-depth to identify key arguments; (2) coding and categorization, where recurring themes such as economic influences, environmental concerns, and policy impacts on fertilizer and pesticide use are identified; and (3) synthesis and interpretation, where the findings are critically discussed to provide a holistic understanding of farmers' perspectives (Nowell et al., 2019). The thematic analysis framework ensures that the study systematically integrates findings from different sources, allowing for a robust examination of both converging and diverging views on the research topic.

This qualitative study contributes to the existing literature by providing a comprehensive synthesis of farmers' attitudes towards fertilizers and pesticides, emphasizing socio-economic and environmental dimensions. The findings will inform policymakers, agricultural extension services, and researchers by highlighting key determinants influencing farmers' decision-making and proposing strategies for promoting sustainable agricultural practices. The study acknowledges potential limitations, such as the reliance on secondary data, which may limit direct engagement with farmers' lived experiences. However, by drawing on diverse and credible sources, this research offers valuable insights that can serve as a foundation for future empirical investigations.

The data sources for this study include secondary data collected from peer-reviewed journal articles, government reports, institutional publications, and conference proceedings published within the last five years. The selection of literature is based on relevance, credibility, and methodological rigor to ensure the inclusion of high-quality academic insights (Boell & Cecez-Kecmanovic, 2020). Additionally, global and regional reports from organizations such as the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and the World Bank are included to provide context on agricultural sustainability policies and trends (FAO, 2021). The study specifically focuses on research that discusses farmers' knowledge, perceptions, and behaviors toward fertilizers and pesticides, as well as factors influencing their adoption, such as economic constraints, environmental awareness, and policy interventions (Nguyen et al., 2021).

The data collection technique follows a structured document analysis approach, where relevant literature is identified using databases such as Google Scholar, Scopus, Web of Science, and ScienceDirect (Massaro et al., 2019). The inclusion criteria for selecting sources are: (1) publications from reputable academic journals, (2) research conducted within the past five years (2019–2024), (3) studies focusing on farmers' attitudes toward fertilizers and pesticides, and (4) publications in English to ensure accessibility and comparability. The exclusion criteria include articles lacking methodological transparency, opinion-based papers without empirical data, and outdated studies that do not align with contemporary agricultural practices. A keyword-based search strategy is applied, using terms such as "farmers' attitudes towards fertilizers and pesticides," "agrochemical use in agriculture," and "sustainable farming

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The table below presents 10 selected articles from the past five years (2014–2024) obtained from Google Scholar, focusing on farmers' attitudes, the impact of fertilizers and

pesticides, sustainable agricultural practices, environmental concerns, and government policies. These articles were carefully filtered from a broader set of literature to ensure relevance and scientific rigor.

Table 1 Literature Review Summary on Farmers’ Attitudes Towards Fertilizer and Pesticide Use

No.	Author(s) & Year	Title	Research Focus	Key Findings
1	(Qiao & Huang, 2021)	Farmers' Risk Preference and Fertilizer Use	Relationship between risk preferences and fertilizer use in China	Risk-averse farmers apply more fertilizer when output elasticity is high; risk-takers apply more otherwise.
2	(Brunelle et al., 2024)	Reducing Chemical Inputs in Agriculture Requires a System Change	Impact of fertilizers and pesticides on yield gaps	Fertilizers mitigate abiotic yield gaps; pesticides reduce biotic risks but can increase yield variability.
3	(Sandy et al., 2024)	Knowledge Level of Farmers Regarding the Use of Pesticide for Pest Control	Farmers' knowledge and attitudes towards pesticide use in Indonesia	Farmers rely heavily on pesticides but lack knowledge on Integrated Pest Management (IPM).
4	(Muraty, 2022)	Exploring the Benefits of Advanced Technologies in Fertilizer, Pesticide, and Water Management	Adoption of precision agriculture technologies	Advanced technologies enhance productivity but face barriers like cost and resistance to change.
5	(USDA, 2025)	Fertilizers & Pesticides	Practices for managing fertilizers and pesticides in U.S. agriculture	Organic farming avoids synthetic chemicals; conventional farming uses various chemical inputs.
6	(Hossain et al., 2024)	Pesticide Knowledge and Attitude Among Potato Growing Farmers	Frequency of pesticide use among potato farmers in Bangladesh	Education level correlates positively with pesticide application frequency; awareness doesn't deter usage.
7	(Imbiri et al., 2021)	A novel taxonomy for risks in agribusiness	Risk Management in Agribusiness Supply Chains (ASC)	Agribusiness Supply Chain (ASC) Risks and Their Management.



		supply chains: A systematic literature review		
8	(Imbiri et al., 2024)	Risk propagation and resilience in the agribusiness supply chain: a systematic literature review	Investigating risk propagation and resilience in the agribusiness supply chain (ASC).	The research advances the construct of risk propagation and resilience in the ASC and develops a framework proposing directions in risk propagation and resilience in ASC research.

Based on the various studies reviewed, several key findings emerge regarding farmers' risk preferences, fertilizer and pesticide use, precision agriculture technology adoption, and risk management in agribusiness supply chains (ASC). These findings provide valuable insights into how these factors influence agricultural productivity, environmental sustainability, and the economic stability of farmers and the agribusiness sector as a whole.

The study by Qiao & Huang (2021) in China reveals that farmers' risk preferences significantly influence their fertilizer use. Risk-averse farmers tend to apply more fertilizer when output elasticity is high to prevent potential yield losses. Conversely, risk-taking farmers are more flexible in fertilizer application, adjusting based on cost efficiency and environmental conditions. This finding suggests that agricultural policies, including fertilizer subsidies, should be tailored to farmers' risk profiles to achieve optimal efficiency.

Sarma (2022) states that farmers use pesticides in order to reduce the production risk and influenced by their psychological factors such as *behavioral attitude*, *subjective norm*, *perceived behavioural control*, and *behavioural goal*. Government proposes the effective pesticide policy and ongoing monitoring of the application process as well as expansion of indigenous technologies, and promoting increased understanding of the use of pesticides

by farmers, in order to resulting in sustainable crop production and healthy consumption. However, farmers' behavioral goals influenced their intentions to obey the pesticide application regulations.

Regarding yield gaps in agriculture, the study by Brunelle et al. (2024) highlights that fertilizers play a crucial role in addressing nutrient deficiencies, which hinder plant growth. Meanwhile, pesticides effectively mitigate biotic risks such as pests and diseases but can increase yield variability due to pest resistance and negative environmental impacts. Therefore, a more balanced approach is needed between increasing crop yields and ensuring environmental sustainability, such as implementing integrated pest management (IPM) strategies to reduce reliance on synthetic pesticides.

However, a study by Sandy et al. (2024) in Indonesia found that most farmers heavily depend on pesticides yet lack sufficient knowledge about proper dosage and environmental effects. The lack of education on IPM leads to inefficient pest control and potential environmental harm. This underscores the need for wider education and outreach programs to enhance farmers' understanding of more sustainable pest control methods.

In terms of technology, Muraty (2022) explored

the adoption of precision agriculture technologies, showing that while such innovations can enhance efficiency in fertilizer, pesticide, and water management, implementation remains limited due to high costs and farmers' resistance to change. A lack of technical skills and limited access to advanced technology further hinder adoption. Thus, government and private sector support in the form of technology subsidies and farmer training programs is essential to facilitate the transition to precision agriculture.

On the other hand, a study by USDA (2025) compared organic and conventional farming practices. Findings show that organic farming avoids synthetic chemical inputs, relying instead on natural fertilizers and crop rotation to maintain soil fertility. In contrast, conventional farming relies on synthetic fertilizers and pesticides, which offer higher yields but pose greater environmental risks. Agricultural policies should therefore consider a hybrid approach that integrates organic and conventional farming methods to maximize productivity while ensuring environmental sustainability.

Meanwhile, a study by Hossain et al. (2024) in Bangladesh found a positive correlation between farmers' education levels and the frequency of pesticide use. However, increased awareness of pesticide hazards does not necessarily reduce usage. This indicates that awareness alone is insufficient to change farmers' behavior, necessitating stricter regulations and incentive-based policies to curb excessive pesticide application.

In the context of agribusiness supply chains (ASC), Imbiri et al. (2021) developed a risk taxonomy for ASC and identified that risks in agribusiness supply chains can be categorized

into environmental, organizational, and supply chain network risks. Poor risk management can destabilize supply chains and increase vulnerability to external shocks. Therefore, digitalization and logistical innovations are crucial in improving ASC resilience.

Furthermore, Imbiri et al. (2024) explored how risks propagate within agribusiness supply chains and how resilience strategies can be implemented to mitigate them. Findings indicate that supply chain resilience can be strengthened through product diversification, better inventory management, and adaptive logistics strategies. As such, a technology-driven and policy-supported resilience model is necessary to enhance efficiency and sustainability in agribusiness supply chains.

In West Papua, Indonesia, a study by Imbiri et al. (2023) examined supply chain risks in the palm oil industry from the perspective of key stakeholders. The findings reveal that sustainability issues and regulatory challenges remain major obstacles in the palm oil supply chain. Clearer policies and sustainable certification systems are needed to improve governance and sustainability in the palm oil sector.

Lastly, Wambrau et al. (2024) analyzed the marketing patterns of smallholder rubber farmers in Southern Papua, Indonesia. Their study highlights that imbalanced profit distribution among supply chain actors poses a major challenge in the rubber trade. To address this issue, price transparency and government support in strengthening market access and distribution infrastructure are essential.

Overall, these studies provide critical insights into various challenges and opportunities in the agricultural and agribusiness sectors. Improved

risk management, increased adoption of precision agriculture, and sustainable agricultural policies are essential to boosting productivity without compromising environmental integrity and farmers' well-being. Collaboration among governments, academia, and the private sector will play a key role in developing a more efficient, resilient, and sustainable agricultural system.

The use of fertilizers and pesticides plays a crucial role in increasing agricultural productivity and ensuring food security. However, farmers' attitudes towards these inputs vary significantly depending on their risk preferences, knowledge levels, access to technology, and environmental awareness. Several studies have examined these aspects, providing insights into how farmers' behavior, government policies, and technological advancements influence fertilizer and pesticide use, and ultimately, agricultural yields.

Farmers' attitudes towards fertilizers are strongly influenced by their risk perception and economic considerations. The study by Qiao & Huang (2021) in China found that risk-averse farmers tend to use more fertilizers, particularly when output elasticity is high, to minimize potential yield losses. On the other hand, risk-taking farmers apply fertilizers more selectively, optimizing for cost efficiency and environmental factors. This indicates that fertilizer use is not merely a technical decision but is deeply intertwined with farmers' risk management strategies. Understanding these attitudes can help policymakers design targeted fertilizer subsidy programs that cater to different farmer profiles, promoting both productivity and environmental sustainability.

Similarly, the role of pesticides in agricultural yield improvement is widely debated. While

pesticides effectively reduce biotic risks, such as pests and diseases, their overuse leads to environmental degradation and increased resistance among pests. The study by Brunelle et al. (2024) highlights that pesticides contribute to yield stability in the short term but can cause long-term fluctuations due to evolving pest resistance. Additionally, research by Sandy et al. (2024) in Indonesia reveals that many farmers rely heavily on pesticides but lack sufficient knowledge about proper application techniques and the principles of Integrated Pest Management (IPM). This over-reliance not only leads to inefficiencies but also poses health risks to farmers and ecological imbalances. These findings underscore the need for comprehensive farmer education programs that promote safer and more sustainable pest management strategies.

The adoption of precision agriculture technologies presents a potential solution to optimizing fertilizer and pesticide use while minimizing negative environmental impacts. However, studies such as Muraty (2022) indicate that despite the proven benefits of these technologies, high costs and resistance to change remain significant barriers to widespread adoption. Many farmers lack the technical knowledge and financial resources to integrate precision agriculture into their farming practices. To encourage adoption, government incentives, training programs, and access to affordable agricultural technology must be expanded, ensuring that precision agriculture becomes accessible to both smallholder and large-scale farmers.

Moreover, the contrast between organic and conventional farming approaches further highlights differing attitudes towards fertilizers and pesticides. According to USDA (2025), organic farmers deliberately avoid synthetic

fertilizers and pesticides, instead relying on natural soil amendments and crop rotation to enhance yields. Conversely, conventional farmers prioritize productivity, making extensive use of synthetic inputs to maximize short-term gains. The challenge lies in balancing productivity with sustainability, where an integrated approach that incorporates both organic and conventional practices could provide an optimal solution for increasing yields while preserving soil health and biodiversity.

Education plays a significant role in shaping farmers' attitudes towards pesticide use. The study by Hossain et al. (2024) in Bangladesh found that farmers with higher education levels tend to apply pesticides more frequently, yet awareness alone does not necessarily lead to reduced usage. This suggests that while education can improve farmers' access to information, behavioral change requires additional interventions, such as regulatory measures, incentives for sustainable practices, and demonstrations of alternative pest control methods like biopesticides and companion cropping.

Beyond individual farm-level decisions, risk management in the agribusiness supply chain (ASC) also affects fertilizer and pesticide use. Imbiri et al. (2021) categorized ASC risks into environmental, organizational, and supply chain-related factors, emphasizing that ineffective risk management can disrupt input supply chains, pricing stability, and market access. Additionally, Imbiri et al. (2024) explored how risk propagation and resilience influence fertilizer and pesticide availability, highlighting that supply chain shocks can lead to price volatility and accessibility issues for farmers. Therefore, addressing ASC risks through better infrastructure, policy interventions, and market stability mechanisms

is crucial to ensuring farmers can consistently access and apply the right inputs.

Case studies from Indonesia further illustrate how institutional and economic factors influence farmers' attitudes toward fertilizer and pesticide use. In the palm oil sector, research by Imbiri et al. (2023) in West Papua found that regulatory uncertainties and sustainability challenges impact fertilizer application patterns. Likewise, a study on rubber farmers in Papua by Wambrauw et al. (2024) highlighted that market imbalances and price disparities affect how farmers invest in agricultural inputs. These findings indicate that access to fair markets and stable pricing mechanisms can significantly shape fertilizer and pesticide application decisions.

4. CONCLUSION

Farmers' attitudes towards fertilizer and pesticide use are shaped by a complex interplay of risk preferences, knowledge, economic incentives, technological advancements, and supply chain dynamics. While fertilizers are essential for addressing yield gaps, their overuse can lead to environmental degradation. Similarly, while pesticides help control biotic threats, misuse and over-application can cause resistance and ecological harm. The adoption of precision agriculture and integrated pest management (IPM) offers promising solutions, but challenges such as cost barriers and resistance to change must be addressed.

To enhance agricultural yields sustainably, a multi-stakeholder approach is needed. Governments must provide better subsidies and incentives for sustainable practices, researchers should continue to develop eco-friendly alternatives, and farmers must be empowered with education and technology. Ultimately,

fostering a balanced, knowledge-driven approach to fertilizer and pesticide use will be key to ensuring long-term agricultural productivity and environmental sustainability.

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