



Marketing challenges of horticulture sector in Jammu and Kashmir: A case study of district Pulwama

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Abstract

Horticulture plays an important role in modern communities, but it is undergoing some very significant challenges that are impacting on the production as well as on the exports of horticultural crops. Government has made many efforts to increase the horticulture production in the State, but in the marketing there is not any proper attention. Middleman exploitation, unregulated market, price fluctuations and high cost of transportation were the main challenges as expressed by majority of the respondents. The aim of the present paper is to analyze the marketing challenges faced by the horticulture growers in the district Pulwama of Kashmir valley.

Keywords: horticulture, challenges, price fluctuations, unregulated market

Introduction

Jammu and Kashmir State is very famous for its horticultural produce both in India and abroad. The favourable agro climatic conditions and fertile soil are ideally suited for the cultivation of horticulture crops in Jammu and Kashmir. Apple, Pear, Cherry, Mango, Plum, Walnut and Almond are the major fruits grown in the Jammu and Kashmir. Besides these fruits medicinal and aromatic plants, plantation crops, floriculture, and vegetables are also grown in the state. The horticulture crops provide better alternative for diversification of Jammu and Kashmir agriculture via higher returns. It plays an important role in State's nutritional security as well, including employment generation and poverty alleviation. Horticulture industry has a substantial share to the state's GDP which remains around 7-8 percent over the past few years. About 7 lakh families comprising of about 33 lakh people are directly or indirectly associated with horticulture sector in Jammu and Kashmir (Akhter, 2015). During the year 2015-16 horticulture crops covers an area of 3.37 lakh hectares with 71% area under fresh fruits. During the same year production of fruits was 24.87 lakh metric tonnes constituting of 22.17 lakh metric tonnes of fresh fruits and 2.70 lakh metric tonnes of dry fruit (Directorate of Economics & Statistics, J&K). Horticulture development is one of the thrust areas in agriculture and a number of programmes have been implemented in the past, resulting in the generation of higher incomes in the rural areas, thereby improving the quality of life in villages. Export of fruit outside the state was 14.58 lakh metric tonnes and an income of Rs.6000 crore was generated from fruit production during 2015-16 (Economic Survey 2016). Lack of cold storage facilities, Lack of planning in Production, Inadequate plant protection measures, non-availability of high quality of varieties, Weak marketing facilities, High transportation cost, Post- harvest losses and lack of infrastructure facilities have adversely affected the horticulture sector of Jammu & Kashmir (Darzi, 2016)^[4].

Review of literature

Weinberger and Lumpkin (2005) have emphasized the increasing importance and demand of horticulture crops due to growing income levels, changing life styles and urbanization. The study showed horticulture industry contributes significantly to poverty alleviation, employment and income generation.

Reshi, *et al.* (2010)^[6] revealed that 65.46 per cent of the horticulture area in Jammu and Kashmir is covered by fresh fruits, out of which 43.5 per cent is occupied by apple fruit. The study emphasized that price fluctuations, post-harvest losses, inadequate infrastructure and improper marketing networks are the main constraints faced by the farmers in J&K.

Azad, K. C. (1991)^[5], studied the cost of crop production, marketing system and economic viability of cultivation of fruits viz. apple, peach, plum and apricot. The study indicated that net returns for orchards were highest in the age group of 21-30 years for apples and 11-16 years for the crops like peach, plum and apricot. The cultivators paid maximum on packing material and on transportation cost of crops.

Raina, *et al.* (2017)^[7], emphasized that the major constraints faced by the J&K cultivators in the cultivation of flowers were lack of hi tech production, insufficient knowledge on diseases, middleman exploitation and lack of knowledge on floriculture schemes.

Sharma, *et al.* (2014). In their study observed that in two tehsils of district Poonch, 90% of the cultivators accounted price fluctuation, 80% of the cultivators constituted high commission charges and 76% of the cultivators constituted lack of irrigation as the main constraint in the cultivation of horticulture crops.

Research methodology and objectives

The data was collected through primary sources only. The data was collected from 117 respondents in 4 villages of

district Pulwama namely- Payar, Newa, Monghama and Zadura. Random sampling was done as per the Study requirement. The main objective of the study is to examine the challenges faced by the horticulture cultivators in district Pulwama.

Marketing challenges faced by horticulture growers in district Pulwama Garrett Ranking Technique is used to analyze the marketing challenges faced by the respondents of district Pulwama in the horticulture sector. The respondents have been asked to allocate the rank for all challenges and the results of such ranking have been transformed into score value with the help of the following formula:

$$\text{Percent position} = 100 (R_{ij} - 0.5)/N_j$$

R_{ij} = Rank given for the i th variable by j th respondents

N_j = Number of variable ranked by j th respondents

Table 1: Percent position and garret value

$100(R_{ij}-0.5)/N_j$	Calculated value	Garret Value
$100(1-0.5)/7$	7.14	79
$100(2-0.5)/7$	21.43	66
$100(3-0.5)/7$	35.71	57
$100(4-0.5)/7$	50.00	50
$100(5-0.5)/7$	64.29	43
$100(6-0.5)/7$	78.57	34
$100(7-0.5)/7$	92.86	21

Table 2: Ranking given by the respondents on marketing challenges

Marketing Challenges	Ranks given by respondents						
	1 st	2 nd	3 rd	4 th	5 th	6 th	7 th
Delay in payment	6	6	13	18	25	25	24
Lack of knowledge about market information	21	9	16	29	13	6	23
Price Fluctuations	21	33	20	9	14	8	12
High cost of transport	9	15	12	5	23	36	17
Unregulated market	13	23	25	23	19	7	7
Unauthorized deductions	12	4	9	21	17	29	25
Middle man Exploitation	35	27	22	12	6	6	9

Table 3: Calculation of garret value and ranking

Marketing Challenges	1 st	2 nd	3 rd	4 th	5 th	6 th	7 th	Total	Mean score	Ranks
Delay in payment	474	396	741	900	1075	850	504	4940	42.22	7
Lack of knowledge about market information	1659	594	912	1450	559	204	483	5861	50.09	4
Price Fluctuations	1659	2178	1140	450	602	272	252	6553	56.01	2
High cost of transport	711	990	684	250	989	1224	357	5205	44.49	5
Unregulated market	1027	1518	1425	1150	817	238	147	6322	54.03	3
Unauthorized deductions	948	264	513	1050	731	986	525	5017	42.88	6
Middle man Exploitation	2765	1782	1254	600	258	204	189	7052	60.27	1

From the table 3 with the help of Garrett Ranking Technique it is clearly indicated that middleman exploitation with mean score of 60.27, price fluctuations with mean score of 56.01 and unregulated market with mean score of 54.03 are the major marketing challenges faced by the cultivators of district Pulwama. The table also reveals that delay in payment with mean score of 42.22 is the least marketing challenge faced by the horticulture cultivators.

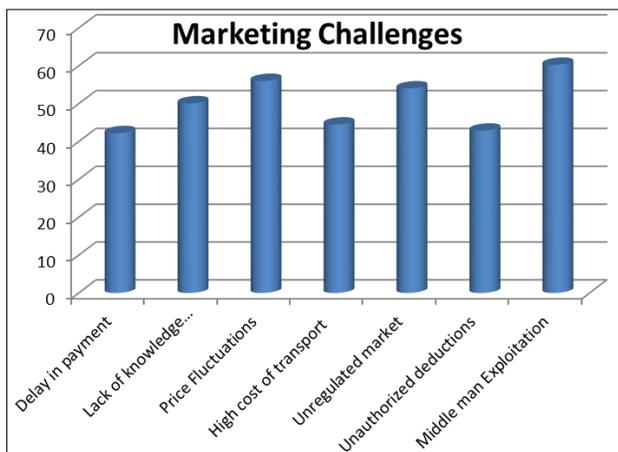


Fig 1

Conclusion and Suggestions

No doubt, horticulture sector is contributing to the J&K economy, but there are certain marketing challenges which create hindrances for further progress of this sector. Middle man exploitation, price fluctuations, unregulated market, lack of knowledge about market, high cost of transport, unauthorized deductions and delay in payment were the major marketing challenges being faced by the horticulture cultivators in district Pulwama. In order to overcome these challenges firstly middleman exploitation should be abolished as it reduces net amount of the cultivators. Minimum Support Price (per K.G or per Box) of crops should be fixed by the State Govt. to overcome the problems of price fluctuations. Market information centers should be established that will provide knowledge on the present happenings in the local and outside market. High cost of transport and unauthorized deductions on crops should also be reduced that will make this sector more profitable.

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