

# Down on the farm? There's an app for that

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Uzhavan app. Credit: Apple/Seenivasan Ramasubbu

Agriculture in the developing world can reap considerable benefits from the use of modern information and communications technology. A mobile application launched by the government of Tamil Nadu is a case in point. Research published in the *International Journal of Agriculture Innovation, Technology and Globalisation* discussed how the app, known as Uzhavan, can reduce the digital divide by fostering extension services in the sector.

S. Aravindh Kumar of the Department of Agricultural Extension and Communication at Swami Keshwanand Rajasthan Agricultural University in Bikaner, Rajasthan and C. Karthikeyan of the Department of Agricultural Extension and Rural Development at Tamil Nadu Agricultural University in Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu, India, discuss how the Uzhavan app can improve yields.

The team's survey of users revealed that most of them are educated and had frequent contact with extension agents. Moreover, those users were media savvy and well acquainted with [social media](#) too all of which appear to reduce the time they take to find the information they need.

The Uzhavan app operates in Tamil and English and has a small footprint in terms of the required computing resources on one's mobile device. Almost six million users have downloaded it from the Apple and Google Play online stores.

Once a farmer has downloaded it and registered with the service, they have access to a wealth of useful information across agricultural services such as access to information subsidies, information on the fertilizers and feedstock sector, equipment hire, market prices for their products, pertinent weather forecasting, and agricultural news, as well as information on their extension official.

The team explains that this free app is a major step taken to reduce the

[digital divide](#) by delivering high-quality, timely, and accurate agricultural information and extension services for a large population of farmers who would otherwise have scant access to extension workers who can help them get the best from their land.

The researchers found that many users of the Uzhavan app have numerous suggestions for how it might be improved, which they detail in their paper. Nevertheless, they suggest that the efforts of the state government of Tamil Nadu have through the launch of the app begun to cover a large population of farmers with limited extension workers.

**More information:** C. Karthikeyan et al, Uzhavan app as a conduit to reduce the digital divide by fostering vital agricultural extension services in the state of Tamil Nadu, India, *International Journal of Agriculture Innovation, Technology and Globalisation* (2022). [DOI: 10.1504/IJAITG.2022.10051612](#)

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