

**THE ROLE OF FARMERS' GROUPS IN RICE FARMING AT DESA WEHALI,
KECAMATAN MALAKA TENGAH, KABUPATEN MALAKA**
(Peran Kelompok Petani Dalam Budidaya Padi Di Desa Wehali, Kecamatan Malaka Tengah,
Kabupaten Malaka)

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ABSTRACT

Lowland rice farming in Wehali Village, Central Malaka District, Malaka Regency, still faces various problems, including low productivity, limited farmers' knowledge and skills, weak access to capital and technology, and the suboptimal role of farmer groups in supporting farming activities. In fact, farmer groups have a strategic role as learning classes, cooperation forums, and production and marketing units in improving the performance of lowland rice farming. This study aims (1) to identify the characteristics of lowland rice farming, (2) to analyze the role of farmer groups in lowland rice farming, and (3) to determine the factors related to the role of farmer groups in Wehali Village. The study was conducted in May 2025 using a survey method. The research location and respondents were determined through purposive sampling involving three active farmer groups with a total of 60 farmer respondents. Data were collected through interviews, observations, and questionnaires, and analyzed descriptively. The results show that (1) the characteristics of lowland rice farming in Wehali Village are dominated by farmers with relatively small landholdings and low levels of education; (2) the role of farmer groups is generally categorized as moderately effective, particularly as learning classes and cooperation forums, while their role as production and marketing units has not been optimally implemented; and (3) factors related to the role of farmer groups include education level, farming experience, and farmer participation in group activities. The conclusion of this study indicates that strengthening the role of farmer groups through improved extension services, training programs, and cooperation with relevant stakeholders is necessary to enhance the productivity and sustainability of lowland rice farming in Wehali Village.

Keywords: Role of Farmer Groups, Lowland Rice Farming, Productivity, Wehali Village

ABSTRAK

Pertanian padi sawah di Desa Wehali, Kecamatan Malaka Tengah, Kabupaten Malaka, masih menghadapi berbagai masalah, termasuk produktivitas rendah, pengetahuan dan keterampilan petani yang terbatas, akses modal dan teknologi yang lemah, dan peran kelompok tani yang kurang optimal dalam mendukung kegiatan pertanian. Padahal, kelompok tani memiliki peran strategis sebagai kelas pembelajaran, forum kerja sama, dan unit produksi dan pemasaran dalam meningkatkan kinerja pertanian padi sawah. Penelitian ini bertujuan (1) untuk mengidentifikasi karakteristik pertanian padi sawah, (2) untuk menganalisis peran kelompok tani dalam pertanian padi sawah, dan (3) untuk menentukan faktor-faktor yang berkaitan dengan peran kelompok tani di Desa Wehali. Penelitian ini dilakukan pada Mei 2025 dengan menggunakan metode survei. Lokasi penelitian dan responden ditentukan melalui purposive sampling yang melibatkan tiga kelompok tani aktif dengan total 60 responden tani. Data dikumpulkan melalui wawancara, observasi, dan kuesioner, dan dianalisis secara deskriptif. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa (1) karakteristik pertanian padi sawah di Desa Wehali didominasi oleh petani dengan kepemilikan lahan yang relatif kecil dan tingkat pendidikan yang rendah; (2) peran kelompok tani secara umum dikategorikan cukup efektif, terutama sebagai kelas pembelajaran dan forum kerja sama, sedangkan peran mereka sebagai unit produksi dan pemasaran belum diimplementasikan secara optimal; dan (3) faktor-faktor yang berkaitan dengan peran kelompok tani meliputi tingkat pendidikan, pengalaman bertani, dan partisipasi petani dalam kegiatan kelompok. Kesimpulan dari penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa penguatan peran kelompok tani melalui peningkatan pelayanan penyuluhan, program pelatihan, dan kerja sama dengan pemangku kepentingan terkait diperlukan untuk meningkatkan produktivitas dan keberlanjutan pertanian padi sawah di Desa Wehali.

Kata Kunci: Peran kelompok tani, pertanian padi dataran rendah, produktivitas, Desa Wehali

INTRODUCTION

Indonesia is an agrarian country, meaning that agriculture plays a vital role in the overall national economy. This is evident in the large population and workforce living or working in the agricultural sector, as well as in the national products derived from agriculture. Given its agrarian economic characteristics, agricultural land is a crucial factor of production for farmers. Differences in land ownership over the quantity and quality of land result in differences in production and income within the agricultural sector. The income received by farmers determines their consumption and savings patterns (Mubyarto, 1994).

Role is a dynamic aspect of status, meaning that every individual with a certain social status is expected to exercise a series of rights and obligations according to their position in society. Roles reflect the behavior expected by the social environment of that individual, thus helping to create order and stability in social interactions. Soerjono Soekanto (2009).

Collaboration between extension workers and farmer groups is crucial for producing better, more qualified farmers. Therefore, the role of extension workers can be described as motivators and communicators. They serve as facilitators and innovators, providing guidance to farmer groups, directed at implementing agribusiness systems and enhancing their roles. Marbun (2019) states that to increase the effectiveness of extension activities and to foster and develop farmers' participation in agricultural development, it is necessary to provide guidance to established farmer groups so that these groups can develop into a viable economic force and subsequently improve the welfare of their members.

Humans can be described as social beings who constantly strive to fulfill their needs. These efforts are always guided by the cultural knowledge they possess and use to perceive an object they encounter. After being accompanied by certain expectations about the object, they then act or behave in a certain way toward that object, whether in the form of objects or other people (Irianto & Suciantini, 2018).

Living in groups is crucial to life. A group can be strong if it is well managed. A farmer group is an institution at the farm level formed to organize farmers in running their businesses (Hermanto & Swastika, 2011). The development of a farmer group is inseparable from aspects of group dynamics, such as communication within the group to build relationships among group members and unity within the group.

Production is an economic process that transforms inputs or resources, such as raw materials, labor, and technology, into goods or services ready for consumption or marketing. This process aims to create added value by producing products that precisely meet consumer needs and desires. In production, efficiency and quality are crucial for achieving optimal results, both in the manufacturing and service sectors, which in turn contribute to the economy and the well-being of society.

Wehali Village, Malaka Tengah District, Malaka Regency, is predominantly a rice paddy farmer. However, the welfare of farmers in this village remains relatively low, due to several factors: limited skills and knowledge about optimal rice cultivation techniques, and limited access to capital and technology. Farmers often struggle to obtain capital to purchase seeds, fertilizers, and pesticides. Rice prices frequently fall below the cost of production, resulting in losses.

Farmer groups in Wehali Village are part of an effort to organize farmers in the area to improve agricultural yields and community welfare. There are 14 farmer groups in Wehali Village, consisting of local farmers who work together to manage agricultural resources more efficiently, such as land, air, and agricultural technology. They are also involved in several government programs aimed at optimizing agricultural output, such as agricultural extension services, procurement of agricultural equipment, and capacity building in rice cultivation. However, despite their involvement in several government programs, farmer groups in Wehali Village have not yet increased rice production in Wehali Village.

This is due to a lack of collaboration between extension workers and farmer groups in conducting visits or training to empower rice farmers. Therefore, empowerment and extension activities are needed to empower farmers and increase their productivity in managing their land, thus achieving better yields.

Based on the above background, the researcher intends to conduct a study entitled "The Role of Farmer Groups in Rice Farming in Wehali Village, Malaka Tengah District, Malaka Regency."

RESEARCH METHODS

The research was conducted in Wehali Village, Malaka Tengah District, Malaka Regency. This research was conducted from May 2025 until completion with the consideration that the location is a place for farmers' farming activities (land) and involves farmers in the activities of farmer groups that are still active in increasing paddy rice production.

Data collection was conducted using a survey method. The types of data collected in this study consisted of primary and secondary data. Primary data were obtained from direct interviews with respondents using a pre-prepared questionnaire and field observations. Questions in the questionnaire were measured using a Likert scale with a score of 1–3, where a score of 1 indicates a category of less influential, a score of 2 indicates a category of quite influential, and a score of 3 indicates a category of influential. The use of this Likert scale was adjusted to the research needs and the characteristics of the respondents (Sugiyono, 2023). Secondary data were obtained from relevant agencies such as the Wehali Village Office, the East Nusa Tenggara Central Statistics Agency Office, and from library and internet sources.

1. To answer the first objective, namely to determine the characteristics of farming respondents, a qualitative descriptive analysis will be conducted, aiming to produce data in the form of a concrete picture in the field. In this study, the qualitative descriptive method was conducted on respondents in the rice paddy farmers in Wehali Village.
2. To answer the second objective, namely to determine the role of farmer groups in increasing rice production in Wehali Village, Malaka Tengah District, Malaka Regency, measures of central tendency (mean and standard deviation) were used. (Hendrik, 2021) were then arranged into three categories as follows:

$X \leq \text{mean} - \text{standard deviation} = \text{plays little role}$

$\text{Mean} - \text{standard deviation} < X < \text{mean} + \text{standard deviation} = \text{plays quite a role}$

$X \geq \text{mean} + \text{standard deviation} = \text{plays a role}$

To answer the third objective, namely to find out what factors are related to the role of Farmer Groups in developing paddy fields in Wehali Village, Malaka Tengah District, the Nonparametric Spearman Rank statistical test was used. Analysis using SPSS according to the instructions (Sugiyono, 2015:23; Hendrik 2016:120) regarding the Spearman Rank Correlation formula. The magnitude of the Spearman Rank correlation coefficient can be calculated using the following formula:

$$\rho = 1 - \frac{6 \sum d_i^2}{n(n^2 - 1)}$$

Where:

ρ = Spearman's Rank Correlation Coefficient

bi = Difference between pairs of ranks $27 n$ = Number of respondents

6 = Constant number

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

General Description of Research Location

Wehali Village is located in the center of the Malaka Regency capital and is part of the Central Malaka District. It covers an area of 6.8 km², with 10 hamlets, 26 neighborhood associations (RTs), and 10 community units (RWs). The population is 6,853, with 3,466 males and 3,387 females. The boundaries are as follows: to the north it borders Kamanasa Village, to the south it borders Umanen Lawal Village, to the east it borders Umakatahan Village and Harekakae Village, and to the west it borders Bakiruk Village.

Wehali Village is located at an altitude of ≥ 500 meters above sea level and 270-537 meters above sea level. The land has slopes ranging from 0-8% and 8-15%, with rainfall ranging from 16-68 mm per month.

The Characteristics of Respondents in Lowland Rice Farming

The respondents in this study were 60 lowland rice farmers who were members of a farmer group in Wehali Village, Malaka Tengah District, Malaka Regency. Based on age characteristics, most

respondents were in their productive age, between 30 and 60 years old. This condition indicates that respondents still have adequate physical ability and work enthusiasm to manage lowland rice farming. In terms of gender, respondents were predominantly male, because lowland rice farming activities in Wehali Village still require a lot of physical labor in the process of land preparation, planting, and harvesting. However, women also play a role in farming activities, especially in the planting, maintenance, and post-harvest stages. The level of education of respondents was generally still relatively low, with the majority being elementary and junior high school graduates. This low level of education affects farmers' ability to accept and implement innovations and new technologies in lowland rice farming. In terms of farming experience, most respondents have managed lowland rice farming for more than 10 years, thus possessing knowledge and skills gained from experience and traditions passed down through generations. Respondents' land holdings were relatively small, ranging from 0.5 to 2 hectares per farmer. This indicates that rice farming in Wehali Village is still small-scale. Most respondents owned their own land, although some farmers managed their land through rental or sharecropping systems. Based on the number of dependents in their families, respondents generally had 3 to 5 dependents, which influenced household economic needs and farmers' motivation to increase rice production. In general, the characteristics of respondents indicated that rice farmers in Wehali Village had diverse socioeconomic backgrounds, which also influenced their level of participation and role in farmer groups and rice farming management.

The Role of Farmer Groups as Learning Classes

The Farmer Group Learning Class is a learning and training program for farmer group members to build insight, skills, and mentality, as well as develop and cultivate freedom in rice farming with the aim of increasing their efficiency, increasing income, and improving their lives. From the research results, it is known that the average score for the role of farmer groups as a learning medium is included in the category of quite instrumental with an average score of 17.92. On several occasions, farmer groups received visits and received training from the government as speakers so that farmers can learn good farming methods. The role of farmer groups as learning classes can be seen in Table 1.

Table 1. The Role of Farmer Groups as Learning Classes

Role	Category Score	Number (People)	Percentage (%)
≤17,42	Less involved	10	16,6
17,42 - 18,42	Moderately involved	45	75
≥18,42	Plays a role	5	8,3
Total		60	100

Source: Results of Primary Data Analysis for 2025

Based on Table 1, it can be seen that the majority of respondents fall into the category of having a sufficient role, with a total of 45 people or 75%, indicating that the majority of respondents have carried out their roles adequately, although there is still room for improvement. As many as 10 people or 16.6% fall into the category of having a less role, indicating that there is a group of respondents who have not optimally carried out their roles and need capacity building. Meanwhile, only 5 people or 8.3% fall into the category of having a role, indicating that a small number of respondents have been able to carry out their roles very well. Overall, these results illustrate that the level of respondents' role is in the moderate category with a dominant tendency towards the level of having a sufficient role.

The Role of Farmer Groups as Production and Marketing Units

Farmer groups are agricultural units that work together to achieve more profitable economies of scale. The role of farmer groups as production and marketing units is crucial in assisting farming communities in growing and developing their rice farming businesses. Each member of the farmer group can be seen as a complete business unit that can be developed to achieve economies of scale in terms of quantity, quality, and consistency. The research results show that the average score for the role of farmer groups as production units in the research location is categorized as having a sufficient role with an average score of 20.72.

The role of farmer groups as production units is facilitated by technological, social, support, and

capital systems, as well as other production areas. For further details, see Table 2 on the role of farmer groups as production units in the Lalor, Kios Setia Tani, and Tiroso farmer groups.

Table 2. The Role of Farmer Groups as Production and Marketing Units

Skor	Less involved	Jumlah (Orang)	Persentase (%)
≤20,26	Moderately involved	17	28,3
20,26 - 21,17	Plays a role	43	71,6
≥21,17	Less involved	0	0
Jumlah		60	100

Source: Results of Primary Data Analysis for 2025

Table 2 shows that the majority of respondents, 43 (71.6%), were in the Sufficient category. This indicates that the observed role is generally at an adequate level, although it has not yet reached a very optimal level. Seventeen (28.3%) were in the Poor category, indicating that there is still a group of respondents who believe that the role is not yet running well. This indicates that certain aspects of the role need to be evaluated and improved. Furthermore, no respondents (0%) rated the role as Influential, indicating that there is no perception that the role has reached an excellent standard. This condition strengthens the conclusion that role improvement is essential for its quality to increase from the Sufficient category to the High category.

The Role of Farmer Groups as a Means of Cooperation

Farmer groups serve as a platform for strengthening cooperation among farmers within the group to address various problems, difficulties, obstacles, and disruptive influences. To mitigate these risks, farmer groups can address them by strengthening and fostering cooperation among their members. To strengthen and realize this participation, farmer groups, as a medium for cooperation among group members, must work across multiple functions.

Cooperation media is a very important job to be maintained so that cooperation between members of the farmer groups who are members of the Lalor farmer group, Kios Setia Tani and Tiroso can be well maintained so that it can develop and run well according to the needs of the farmer group members.

Based on research data, the role of farmer groups as a means of collaboration is increasingly advanced. The research results show that the average score for the role of farmer groups as a means of collaboration falls into the role category with an average score of 18.72. The cooperative media system implemented by farmer groups is a collaboration in the division of labor for both leaders and group members, where through this division of labor they feel responsible for their respective roles.

Farmer groups serve as a platform for strengthening cooperation among themselves and with other parties. Through this collaboration, it is hoped that rice farming will become more efficient and more resilient to threats, challenges, obstacles, and related disruptions. Further information on the role of farmer groups as a collaborative tool can be found in Table 3.

Table 3. The Role of Farmer Groups as a Means of Cooperation

Role	Category Score	Number (People)	Percentage (%)
≤17,87	Moderately involved	0	0
17,87 - 19,56	Plays a role	52	86,6
≥19,56	Less involved	8	13,3
Total		60	100

Source: Results of Primary Data Analysis for 2025

The results in Table 3 show that based on the score categorization results, it can be seen that the majority of respondents are in the moderately involved category, namely 52 people or 86.6%, which indicates that the majority of respondents have carried out their roles quite well in the activities or responsibilities given, although not yet reaching the optimal level. A total of 8 people or 13.3% are included in the involved category, which means they show an active and maximum role in carrying out tasks, participating in decision-making, or contributing to group activities. There are no respondents in the less involved category (0%), which indicates that all members have at least shown

adequate involvement. Overall, these results indicate a relatively high level of respondent involvement, with a predominance in the moderately involved category and a small number showing a maximum role, thus reflecting the effectiveness of member participation and involvement in the activities being measured.

Factors that are related to the role of Farmer Groups in developing rice paddies

The results of the analysis of factors related to the role of farmer groups in developing lowland rice are shown in the table below:

Table 4. Factors Related to the Role of Farmer Groups in the Development of Lowland Rice

Factor	Correlation Coefficient	significance	Explanation
Age	-0,010	0,938	Not Significant
Education	0,080	0,544	Not Significant
Farming Experience	0,046	0,728	Not Significant
Land Area	-0,100	0,447	Not Significant
Family Dependencies	0,076	0,565	Not Significant
Study Class	0,188	0,149	Not Significant
Production and Marketing Unit	1,000	—	Not Significant
Cooperation Vehicle	0,216	0,098	Not Significant

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Source: Results of Primary Data Analysis for 2025

The Relationship between Age Factors and the Role of Farmer Groups

Age is one of the basic characteristics of respondents that reflects a person's level of maturity and life experience. Differences in the age of farmers, whether relatively young or older, do not directly affect their level of participation in farmer group activities. Productive-age farmers tend to have high energy and work ethic, while older farmers have more farming experience, so both can still contribute according to their respective capacities. However, the results of the study showed that age had no significant relationship with the role of farmer groups, so it can be concluded that farmer involvement in groups is not affected by age differences. The results of the Spearman correlation analysis showed that age had no significant relationship with the role of farmer groups, either as a learning class ($r = -0.193$; $p = 0.139$), a production unit ($r = -0.010$; $p = 0.938$), or a means of cooperation ($r = -0.091$; $p = 0.488$). Thus, it can be concluded that farmer age does not affect their level of participation or role in farmer groups.

The Relationship between Education and the Role of Farmer Groups

Based on the Spearman correlation results, the relationship between education and roles in farmer groups shows a very low correlation and is not statistically significant. This means that members' education levels do not significantly influence their roles in farmer groups, either in terms of production units or group collaboration. Therefore, education is not a primary factor determining member involvement in farmer groups, according to the data obtained. Farmers with higher levels of education tend to be more receptive to and understand information, innovations, and agricultural technologies conveyed through farmer group activities. A higher level of education also influences farmers' ability to actively participate in group discussions, decision-making, and the application of extension results in the field. Conversely, farmers with lower levels of education tend to experience limitations in understanding technical information, resulting in less than optimal roles in farmer

groups.

Based on the Spearman correlation data presented, the relationship between education level and role in farmer groups, represented by the variables of production unit and cooperation vehicle, shows a very low correlation and is not statistically significant (correlation values of 0.080 and 0.017, respectively, with a p -value > 0.05). This indicates that the education level of members does not significantly influence their role in farmer groups, either in terms of participation in production units or involvement in cooperation vehicles.

The Relationship between Farming Experience and the Role of Farmer Groups

Farming experience is an important indicator of a farmer's level of expertise and skill in managing various aspects of production. The longer a person is involved in farming, the broader their knowledge of land management, cultivation techniques, and how to address farming issues. Farmers with longer farming experience generally have better practical knowledge, ability to manage their farms, and a deeper understanding of agricultural issues. This experience encourages farmers to participate more actively in farmer group activities, whether as a learning class, a collaborative platform, or as a production and marketing unit. Experienced farmers also tend to play a role in knowledge sharing and group decision-making. The analysis shows that farming experience has a very strong relationship with age ($r = 0.817$; $p = 0.000$), meaning that the older the person, the greater the farming experience. However, farming experience does not show a significant relationship with the role of farmer groups, so experience level does not influence farmer involvement in group activities.

The Relationship between Land Area Factors and the Role of Farmer Groups

Land area is an important indicator that describes the scale of a farmer's business. However, based on the results of the Spearman correlation analysis, land area did not show a significant relationship with age, farming experience, family responsibilities, or the role of the farmer group. This indicates that the size of the farmer's land does not affect their level of experience, social role, or involvement in farmer group activities. Farmers with small and larger plots of land still have the same opportunity to participate in farmer group activities, such as attending meetings, extension services, and group collaboration. The results showed that the variable of land area did not have a significant relationship with the role of the farmer group, whether as a learning class, production unit, or collaboration vehicle. This is indicated by the correlation coefficient values of -0.207 ($p = 0.113$), -0.100 ($p = 0.447$), and 0.019 ($p = 0.883$), respectively. These findings indicate that the size of the farmer's land does not affect their level of participation or contribution in farmer groups.

The Relationship between Family Dependencies and the Role of Farmer Groups

The results of the analysis using the Spearman Rank correlation test indicate that the number of family members responsible for a farmer does not have a significant relationship with the role of the farmer group in Wehali Village. This indicates that the number of family members who are the farmer's dependents does not directly affect the level of farmer involvement and role in farmer group activities. Farmers with more or less family members can still participate in farmer group activities according to their abilities and time available. Based on the results of the Spearman correlation analysis, the variable of family members responsible for a farmer does not show a significant relationship with the role of the farmer group, either as a learning class ($r = -0.187$; $p = 0.152$), a production unit ($r = 0.076$; $p = 0.565$), or a means of cooperation ($r = -0.162$; $p = 0.216$). This finding indicates that the number of family members who are the farmer's responsibility does not affect the level of farmer involvement in farmer group activities. This may occur because the role in the group is determined more by social factors, experience, learning motivation, and internal group dynamics than by the burden of family members.

The Relationship between Learning Classes and the Role of Farmer Groups

Learning classes are one of the primary functions of farmer groups as a forum for improving farmers' knowledge and skills. Theoretically, effective learning classes can strengthen the role of farmer groups in production and collaboration. However, the results of the Spearman correlation analysis showed that learning classes had no significant relationship with the role of farmer groups as production units ($r = 0.188$; $p = 0.149$) or as a means of collaboration ($r = 0.143$; $p = 0.277$). This finding indicates that learning activities within farmer groups have not had a sufficient impact on

strengthening the production and collaboration functions of members. The role of farmer groups is likely more determined by other factors such as the level of member motivation, farming experience, and internal group dynamics.

The Relationship between Production and Marketing Units and the Role of Farmer Groups

Production and marketing units are important economic functions within farmer groups. Through collective production and marketing activities, farmer groups can increase efficiency, strengthen bargaining power, and stabilize farmer incomes. However, the analysis results show that the production unit variable has no significant relationship with the role of farmer groups, either as a learning class or a means of collaboration ($r = 0.188$; $p = 0.149$ and $r = 0.216$; $p = 0.098$). This indicates that production and marketing activities within farmer groups have not been running optimally and have not been able to make a strong contribution to improving the institutional role of the group.

The Relationship between Collaborative Vehicles and the Role of Farmer Groups

A collaborative platform is a function of farmer groups that emphasizes social interaction, solidarity, and coordination among members. Theoretically, an effective collaborative platform will strengthen the role of farmer groups both in learning classes and production units. However, the results of the Spearman correlation analysis indicate that the collaborative platform variable does not have a significant relationship with the role of farmer groups, either as a learning class ($r = 0.143$; $p = 0.277$) or production unit ($r = 0.216$; $p = 0.098$). This indicates that collaborative activities within farmer groups are not optimal or evenly distributed, thus not being able to significantly increase the group's role. Other factors such as motivation, farming experience, and internal leadership likely determine the level of member involvement in farmer groups.

CONCLUSSION AN RECOMMENDATION

Conclusion

From the research results, the following conclusions can be drawn:

- 1) Lowland rice farming in Wehali Village demonstrates a combination of traditional and semi-modern practices, utilizing small to medium-sized plots, local and superior rice varieties, and achieving an average productivity of 3–5 tons per hectare per planting season. Income from farming serves as a primary source of family well-being, although it is affected by price fluctuations and production costs. Farmer groups and agricultural extension workers play a significant role in improving technology access, coordination, and farmer participation. Overall, lowland rice farming in this village remains the backbone of the local economy and supports agricultural sustainability despite facing various challenges.
- 2) The Role of Farmer Groups in Increasing Lowland Rice Production
The role of farmer groups in lowland rice farming is generally considered moderate. Farmer groups have fulfilled their function as learning classes and collaborative platforms through meetings, information exchange, and collaboration among members. However, the role of farmer groups as production and marketing units has not been optimal, particularly in managing joint ventures and marketing lowland rice production.
- 3) Factors Related to the Role of Farmer Groups
The analysis results show that factors such as age, education level, farming experience, land area, family responsibilities, class, production and marketing units, and collaboration platforms do not have a significant relationship with the role of farmer groups.

Recommendation

Based on the above conclusions, the following suggestions can be made: Bagi Petani Padi Sawah

- 1) For Paddy Farmers
Farmers in Wehali Village are expected to be more active in participating in farmer group activities, particularly in meetings, training, and agricultural extension programs. Increased farmer participation will help increase knowledge and skills in managing lowland rice farming, thereby increasing farmer productivity and income.

2) For Farmer Group

Farmer groups in Wehali Village need to enhance their role, particularly as production and marketing units, by strengthening joint business management, collectively procuring production inputs, and establishing cooperative harvest marketing. Furthermore, farmer groups are expected to function more optimally as learning classes and collaborative platforms to improve the independence and welfare of their members.

3) For Further Research

Further research is recommended to examine in more depth the influence of farmer groups on lowland rice farmer productivity and income using more diverse analytical methods or a broader research area to produce more comprehensive results.

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