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Marketing bheaviour of flower Cultivators

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Abstract: The study was undertaken to know the marketing behaviour of flower cultivators and constraints in marketing of flowers among 120 flower cultivators in Nilakkottai block of Dindigul district, Tamil Nadu. The study reveals that majority (54.17%) of the flower cultivators preferred polythene bag as the packing material. With regard to mode of transport, 45.83 per cent of flower cultivators transport the flowers through bicycle to the market, majority (71.67%) of the flower cultivators sold their produce at nearby town and 29.33 per cent of the respondents sold their produce at distant towns and preferred to sell their produce through commission agents. Nearly three-fourths (70%) sold their produce for credit. More than one-third (41.67%) of the respondents brought their produce to the market within the range of 5 to 10 km distance. More than half (51.67%) of the respondents reported that receipt of advance was the reason for the selection of market. Regarding constraints in marketing, the foremost and predominant problems faced by majority of the flower cultivators were the price fluctuations (73.33%), more commission (60%) inadquate transport facilities (56.67%), improper weighment (55%), poor link road facilities (47.50%), delayed payment (43.33%) a price fixed by commission agents (40%), high cost of transport (25.83%) and lack of cold storage facilities (23.33%). *(Key Words: Marketing, Flower Cultivators)*

Commercial floriculture is the most profitable agro-industry in many developed countries. The present domestic retail sale of floriculture produfts is about Rs. 250 crores and the share of modern cutflowers is about Rs. 100 crores. Flowers are estimated to be grown at about 25,000 ha in India and the major flowers are Jasmine, Chrysanthemum, Rose, Crosandra, Marigold and Tuberose. The market influences production primarily through the returns they offer to producers. For examining the influnce of markets on production in India, it would be useful to classify the flowers based on the end use they are put to. A right package of technical inputs, policy initiatives, market development and concerned actions can definitely make India force to reckon with the global floriculture trade. In order to gain a thorough understanding of the factors that influenced the marketing of flowers, this study was undertaken with the following objectives:

1. To study the marketing behaviour of flower cultivators.

2. To identify the problems encountered by the flower cultivators in marketing the flowers.

Materials and Methods

The study was conducted in Dindigul district of Tamil Nadu which stands first in area cultivated under various flowers in Tamil Nadu as per the season and crop report for the year 1990-91.

Hundred and twenty flower cultivators were selected by proportionate random sampling procedure from the leaving five revenue villages in maximum flower production area. In this study marketing behaviour referred to packing materials used, mode of transport, plate of sale, mode of sale, terms and conditions of sale, distance of market and reasons for the selection of market. The scoring procedure followed by Raja (1982), Ponnusamy (1993) and Swamidasan (1993) were combined in this study. The added scores for each recpondent indicated the marketing behaviour score. To list out the problems faced by the flower growers in marketing of flower open ended question was used. The respondents themselves were a sked to enumerate their problems.

The problems were then ranked based on percentage analysis.

Results and Discussion

Marketing Behaviour of Flower Cultivators

Marketing behaviour refers to the pattern of decision to select and sell the produce through various market channels. Marketing behaviour in this study referred to the behaviour of flower cultivators towards mode of packing, mode of transport, place of sale, mode of sale, terms and conditions of sale, distance of the market and reasons for the selection of market. The results are presented in Table-

Mode of Packing

Majority of the flower cultivators (54.17%) utilised polythene bags for packing the flowers. Gunny bags were utilised by 22.5 per cent of the respondents as packing material followed by bamboo baskets (20.00%) and cloth bags (3.33%).

It was observed during the survey that polythene bags were the cheapest and easily available packing materials to the villagers. Hence, majority of the respondents select polythene bags as packing material to pack the flowers.

Table 1 Distribution of respondents on marketing behaviour

Particulars Marketing behaviour items	Number (n = 120)	Per cent
1. Mode of packing		
a) Bamboo basket	24	20.00
b) Polythene bag	65	54.17
c) Cloth bag	4	3.33
d) Gunny bag	27	22.50
2. Mode of transport		
a) Head load	-	-
b) Bi-cycle	55	45.83
c) Bullock cart	2	1.67
d) Moped	22	18.33
e) City bus	7	5.83
f) Tempo Van	-	-
g) Lorry	23	19.17
h) Train	11	9.17
3. Place of sale		
a) Village itself	-	-
b) Nearby town	86	71.67
c) Distant towns	34	28.33
4. Mode of sale		
a) Local merchant	-	
b) Retailer in nearby town	-	-
c) Commission agent in nearby town	81	67.50
d) Wholesaler	39	32.50

Terms and conditions for sale

a)	Auction	-	-
b)	Credit sale	84	70.00
c)	Contract	-	-
d)	Immediate payment	36	30.00

5. Distance of the market (km)

a)	Below 5	17	14.17
b)	5-10	50	41.67
c)	10-15	19	15.83
d)	15-20	-	-
e)	20-25	-	-
f)	Above 25	34	28.33

7. Reason for selection of market

a)	Nearer to place of production	4	3.33
b)	Receipt of advance	62	51.67
c)	Higher price	36	30.00
d)	Immediate payment	18	15.00

Mode of transport

With regard to mode of transport 45.83 per cent of flower cultivators transported the flowers hough bycycle to the market. Lorry was utilised by 19.17 per cent of respondents as the means of transport, followed by moped (18.33%), train (9.17%) city bus (5.83%) and bullock cart (1.67%).

Majority of the farmers were in medium level of socio-economic status, and one third of respondents were in low level of family annual income, the bicycle was utilised as the transporting medium by 45.83 per cent of the respondents. Lorry was provided by the wholesalers in Coimbatore and Madras flower market and hence the lorry was utilised by 19.17 per cent of the flower cultivators. Apart from the economic conditions the mode of transport was also decided based on the distance of the market from the field and quantity of flowers available for marketing.

Place of sale

Majority (71.67%) of the flower cultivators sold their produce at nearby town and 28.33 per cent of the respondents sold their produce at distance owns.

There is a big flower available at the nearby own Nilakottai. Majority of the respondents field were within a radius of 15 km from Nilakottai town, where a well organised flower market with number of flower rading commission agents is available. Hence, 71.67 per cent of the respondents preferred nearby town to sell their produce.

Mode of sale

Majority (67.50%) of the flower cultivators sold their produce through commission agents in nearby town and 32.50 per cent of the respondents sold their produce through wholesalers in distante towns.

Majority of the flower cultivators received advance from the commission agents in nearby town to meet the cultivation expenses. Hence, 65.50 per cent of the flower cultivators sold their produce through the commission agents in nearby town. The wholesalers in distant towns sent lorry and collect the flowers from the farmers at a common place in the villave itself. Hence, 32.50 per cent of the flower cultivators sold their flowers through the wholesalers in distant towns.

Terms and conditions for sale

Majority (70%) of the flower cultivators sold their produce for credit sales followed by 30 poer cent for immediate cash payment. The immediate cash obtained by the respondents would help the farmers to meet their farm and home expenses.

Distance of the market

More than one-third of the respondents (41.67%) brought their produce to the market within the range of 5 to 10 km distance followed by above 25 km (28.33%), 10 to 15 km (15.83%) and below 5 km (14.17%) distance.

Only 28.33 per cent of the respondents sold their produce at distant markets which were at more than 25 km. This could be due to the reasons of getting

renumerative price for their harvested produce and immediate cash payment.

Reasons for selection of market

More than half of the respondents (51.67%) reported that receipt of advance was the reason for the selection of market and followed by higher price (30%), immediate payment (15%) and nearer to place of production (3.33%).

The commission agents used to provide loans to the farmers to meet the cultivation expenses. Hence, majority of the flower cultivators used to receive advance and could be the reasons for selection of the market.

Problems encountered by flower cultivators

The problems perceived by the flower cultivators in marketing the flowers are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Problems encountered by th flower cultivators in marketing the flowers

Sl.No.	Problems	Number	Percent
1.	Price fluctuations	88	73.33
2.	More commission	72	60.00
3.	Inadequate transport facilities	68	56.67
4.	Improper weighment	66	55.00
5.	Poor link road facilities	57	47.50
6.	Delayed payment	52	43.33
7.	Price fixed by commission agents	48	40.00
8.	High cost of transport	31	25.83
9.	Lack of cold storage facilities	28	23.33
10.	Lack of co-operative credit facilities	17	14.17
11.	Non-availability of flower processing industry	10	8.33

A perusal of Table-2 rvealed that 11 problems are experienced by the flower cultivators. Among them the first important problem faced by the flower cultivators (73.33%) was the "price fluctuations". The price of flowers were subjectd to wide fluctuations in the market. Because of glut in the market during peak season, they can get only low price. Other than this reason, flower growers are also at the mercy of commission agents in fixing prices. This finding derived support from the study conducted by Palanisamy (1978) and Raja (1982).

"Charging more commission by the commission agents" was expressed as the second major problem by 60 per cent of the flower cultivators. The commission agents through whom the growers sell the flowers, charge the same rate of commission irrespective of the price for which the flowers are sold. Further, the price obtained for flowers which arrive late in the market is low and even then the same rate commission has to be paid by the growers.

"Inadequate transport facilities" was the third problem encountered by 56.67 per cent of flower cultivators. This might be due to the limited city bus services to the villages. The flower growing areas are in interior places and hence the in adequate transport

facilities would have been felt.

"Improper weighment" was the fourth problem faced by 55 per cent of the flower cultivators. This might be due to the cheating tendency of the commission agents and wholesalers in weighing the produce.

"Poor link road facilities" was expressed as the fifth problem felt by 47.50 per cent of the flower cultivators. Majority of the flower cultivators transport their produce through bicycle. If the link roads are increased, they can easily and quickly transport the flowers to the flower market.

"Delayed payment" was faced as the sixth problem by 43.33 per cent of cultivators. The commission agents were delaying the payment by 5 to 15 days.

"Price fixed by the commission agents" was rated as the seventh problem expressed by 40 per cent of the flower cultivators. In the absence of competition from outside traders, the fixation of price is done arbitrarily by the commission agents.

"High cost of transport" was reported as the eighth problem by 25.83 per cent of flower cultivators. This might be due to more than one third of the farmers

transporting their produce through lorry and train and sell the flowers at distant towns. Because of this they paid high cost for transporting their produce.

"No cold storage facilities available" was expressed as the ninth problem encountered by 23.33 per cent of the respondents. If cold storage facilities are available, during the high production period the flowers can be stored and marked in the off-season period.

"Lack of co-operative credit facilities" was reported as the tenth problem by 14.17 per cent of the respondents. No credit is given for flower cultivation by institutionalised credit agencies like co-operative societies. So, the flower cultivators have to get the loans from private money lenders of from commission agents paying higher rate of interest.

"Non-availability of flower processing industry" was reported as eleventh problem by 8.33 per cent of respondents. Suitable industries, either by private or co-operative basis may be established for aromatic oil extraction which would fetch higher price.

Conclusion

The study leads to conclusion that majority (54.17%) of the flower cultivators preferred polythene bag as the packing material. More than half (51.67%) of the flower cutivators reported that receipt of advance was the reason for the selection of market. The formost and predominant problems faced by majority of the flower cultivators were the price fluctuations (73.33%), more commission (60% and in adequate transport facilities. Special care showed be taken to establishing suitable marketing infrastructure for flower crops.

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Indegenous technologies for sustainable farming

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Abstract : Four micro level and one macro level researches were conducted to document and analyze the Indigenous Technical Knowledge (ITK) prevalent among the farmers in Tamil Nadu. The ITKs were collected from farmers in wetland, garden land and rainfed farming systems available in the state. As many as 1200 ITKs were documented. They were analyzed and grouped. They were found to be relevant to agriculture and allied activities. The document ITKs were analyzed for their rationality by checking them with subject matter specialists and extension personnel. The ITKs were checked with the farmers to understand their level of awareness and extent of adoption by farmers and dairy farmers. Nearly 66 per cent of the collected ITKs were judged as rational. Among the farmers, 42.78 per cent had low awareness followed by 32.09 and 25.13 per cent who had medium and high level awareness respectively. The adoption level of ITKs in agriculture was low with 43.85 per cent followed by 31.55 and 24.60 per cent who had adopted at medium and high levels respectively. Regarding awareness about ITKs on dairy 48, 30 and 22 per cent had low, medium and high levels respectively. Almost similar trend was noticed in the percentage of adopters of ITKs on dairy. The paper will highlight researches specifically conducted in different farming systems in Tamil Nadu. It contains suggestions on field testing, standardising and blending ITKs with modern technologies for recommending them to the farming community through the field extension personnel. (Key Words : Farming systems and indigenous knowledge)

Attaining food security had been a major policy issue since independence. Apporpriate polcy support for agriculture, building of a strong agricultural research and education system coupled with an extension system had helped in achieving household food security as well as the required national confidence to meet the growing food demands despite a growing population. Food grain production