

Constraints in Production and Marketing of Vegetables in Udhampur District of Jammu and Kashmir Union Territory

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Abstract

Demand for vegetables has increased many fold for the last few years as people are now health conscious and are consuming vegetables regularly for getting health benefits as well. These vegetables are grown on high scale in various belts of Udhampur district. The present study was conducted in Chenani block of Udhampur district as the selected area is hub of quality vegetable production. Four vegetable growing villages were selected randomly and from each village 20 farmers were selected randomly to constitute a sample of 80 farmers in all. The results of the study revealed that the most of the respondents were facing the problem of lack of irrigation facilities, high labour cost and non-availability of labour during peak period. Low prices of agricultural goods, pest disease insect problem, drought and lack of credit facilities were other problems faced by the farmers. Few of the farmers were of the opinion that latest technical knowledge and availability of good quality seedlings in sufficient quantity is lacking in the area. High cost of pesticides was the other production problem. Farmers of Bashat area in particular were facing a specific problem that is road connectivity from their fields to roadside. The fields were not well connected to the road and the link was in dilapidated conditions which force them to transport the produce through human labour which in turn increases their marketing cost resulting in decline in their profit.

Keywords: Constraints, production, marketing, vegetables

The economic aspects of vegetable cultivation are not less important as well maintained and established fields give better returns than cereal crops from the same piece of land. It may also be mentioned that there are many factors which may enhance the production of vegetables but among them cost and return coupled with marketing are considered being the key factors for increasing the production. The growers before prioritizing the preferences for vegetable cultivation ensures its cost and return factor, which

is the main motivation factor for bringing more area vis-à-vis giving lot of attention. Moreover,

along with the production, the role of marketing opportunities are equally important, as the farmers can ensure the reasonable return for their produce and also a legitimate share in the price paid by the consumers. Although area under fruits and vegetables and its production has shown a steady increase over time, yet their marketing aspects (comprising of marketing cost, marketing margin,

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marketing loss and price spread) has all along been almost neglected and at present marketing facilities are inadequate. Under the existing marketing practice, before the produce reaches to the end user, it has to be handled and passed through a long chain of various intermediaries, with the result that the producers are getting a small share of consumers' rupee and they have to face number of production and marketing problems. Therefore, identifying problems associated with production and marketing of vegetables provides an opportunity to know the actual position of farmers while producing and marketing vegetables. The difference between the price received by the farmer and price paid by the consumer comprises cost of undertaking and rendering market services such as assembling, grading, transporting, processing, wholesaling, retailing and the margins of the intermediaries, charges, sale tax etc, as they are too wide because to its perishable nature, seasonality of production, spatial distribution of plantation far off from consuming centres, inadequate cold storage and credit facilities and lack of comprehensive marketing information. All these forces compel the growers to sell their produce unprocessed and immediately after harvest, resulting gluts in the markets and thereby fall in prices and hence lower returns.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The present study was conducted in Chenani block of Udhampur district as the selected area is hub of quality vegetable production. Four vegetable growing villages were selected randomly and from each village 20 farmers were selected randomly to constitute a sample of 80 farmers in all. The information about the problems faced by the vegetable growers were ascertained from the selected respondents on various aspects of production and marketing.

Tabular and percentage analysis was done to find out the result of proposed objectives:

1. **Tabular analysis:** This approach was used for the analysis of the production and marketing constraints of vegetable growers. Frequency of the respondents experiencing problems were tabulated, computed and analyzed using percentage analysis.

Percentage analysis

Percentage refers to a special kind of ratio. It is used to make comparison between two or more series of data. They can be used to compare the relative items, the distribution of two or more series of data, since the percentage reduces everything to a common base and there by allow meaningful comparisons to be made. In the present study the percentage analyses helped to check the relative comparison of major problems in terms of percentage.

$$\text{Percentage} = X/Y \times 100$$

Where, X and Y differ according to the objectives of the study.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The major problems faced by the farmers in the production of vegetables are presented in Table 1 which revealed that 90.00 per cent of the respondents were facing high labour cost as a major problem followed by non-availability of labour during peak (85.00%), low prices of vegetables (80.00%), problem of attack of insect, pest and disease (75.00%). Drought and lack of credit facilities were other problems faced by the farmers. Few of the farmers were of the opinion that latest technical knowledge and availability of good quality seedlings in sufficient quantity is lacking in the area. High cost of pesticides was the other production problem as reported by 67.50 percent of the farmers. More than 50 per cent of the farmers were also facing the problem of lack of irrigation facilities. These results are in conformity with the Shah *et al.* (2020).

Table 1: Production constraints faced by Vegetable growers of Udhampur district

Sl. No.	Constraints	Respondents (N=80)	
		Frequency	Percentage
1	High labour cost	72	90.00
2	Non-availability of labour during peak	68	85.00
3	Low prices of vegetables	64	80.00
4	Problem of attack of insect, pest and disease	60	75.00
5	Drought and lack of credit facilities	60	75.00
6	High cost of pesticides	54	67.50

7	Inadequate latest technical knowledge and availability of good quality seedlings in sufficient quantity	52	65.00
8	Lack of irrigation facilities	46	57.50
9	High cost of seed	44	55.00
10	Problem caused by parrot in fruit plants	60	75.00

Marketing constraints faced by vegetable growers of Udhampur district are presented in Table 2. The results of the study revealed that 80.00 per cent of the respondents farmers particularly of Bashat area were facing a specific problem that is road connectivity from their fields to roadside. The fields were not well connected to the road and the link was in dilapidated conditions which force them to transport the produce through human labour which in turn increases their marketing cost resulting in decline in their profit.

Table 2: Marketing constraints faced by Vegetable growers of Udhampur district

Sl. No.	Problems	Respondents (N=80)	
		Frequency	Percentage
1	Long distance from the production point to market	74	92.50
2	High transportation cost	72	90.00
3	High cost of labour	70	87.50
4	Non-availability of market in close vicinity	70	87.50
5	Not getting remunerative of the produce	63	78.75
6	High commission charged by Market Intermediaries	60	75.00
7	Fluctuation in prices	55	68.75
8	Inadequate road connectivity from their fields to roadside	54	67.50
9	Lack of market information	50	62.50

Long distance from the production point to market, high transportation cost and high cost of labour were major problem reported by 92.50 per cent, 90.00 per cent and 87.50 per cent of the farmers, respectively. Non-availability of market in the close vicinity (87.50 per cent), not getting remunerative of the produce (78.75 per cent) and high commission charged by the forwarding agents (75.00 per cent) were the other main marketing problems reported

by the respondents. It was cumbersome and little bit difficult for them to market the produce to Jammu or Udhampur.

Fluctuation in prices and lack of market information were other marketing problems reported in the study area. The results are in close conformity with and Kumari (2017) in their respective studies.

CONCLUSION

The major problems faced by the vegetable growers in production and marketing identified and majority of the farmers put high labour cost as major problem faced during production of commodities. There were other problems which also create hurdles for vegetable growers in cultivation of crops and these were attack of insect and pests, high cost of seed, lack of irrigation facilities, inadequate latest technical knowledge and availability of good quality seedlings in sufficient quantity. Marketing constraints such as long distance from the production point to market, non-availability of market in close vicinity and high commission charged by Market Intermediaries are few marketing problems which are directly related with the functioning of the market which needs to be improved.

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