

Opportunities and Challenges for Marketing of Fruits and Vegetables in Sangli and Kolhapur Districts

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ABSTRACT

At present the fruits and vegetables are produced by the farmers who are not much literate or having the scientific knowledge of crop production. Number of primary marketing units yet they have not done much in collection, grading, marketing etc. There is an absence of proper marketing channels as well as direct intervention of the government. Hence, producers as well as consumers are at worst position. Lack of proper marketing management, cold storage facilities, proper physical communication facilities, and also due to low level of literacy, dispersed markets, least care of state and central governments creates the problems. The present study has highlighted the present practices of production and marketing of vegetables and fruits in Sangli and Kolhapur Districts.

Keyword: Marketing and Production of fruits and vegetables, Marketing Channel.

I. INTRODUCTION

Agriculture has always remained the backbone of the Indian Economy and despite concentrated industrialization in the last six decades, agriculture still occupies a place of pride and honor. Due to perishable nature and forces of demand and supply the fruits and vegetables cannot provide assured returns to the farmers. The dominance of middlemen could not give the expected profit to the farmer and consumer get it for with higher prices. The interest of farmer and consumer is not conducive due to middlemen. The study examines various aspects of fruit and vegetable marketing such as market infrastructure, marketing practices, marketing costs etc. in the wholesale markets in the selected area.

II. OBJECTIVES

- 1) To study the various government policies and schemes for the production and marketing of fruits and vegetables.
- 2) To study the present demand parameters of fruits and vegetables.
- 3) To analyze opportunities and challenges for marketing of fruits and vegetables.
- 4) To suggest the measures for fair remunerative prices to producers and affordable prices to consumers.

III. ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA

Table No. 1 Opinion about external factors for fixation of price of produce

Sr. No.	Particulars	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Total
1	Demand	19 (05%)	53 (13%)	85 (21%)	115 (29%)	128 (32%)	400 (100%)
2	Season	29 (07%)	42 (11%)	70 (18%)	103 (26%)	156 (39%)	400 (100%)
3	Government Policies	24 (06%)	28 (07%)	87 (22%)	142 (36%)	119 (30%)	400 (100%)
4	Transportation	20 (05%)	82 (21%)	95 (24%)	98 (25%)	105 (26%)	400 (100%)

5	Technology	62 (16%)	68 (17%)	78 (20%)	94 (24%)	98 (25%)	400 (100%)
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Table No. 1 give information about various external factors considered for fixing the price. There were various factors considered. 32% of the producers are strongly agree, 29% are agree, 21% are neutral, 13% are disagree and remaining 05% are strongly disagree about demand decides the price. 39% of the producers are strongly agree, 26% are agree, 18% are neutral, 11% are disagree and remaining 0% are strongly disagree about season decides the price. 36% of the producers are agree, 30% are strongly agree, 22% are neutral, 07% are disagree and remaining 06% are strongly disagree about government policies decides the price. 26% of the producers are strongly agree, 25% are agree, 24% are neutral, 21% are disagree and remaining 05% are strongly disagree about transportation decides the price. 25% of the producers are strongly agree, 24% are agree, 20% are neutral, 17% are disagree and remaining 16% are strongly disagree about technology decides the price.

It is also clear that at the time of production and selling the producers have to give attention on these factors. If they give full attention towards these factors then it helps them in getting more price and it reduces loss. If they plan according to these factors then it will help them in production as well as in selling functions. Due to improvement in technology it is possible to provide fresh products year around, so it also affects on price.

The role of government is very important. The prices of fruits and vegetables are mostly decided by bargaining power. From the government side there are no rules and regulations for price fixation of produce therefore there are many variations in the prices of fruits and vegetables.

Table No. 2 Knowledge/ use of marketing practices

Sr. No.	Particulars	Not at all	a little	Rather	Much	Very much	Total
1	Grading	103 (26%)	176 (44%)	94 (24%)	23 (06%)	04 (01%)	400 (100%)
2	Segmentation	154 (39%)	145 (36%)	51 (13%)	42 (01%)	08 (02%)	400 (100%)
3	Target to customer	126 (32%)	98 (25%)	154 (39%)	15 (04%)	07 (02%)	400 (100%)
4	Positioning	321 (80%)	52 (13%)	23 (06%)	02 (01%)	02 (01%)	400 (100%)
5	Branding	286 (72%)	56 (14%)	40 (10%)	12 (03%)	06 (02%)	400 (100%)
6	Advertising	321 (80%)	56 (14%)	23 (06%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	400 (100%)
7	Self sell	241 (60%)	90 (23%)	21 (05%)	32 (08%)	16 (04%)	400 (100%)
8	Competitors Policy	245 (61%)	59 (15%)	56 (14%)	28 (07%)	12 (03%)	400 (100%)
9	Sell at lean marketing period	300 (75%)	27 (07%)	20 (05%)	28 (07%)	25 (06%)	400 (100%)
10	Market Research	345 (86%)	30 (08%)	10 (03%)	08 (02%)	07 (02%)	400 (100%)

Table No. 2. Give information about knowledge of marketing to the producers. It is observed that in case of grading 44% of the producers said that they have a little knowledge, 24% said not at all, 24% said rather, 06% said much knowledge and remaining 01% said that they have very much knowledge about grading. In case of segmentation 39% of the producers don't have knowledge about segmentation, 36% have little knowledge, 13% said rather, 02% have very much knowledge and only 01% has much knowledge about segmentation. In case of target to customer, 39% of the producer said rather, 32% said not at all, 25% said a little, 04% said much and 02% said very much. 80% of the producers don't have knowledge about positioning, 13% have a little knowledge, 06% said rather, & 02% said much and very much knowledge about positioning. In case of branding, 72% of the producer said that they don't have knowledge about branding, 14% said a little, 10% said rather, 12% said much and remaining 02% said very much

knowledge. 80% of the producer said that they have not at all knowledge about advertising, 14% said a little, 06% said rather and no one said much and very much knowledge about advertising. In case of self sell 60% of the producer don't use self sale practices, 23% a little use, 08% said much use, 05% said rather and remaining 04% said very much use of self sell. 61% of the producers said not at all knowledge about competitor's policy, 15% said that they have a little knowledge, 14% said rather, 07% said much and 03% said very much knowledge about competitors policy. 75% said that not at all, 07% said much and a little each, 06% said very much and remaining 05% said rather use the technique like sell at lean marketing period. And in case of market research 86% of the producers don't know about market research, 08% have a little knowledge, 10% have rather and 02% have much and very much knowledge about market research each.

From the above analysis it is clear that, the producers are unaware about marketing knowledge or very few producers use these marketing practices. Lack of these knowledge leads to suffer losses by getting less prices to their produces. So, it is necessary to make awareness about these practices in producers mind.

IV. FINDINGS

1. It is found that 90% of the middlemen grade their produce. By keen observation the researcher has found that the middlemen grade their produce at the time of selling not at the time of purchasing from producer. i.e. by grading the produce the middlemen fix their prices for consumers not for the producers. It results in, the producer get same price for all quality produce and the middlemen get more prices for good quality produce as well as average price for low quality produce than the producer. It means that the middlemen always in profit.
2. It is found that 57% of the respondents provide transportation facility to producers; and 25% provide credit facility. The lack of transportation and unavailability of credit facility are the main problems of producers. The middlemen take the advantages of these problems and provide transportation and loan facilities and purchase products at low prices.
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4. It is found that there are several reasons of losses. 75% of respondents said that the main reason is perishable nature of produce; 58% of them said low market d; 40% gave other reasons like bad weather, natural calamities; 25% said loading/unloading; 22% said that improper product handling; and the remaining 17% said that transportation is the main reasons behind losses.

V. SUGGESTIONS

1. It is suggested that the government should control on the artificial shortage made by fertilizer stockiest. After shortage they sell these fertilizers at higher prices. Stockiest follows partiality between well known farmers and common farmers. There should be strict watch on distribution pattern of fertilizers.
2. It is suggested that to overcome the problems of exploitation of middlemen it is necessary to provide market for produce through co-operative societies and their role should be increased. Due to the negligible performance of Co-operative societies the number of middlemen has increased. These effects directly on customer. The involvement of politicians in co-operative sale-purchase union has defeated the purpose of Co-operative sale-purchase union. To avoid this there should be an amendment in the byelaws of co-operative Fruits & Vegetables sale-purchase union that the office bearers of such union should actually produce atleast 05 Guntas of Fruits or Vegetables. Only active members should be allowed to contest elections. In addition to this there should be control on middlemen through government rules and regulations. There should be the involvement of producers in the activities like trading, provide information to other producers. Further the government should fix digital TV display in each and every villages to inform about market rate, weather etc. Pricing policy and practices should be designed and implemented in uniform way.
3. It is suggested that the government should take some steps for the improvement of transportation facility. Government should give concession on products while transporting by State Transport (ST) then the producer will get more profit. Again Agricultural Produce Market Committees (APMC) should make arrangement of picking the products from farm and supply it in market then more number of farmers may change their selling method and will increase self sell the produce in the market on their own responsibility as well as profit. In village Nandani from Shirol taluka of Kolhapur district there is a cooperative marketing sangh named 'Nandani Fruits and Vegetables Growers Co operative Sangh Ltd., Nandani' which takes care of production and marketing

of fruits and vegetables. They collect the products from farm and sell the products in the market and gives the money to farmers. In short, they act as a mediator between farmer and market.

CONCLUSION

1. The interference of middlemen is the main problem of producers. Middlemen exploit the producers as well consumers. The producers get the less prices for their products when they sold to middlemen. The negligible performance of Co-operative societies increases the number of middlemen in the study area. It is necessary to increase the role of co-operative societies. In addition to that there should be control on middlemen through government rules and regulations.
2. The middlemen take the advantage to exploit the producers as well as consumers. They get almost double margins for sale the products. The government should appoint special officers to check unfair trade practices, exploitation of the farmer by middlemen. It is necessary to promote, and perhaps even enforce through rules or laws by the government. As a result the producer will get more prices to their products and the consumer will get same products at remunerative prices. To tackle these problems government should provide financial assistance, create awareness among the farmers about various subsidy schemes available to encourage them, take initiative for creating the storage facility at taluka levels and provide it with minimum charges to farmers and give subsidy to build up storage facility, etc.

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