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Problems Faced by Vegetable Growers in District Budgam, J&K

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Authors' contributions

This work was carried out in collaboration among all authors. All authors read and approved the final manuscript.

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to determine the problems faced by the vegetable growers in District Budgam. Data was collected from 250 respondents of ten villages. A structured schedule listing almost all possible problems was framed to know the extent of problems they face. Ranking was

done on the basis of maximum percentage. Majority of the growers about 96.8% reported non availability of labour at the time of harvesting, followed by 91.2% of the growers which reported that markets were distantly located and so on.

Keywords: *Vegetables; grower; problems; market.*

1. INTRODUCTION

Agriculture is the back bone of Indian economy and plays a vital role in its overall development. India has achieved self-sufficiency in food grain production and as of now the emphasis is laid on to achieve higher growth rate. Due to change in the scenario the focus has now shifted from agriculture to horticulture, which besides imparting nutritional security, offers a great potential for efficient input use, higher returns per unit area, crop diversification, earning foreign exchange besides creating employment opportunities through post-harvest processing in agro-based industries. The commercial vegetable farming has steadily been increasing due to the proximity to market center and its production potentiality.

Vegetables are considered as “protective supplementary food” as they contain large quantities of minerals, vitamins and other health promoting phytochemicals, which are required for the normal functioning of the human metabolic processes. The nutritional security of under-developed and developing countries depends heavily on vegetables. Moreover, due to shrinkage of agricultural land, urbanization and industrialization, cultivation of vegetable crops prove more economic. Vegetable crops also play an important role in diversification of agriculture and help to conserve the ever-depleting underground water (Sharma, 2014).

This sector assumed economic significance in the states, where majority of the farmers fall in small and marginal group with land holding less than (0.66 ha). The vegetable growers of the region have responded very well to the introduction of hybrids/high yielding open pollinated varieties, improved production practices including use of environmental friendly bio-fertilizers, bio-pesticides and organic manures [1].

2. METHODOLOGY

The present study was purposively conducted in the District Budgam of Jammu and Kashmir as the district is having maximum area under vegetable cultivation. District Budgam consists of

four Agriculture Sub-divisions out of which two Sub-divisions viz., Chadoora and Budgam were purposively selected on the basis of maximum area under vegetable cultivation. Agricultural Sub-division Chadoora consists of 07 Agricultural zones and Sub-division Budgam consists of 03 Agriculture zones. Out of these zones only two Agricultural zones viz., Chadoora and Budgam with maximum area under vegetable cultivation were purposively selected. Agriculture zone Chadoora consists of 31 villages and Agriculture zone Budgam consists of 26 villages, out of each Agriculture zone five villages were selected. In Agriculture zone Chadoora (i). Bugam, (ii) Nowbugh, (iii) Gowherpora, (iv) Batpora, (v) Wathoor and in Agriculture zone Budgam (i) Narkara, (ii) Galwanpora, (iii) Bugam, (iv) Qazibagh, (v) Ompora were selected having maximum area under vegetable cultivation. Thus, totally ten villages were selected for the study. A total number of 250 out of 1634 vegetable growers from the ten villages were selected randomly by proportional allocation method.

In context of present study, the constraints faced by the vegetable growers while adopting scientifically improved package of practices were accessed. A structured schedule listing almost all possible problems was framed to know the extent of problems they face. Ranking was done on the basis of maximum percentage. The responses were collected and quantified in terms of frequency and percentage. To overcome the constraints the farmers were asked to give suggestions and remedial measures and same were recorded. Suggestions and remedial measures thus obtained were expressed in terms of frequency and percentage. To know the constraints faced by the farmers while adoption of improved cultivation practices of Onion, list of all possible problems were given to the growers to indicate whether or not, to what extent they face such problems; as greater extent and lesser extent, they were quantified in terms of frequency and percentage.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1 indicated the reasons behind non-adoption of recommended package of practices.

Table 1. Problems faced by the vegetable growers in adoption of vegetable production technology practices

S. No.	Constraints	Freq.	%age	Rank
1	Financial crises in the family.	165	66.0	VII
2	Lack of Banks and other authorized Loaning agencies.	31	12.4	XIII
3	Complicated procedures for obtaining loans.	40	16.0	X
4	High rate of interest on loans.	39	15.6	XI
5	Non-availability of quality seeds.	116	46.4	IX
6	Non-availability of quality fertilizers.	117	46.8	VIII
7	Non-availability of FYM.	31	12.4	XIII
8	Non-availability of Transport facility.	215	86.0	V
9	Non-availability of labour at the time of harvesting.	242	96.8	I
10	Non-availability of skilled labour.	39	15.6	XI
11	Lack of knowledge about Package of Practices.	232	92.8	II
12	Lack of training of scientific vegetable production technology.	201	80.4	VI
13	Non-availability of cold storage facilities.	31	12.4	XIII
14	No market facilities in the village.	228	91.2	III
15	High charges on transport facility to the market.	32	12.8	XII
16	Lack of knowledge about prevailing market price.	30	12.0	XIV
17	Non- remunerative price	215	86.0	V
18	High marketing/commission agent charges.	222	88.8	IV

The problem expressed by the respondents was tabulated in terms of frequency, percentage and ranks. As per ranking, majority 96.8% of the growers reported non availability of labour at the time of harvesting, 92.8% reported lack of knowledge, 91.2% reported markets are distantly located, 88.8% complain high commission agent charges, 86.0% reported non- remunerative price, 80.4% reported lack of scientific training and 66.0% complained financial crises. Whereas, less than 50 percent of the growers reported problems in non-adoption of vegetable production technology practices like lack of quality fertilizers, quality seeds, timely availability of transport and skilled labours. Kumar [2] carried out a study on technological gap in soybean cultivation and indicated that, high cost of inputs (88.00%), followed by shortage of labour (85.33%), lack of knowledge about disease control (77.00%) were the major constraints. Jat et al. [3] revealed that there are various constraints which affect the process of adoption, however, few of them are most important, one which affect the extent of adoption of recommended production technology of moth bean which includes weed control through herbicides, lack of knowledge about improved technologies of seed, weedicides and plant protection measures', 'absence of assured marketing at remunerative price and insurance policy facility, sandy storm, high wind velocity and high temperature affect the growth of crop and productivity. Shilpashree [4] reported that,

the general problems faced were price fluctuation (65.00%), lack of timely guidance in time by extension staff (57.50%), non availability of labour during peak period (52.50%) and high cost of labour (50.00%). Osei *et al.* (2013) revealed that majority of the respondents (68%) did not own the lands they cultivated thus resulting in approximately 45 per cent of them cultivating less than one acre of cabbage crop. Majority of cabbage farmers (62%) planted cabbage on raised beds. Cabbage production in the study area was characterized by high use of inorganic fertilizer (NPK). Fifty-three percent (53%) employed the use of watering cans in cabbage production. Pandit (2013) in terms of overall constraints revealed that the highest portion (83.30%) of the respondents faced medium constraint based on constraint facing index (CFI), low price of vegetables during harvesting ranked first followed by lack of quality seed and high wages of labours.

4. SUGGESTIONS GIVEN BY THE VEGETABLE GROWERS TO OVERCOME PROBLEMS

1. To reduce paper work in obtaining loans.
2. Timely availability of Quality seeds.
3. Training about Package of Practices and scientific vegetable production technology.
4. Training on storage and post-harvest technology for extension in shelf life.

5. Technical Know – how in disease and pest management.
6. Introduction of Labor saving techniques.
7. Timely availability of market information.
8. Availability of cold storage facilities.
9. Procedure to eliminate middle-man in the market.

Patil and Jadhav [5] suggested that all the vegetable produce should be purchased by the NAFED, certain quantity of vegetable should be exported to foreign countries and recent production technology and critical inputs be made available through concerned agencies. Atibudhi [6] concluded that the exploitation of farmers by the traders can be minimized by strengthening the market committee, providing proper marketing facilities, competent staff and strict enforcement of regulated market act. Srivastava *et al.* [7] suggested that high yielding varieties be evolved possessing the pest and disease resistance and early in maturity, crop loan facility should be timely and adequately employed, the price of fertilizers, insecticides and fungicides should be reduced and the technical information should be given in time to the farmers. Murthy and Subrahmanyam [8] reported that India's exports to neighboring SAARC countries were either decreasing or stagnated. Hence, it should aim not only to capture the new markets but also to arrest the declining trend and to increase the exports to existing traditional markets like Srilanka, Nepal and Bangladesh. Mohapatra [9] found that establishment of storage godowns at each block headquarter and in the vegetable producing areas is necessary to get fair prices for the produce in lean season, regulation of vegetable sale price should be done by government through involvement of regulated market committee (NAFED) by establishing procurement centers so that exploitation by middleman can be minimized and institutional credit facilities at right time should be extended to the vegetable farmers on priority basis. Yadav [10] suggested that NAFED and co-operatives and Government agencies should intervene in marketing of vegetable. There is a need to develop vegetable varieties with high yield, resistant to pest and diseases. It is also suggested to bring vegetable under essential commodity act. As when there is a shortage of vegetable in the market, the prices will go up and during glut the prices come down drastically. So, the Government should monitor and control the stock at district level and procurement prices can be fixed by Government, this will help to get rid of problems in production

and marketing of vegetable. Waman and Patil [11] concluded that the extension functionaries had to play an important role in pursuing farmers by frequent visits and disseminating the improved vegetable storage technology by conducting demonstration on farmer's field, training and field trips.

5. CONCLUSION

It could be concluded from the findings that no technical assistance from extension personnels, unavailability of improved seeds of vegetables, lack of training on scientific vegetable production technology, no demonstrations on fields, Lack of transportation facilities and high charge, and high cost of hybrid seeds were the main constraints encountered by the vegetable growers in the adoption of recommended package of practice. Therefore, more emphasis should be given to the most serious constraints, such as lack of training, unavailability of improved seeds of vegetables, lack of demonstrations on fields, non availability of facilities of soil testing through the pertinent information provided to the growers on vegetable cultivation.

COMPETING INTERESTS

Authors have declared that no competing interests exist.

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