



Awareness of Banana Growing Farmers on Export Procedure in Western Zone of Tamil Nadu

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This study mainly examined the awareness and willingness of banana growing farmers on export procedures and export respectively in the western zone viz., Erode and Coimbatore. Results showed that awareness about the pre-production export procedure and after production of banana was low among the farmers. Most of the farmers had knowledge on PAN card because government formulates it as mandatory for crop insurance. Most of the sample respondents were unwilling to export banana. The reasons would be inadequate knowledge and lack of knowledge about demand and profitability in banana export. The suggested outcomes were formation of farmers groups and simplification in export procedure would improve the export attitude among the farmers. The awareness and willingness could be improved by making aware of farmers about the use of formal sources like officials of Department of Horticulture, NRC Banana Trichy, APEDA, Agricultural Colleges and Universities.

Key words: Export awareness, Banana production, Willingness, APEDA.

Agriculture played a vital role in India's economy. Around 58 per cent of the rural households depended on agriculture as their principal means of livelihood. The contribution of agriculture and allied sector accounted for 17.32 per cent of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) during 2017-18 (Indian Economic Survey, 2017-18). Therefore, it was exactly quoted that agriculture was the backbone of Indian economy and for its enumeration, modern measures had to be adopted. Those modern measures saved the energy in terms of cost, time, production and labour usage and finally lead to growth in both agriculture and horticulture sectors. It produces around 10 per cent of the world agricultural output; however, its share in world export of agricultural commodities is less than one per cent (Raghavulu, 2003).

Banana (*Musa spp*) is a fruit with marvelous properties. The banana plant has versatile uses. The plants are used for decorative purposes, preparation of fiber and the leaves for storing and packaging food items. Banana was fourth most important commodity globally after Rice, Wheat and Corn (Koepple, 2008). Banana was cultivated in nearly 120 countries in the world. The Global production of Banana is roughly 86 million tones (Chand, 2010).

Diverse climate of India confirmed availability of all varieties of fresh fruits & vegetables. India was the second largest producer of fruits and vegetables in the world after China. The demand of fruits and vegetables was increased in the international market and India's presence had also been enhanced with gamut of products in the trade basket. Banana was cultivated in more than 130 countries across the world in 5.00 million hectare and yielding 103.63

million tonnes of banana and plantain (FAO, 2013). As per National Horticulture Database published by National Horticulture Board, during 2014-15 India produced 86.602 million metric tonnes of fruits. The area under cultivation of fruits stood at 6.110 million hectares. The vast production base offered India tremendous opportunities for export. During 2016-17, India exported fruits and vegetables worth Rs. 10,369.96 crores which comprised of fruits worth Rs. 4,448.08 crores.

In the recent years, there was a growing recognition of the importance of banana and plantains as household food, nutritional security, as well as social security in many parts of the world. India was the largest producer of banana in the world with 29.7 million tonnes from an area of 0.88 million hectares with a productivity of 37 MT/ha. Although India accounted for only 15.5 per cent in area, its contribution in the world's production was 25.58 per cent. It was predicted that with ever-increasing demand, 60 million tonnes of banana would be needed to meet the domestic demand in 2050. Bananas were continuously showing an impressive growth worldwide. The total export of banana contributed 20.84 per cent in quantity of the total fruits exported from India during 2009-10 (Jayale *et al.*, 2012). The major destinations for Indian fruits and vegetables were Sri Lanka, Nepal, UK, Saudi Arabia, UAE, Bangladesh, Malaysia, Netherland, Pakistan and Qatar. Farmers export market participation decisions, farmers already participating in local markets had a higher motivation to engage in the production of exportable commodities when a sudden export opportunity emerged (Bobojonov *et al.*, 2016). It showed that there was low awareness

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prevailing among farmers. But it could be improved when farmers come together through cooperatives or member-owned businesses, they could pool their resources and maximize the value of whatever work they do. The export promotion program was to enhance export performance by firm's capabilities and overall abilities, resources and strategies and overall competitiveness (Diamantopoulous *et al*, 1993) Export promotion programs improve the firm performance, competencies and strategies (Czinkota, 1996). Cooperatives linked farmers to markets, input suppliers, new technologies and sound farm management techniques by (Herlehy 2012). Grouping of farmers was the most important one for achieving higher export growth. Considering these aspects, the study was conducted to know the awareness and willingness of banana growing farmers on export in Tamil Nadu.

Statement of problem

India was the largest banana producing country (29.7 million tonnes) in the world; Tamil Nadu with its share of 27.71 per cent stands first in the total production of banana in the country during 2010-2011 (Raman *et al.*, 2016). Very remarkable contribution in terms of area and production under banana were also observed from the western zone of Tamil Nadu. Banana's year-round availability, affordability, taste, nutritional and medicinal value made it the favourite fruit among every section of the society throughout the world which ultimately increased the export potential of banana. Though India's share in the global market was nearly 1% only, there was increasing acceptance of horticulture produce from the country. The problem remained in banana production was the price and in the local market most of the profit share were acclaimed by the commission agents and brokers. With the intention to protect the banana growing farmers, public sector had taken initiatives along with APEDA for creating cold chain infrastructure, quality assurance measures, Perishable Cargoes and integrated post-harvest handling facilities etc., increased the export potential of our country. Considering the above aspects, it was deemed essential to understand the farmers awareness and their willingness towards export procedure and export. Accordingly, the study was undertaken to analyse the farmers awareness and their willingness towards export procedure and export in the Western zone of Tamil Nadu with the following objectives:

1. To study the socio-economic profile of the sample farmers in Western zone of Tamil Nadu.
2. To analyze the farmer's awareness and willingness about export procedure and
3. To provide the suitable suggestions to improve the awareness on export procedure of banana.

Material and Methods

The primary data was collected from banana growers in two districts of Erode and Coimbatore in Western zone of Tamil Nadu. In respect to the present study, Erode and Coimbatore districts

were purposively selected as they were the major banana area and production districts in western zone of Tamil Nadu. Based on the maximum area under banana cultivation, two blocks were selected randomly from each district (first stage) and three villages were selected randomly from each block (second stage). From each village 10 farmers were selected conventionally (third stage). For this study convenience sampling techniques was used for selecting sample village and farmers to collect data. Thus, the total sample size was 120 farmers. The list of selected blocks, villages and selection of farmers are presented in the Table 1.

Table 1. Distribution of sample respondents in the sample blocks and villages

Districts	Blocks	Villages	No.of respondents
Erode	Sathyamangalam	Ayyampalayam	10
		Kothamangalam	10
		Nallur	10
	Gobichettipalayam	Ammapalayam	10
		Kadathur	10
		Perumugai	10
Coimbatore	Thondamuthur	Vedapatti	10
		Oonampalayam	10
		Thenampalayam	10
	Madukkarai	Arisipalayam	10
		Malumichampatti	10
		Valukkuparai	10
Total sample size			120

The data were collected from these farmers by personal interview method using structured questionnaire. A special schedule using 5 points Likert scale was prepared to measure awareness about export procedure among the farmers (Patil 2008). In this study, Five point Likert scales viz, Strongly agree, Agree, Neutral, Disagree and Strongly disagree was used to allow the farmers to express how much they agree or disagree with major constraints to export and suggestions to improve the attitude of farmers towards exporting banana. Percentage analysis was also used to analyze the socio-economic aspects of the sample respondents.

Results and Discussion

The results obtained from the present investigation as well as relevant discussion have been summarized under following heads.

Socio-economic characteristics of the profile farmers

Based on the objective socio-economic characteristics of the farmers were studied. The socioeconomic characteristics of the sample farmers were collected and analysed. The results are presented in the Table 2.

Around 33 per cent of the farmers were in the age group of 41-50 years. Education status was also

studied for those farmers and 28.33 per cent of them were illiterate and only 9.17 per cent of them were in graduate level.

Regarding the farming experience, 35 per cent of them had farming experience of about 26-35 years. Most of the farmers (69.17 per cent) were in nuclear family and 36.67 per cent of them had the agriculture

Table 2. Socio-economic characteristics of the profile farmers

Factors	Category	No. of respondents	Percentage
Age (years)	Less than 30	19	15.83
	31-40	32	26.67
	41-50	39	32.50
	Above 50	30	25.00
	Total	120	100.00
Education	Illiterate	34	28.33
	Primary	23	19.17
	Secondary	31	25.83
	Higher Secondary	21	17.50
	Graduate	11	9.17
	Total	120	100.00
Experience (years)	Less than 15	27	22.50
	16-25	38	31.67
	26-35	42	35.00
	Above 35	13	10.83
	Total	120	100.00
Family Type	Nuclear	83	69.17
	Joint	37	30.83
	Total	120	100.00
Occupation	Agriculture	44	36.67
	Agriculture + Own business	20	16.67
	Agriculture + Allied Activities	31	25.83
	Agriculture +Government employee	25	20.83
	Total	120	100.00
Annual Income	Less than 50,000	11	9.17
	50,000 – 1,00,000	26	21.67
	1,00,000 – 3,00,000	43	35.83
	3,00,000 – 5,00,000	31	25.83
	Above 5,00,000	09	7.50
	Total	120	100.00
Size of Land Holdings (ac)	Small (1.0 – 2.5)	29	24.17
	Medium (2.0 – 5.0)	49	40.83
	Large (> 5.0)	42	35.00
	Total	120	100.00

as their main occupation and 16.67 per cent were in agriculture along with other occupations. Around 36 per cent of farmer's annual income lied between one lakh to three lakhs and 40.83 per cent of them had 2.5-5.0 ac size of land holding.

Awareness about export procedure-pre production

The mean and standard deviation value for the statements for measuring the Farmer's awareness about export pre production procedure are given in the Table 3.

Farmer's awareness about pre-production procedure for export was studied in the western zone of Tamil Nadu. Based on the results shown in the Table 3, the mean score was highly noticed in 'awareness regarding PAN number (4.00)' with the standard deviation of 0.99. It was mainly achieved due to the promotion of government policies regarding PAN and it was a mandatory one for many crop loans, crop insurance and important bank related activities. The farmers 'awareness about the documents required to get PAN' scored the mean value and standard

deviation of 3.86 and 1.0 respectively. Results also showed that 'awareness about documents required for getting import export code' and 'awareness about import-export (IE) code and the offices of Directorate General Foreign Trade' had the least mean score values of 1.91 and 1.98 respectively. Mainly it was due to lack of awareness regarding export and there was only less number of IEC providing export offices are located. The government has to take some measures for improving IEC related documents. There was also another important factor was prevailing (i.e.) the most of farmers are illiterate and knowing of those related documents was difficult one.

Table 3. Awareness about pre-production procedure for export (n=120)

Statements	Mean	S.D
Awareness about how to start export business	2.49	0.91
Awareness about the registration procedure	2.18	0.83
Awareness about procedure of renewing registration	2.24	0.85
Awareness about one can start export business as manufacturer or merchant	2.53	0.96
Awareness about APEDA organization	2.22	0.84
Awareness about documents needed to register with APEDA	2.19	0.88
Awareness about Permanent Account Number (PAN)	4.00	0.99
Awareness about documents required to get PAN	3.86	1.00
Aware about import-export (IE) code they have to register in the office of Directorate General Foreign Trade	1.98	0.80
Awareness about documents required to get import export code	1.91	0.74

Among all studied statements, the 'awareness about APEDA and its role in promotion of agricultural export' had scored very low. It was one of the foremost important factors for achieving the better export growth of agricultural commodities. It could be improved for achieving better export in fruit crops.

Awareness about export post production procedure

The mean and standard deviation value for the statements for measuring the Farmer's awareness about export post production procedure are given in the Table 4.

From the Table 4, it could be concluded that 'awareness about different transport facilities for export of agricultural products' had the high mean score and standard deviation value of 2.70 and 1.06 respectively. In export, transport plays a major role in export operations. The mean score and standard deviation for 'awareness about phytosanitary certification' were 2.42 and 1.03 followed by 'awareness regarding chemical spray after sampling' 2.40 and 0.86 respectively. Many farmers possess less awareness regarding those chemical sprays for their produce. The lowest mean score of 1.58

and standard deviation of 0.62 was noticed for the statement 'awareness regarding the documents to be given to customs agent'. It is highly essential to make them aware of customs procedure because small errors in these documents pave the way for blunders in the whole export procedure.

Table 4. Awareness about export post production procedure (n=120)

Statements	Mean	S.D
Awareness about not to apply chemical spray after Sampling	2.40	0.86
Awareness about sampling procedure for pesticide residual test	2.23	0.76
Awareness about phytosanitary certification	2.42	1.03
Awareness about different transport facilities for export of agricultural products	2.70	1.06
Awareness about invoice	1.74	0.69
Awareness about size of container	1.77	0.69
Awareness about different modes of entering into Contract	1.78	0.71
Awareness about the different mode of payment	1.97	0.80
Awareness about excise duty on agricultural products	2.13	0.90
Awareness about documents to be given to custom house agent	1.58	0.62
Awareness about the custom examination	2.36	1.04

Banana Farmers Willing to Export

Willingness indicates the interest and acceptance of export among the sample farmers. The details of farmer's willingness to export were collected and the results are presented in the Table 5.

Table 5. Banana Farmers Willingness to Export

Factors	No of respondents	Percentage
Willingness	38	31.67
Unwillingness	82	68.33
Total	120	100.00

It could be inferred from Table 5 that 68.33 per cent of the sample respondents were not willing to export banana and 31.67 per cent of them were willing to export banana. It could be concluded that most of the sample respondents were unwilling to export banana. The reasons would be inadequate knowledge and lack of knowledge about demand and profitability in banana export.

Conclusion

This study revealed that the awareness about export procedure among the banana farmers in Erode and Coimbatore districts (Western zone of Tamil Nadu). Majority of farmers were in the middle age group and also mainstream of farmers were illiterate, so they were not aware of the modern technologies, hi-tech farming, value addition, export procedures, export of agricultural commodities, export prices, export demand and value. Most of the farmers were having farm experience of 26-35 years and they have inadequate knowledge about the export procedures.

Awareness about the export procedure for pre and after production of banana was low for almost all the statements. Among the pre and post production export procedure statements most of the farmers were aware about the PAN card, because the PAN was mandatory one for crop insurance and other subsidy schemes. Most of the sample respondents were unwilling to export banana. The reasons would be inadequate knowledge and lack of knowledge about demand and profitability in banana export. The awareness and willingness could be improved by making aware of farmers about the use of formal sources like officials of Department of Horticulture, NRC Banana Trichy, APEDA, Agricultural Colleges and Universities.

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