

Marketing Challenges of Horticulture Growers in Jammu and Kashmir: A case Study of District Anantnag

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Abstract : *Horticulture is an important component of agriculture and has gained commercial tone in the recent years. The state of Jammu and Kashmir has different topographical and environmental conditions, possesses comparative advantage in the production of various horticultural products. The state enjoys monopoly in the production of saffron, black zeera and some fresh fruits and dry fruits (Delicious Apple, Almonds, etc.) In Kashmir valley, apple is the most commonly planted and commercially the most important fruit crop among all the fruits grown. Apple cultivation is profitable economic activity in the Kashmir valley as compared to other agriculture food crops.*

Key words: Horticulture, production, Economic activity.

Introduction:

Horticulture sector contributes immensely too strengthen the financial condition of Jammu and Kashmir. Horticulture sector contributes significantly to the economic and ecological development, employment generation, and nutritional requirement of the state. Since Jammu and Kashmir is endowed with different agro-climatic conditions and topography, the scope for strengthening for various commercial horticultural activities is enormous. After having passed through various phases over the years, horticulture has emerged as a core sector in agriculture in accelerating the overall growth of economy. Its growth makes a direct impact on employment generation and broader micro economic development of the country. It has, therefore, now become a key sector in states planned economic development. Its role in the country's nutritional security, poverty alleviation and employment generation programmes as also for providing wide range of options to the farmers for crop diversification, is becoming increasingly important. It has now emerged as the fastest growing sector within agriculture triggering agricultural development.

Horticulture is gaining momentum in the state as its contribution to GSDP remains around 7-8 percent over the past few years. As a result, there is a perceptible change in the

concept of horticulture development in the state. At least seven lakh families of the state are directly and indirectly associated with this sector. 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.

Among the various tropical and subtropical fruits, Jammu and Kashmir is the major producer of apple and walnuts in India. As the dominant crops of the valley "*Apple and Walnut*" proudly represents the fruit industry of state. About 70 percent of apple and 90 percent of walnut production in India comes from the state of Jammu and Kashmir and the state has been declared as the "Agri. export zone for apples and walnuts."

Apple is the leading fresh fruit with 45 percent share in area and near about 80 percent share in production. The share of Jammu and Kashmir to the total production of apples in India is 74.4 % in 2016-17, with overall production around 1.726 MT's. Walnut is the leading dry fruit with 27 percent share in area and 11 percent share in production. Apples and walnut taken together account for nearly 70 percent of total area but they account for nearly 90 percent of the aggregate horticulture production.

The area and production of fresh fruits and dry fruits in the state of Jammu and Kashmir have been increasing and the trend is projected to amplify the demand for fruits in future as evidenced by the high income elasticity of demand. This continuous increasing trend in area and production can be attributed to modal factors like commitment of the farmers/orchardists towards this sector, and to the various incentives towards market interventions like establishment of fruit markets, provision for support prices, technological support awareness options research and extension.

Research Methodology

For any research work, research methodology is very important. Research methodology is a way to systematically solve the research problem. It may be understood as a science of studying how research is done scientifically. In it we study the steps that are generally adopted by a researcher in studying his/her research problem along with the logic behind it. It is necessary for the researcher to know not only the research

methods/techniques but also the methodology. Thus research methodology comprises not only the research methods but also the rationale behind the use of such methods, so as to make the research results capable of being evaluated either by the researcher himself/herself or by others.

The data was collected through primary sources only. Four villages were selected randomly from district Anantnag and data was collected from 150 respondents from sample villages.

Objectives of the Study:

. For the present study the following objectives has been setup:

1. To find out the marketing problems of horticulture sector.
2. To find out the remedies to overcome from marketing problems faced by the growers.

Marketing problems faced by horticulture growers in district Anantnag

To find out the most significant factor which influences the respondents, Garret's ranking technique was used. As per this method respondents have been asked to assign the rank for all factors and the result of such ranking have been converted into score value with the help of following formula.

Present position= $100(R_{ij}-0.5)/N_j$

R_{ij} =rank given for the i th variable by j th respondent

N_j =no. of variable ranked by j th respondent

With the use of Garret's table, the present position estimated is converted into scores. Thus for each factor, the scores of each individual are added and then total value of scores and mean value of scores is calculated. The factors having highest mean value is considered to be the most important problem.

In order to find out the marketing problems faced by horticulture growers in district Anantnag Henry Garret's ranking technique is used to analyze and find out the marketing challenges faced by the respondents of district Anantnag. While collecting the data from

respondents, the respondents have been asked to allocate the rank for all marketing constraints and the results of such ranking have been transformed into score value with the help of Garret's ranking technique formula.

Table 1.1 Present position and Garret value (Market Problem).

100(Rij-0.5)/Nj	Calculated value	Garret value
100(1-0.5)/6	8.33	77
100(2-0.5)/6	25	63
100(3-0.5)/6	41.66	54
100(4-0.5)/6	58.33	46
100(5-0.5)/6	75	37
100(6-0.5)/6	91.66	23

Table 1.2 Ranking given by respondents on marketing problems in district Anantnag

Marketing problems	Ranks given by respondents						No. of respondents
	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th	6th	
Lack of marketing knowledge	28	23	26	30	20	23	150
Lack of storage facilities	40	35	30	15	18	12	150
Exploitation by middleman's	25	24	26	30	20	25	150
Unregulated markets	30	28	26	24	20	22	150
Delay in payments	10	30	13	27	34	36	150
High transportation cost	30	25	27	20	25	23	150

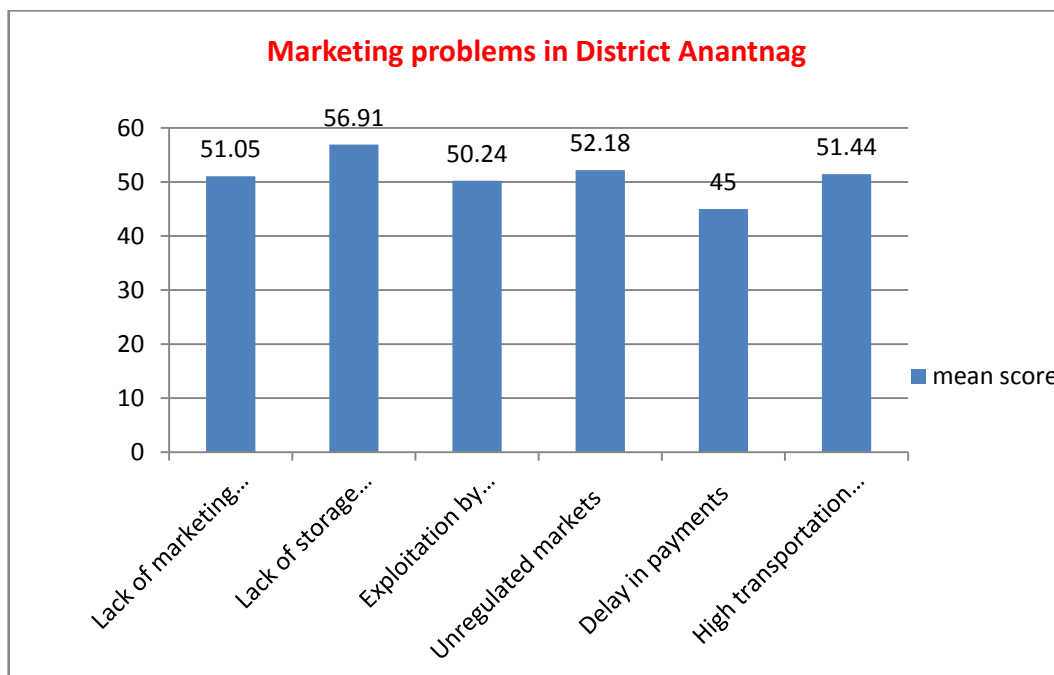
Source: field survey¹

¹ Field survey

Table 1.3 Calculation of Garret value and ranking of District Anantnag (Marketing problem)

Marketing problems	1 st	2 nd	3 rd	4 th	5 th	6 th	Total score in Pulwama	Total no. of respondents	Mean score/ average score	Rank
Lack of marketing knowledge	2156	1449	1404	1380	740	529	7658	150	51.05	4
Lack of storage facilities	3080	2205	1620	690	666	276	8537	150	56.91	1
Exploitation by middleman's	1925	1512	1404	1380	740	575	7536	150	50.24	5
Unregulated markets	2310	1764	1404	1104	740	506	7828	150	52.18	2
Delay in payments	770	1890	702	1242	888	1258	6750	150	45.0	6
High transportation cost	2310	1575	1458	920	925	529	7717	150	51.44	3

Fig. 1.1 Marketing problems in District Anantnag



While using Henry Garret's ranking technique in case of marketing problems in

district Anantnag, it is clearly visible from the table no. 1.3 that lack of storage facility with highest mean score 56.91 as the most serious problem in district Anantnag. While as delay in payments with mean score 45.0 is the least marketing problem faced by horticulture growers in district Anantnag.

Suggestions:

While conducting survey and interacting with the horticulture growers of district Anantnag, we found that the growers are facing lot of problems that needed to be looked upon by the concerned authorities. For the proper development of this sector, we put some suggestions which are mentioned below:

1. Government should take remedial steps in order to remove the obstacles which come in the way of development horticulture sector.
2. Market information centers should be established in every district that will provide knowledge on the present happenings in the local and outside markets.
3. Majority of farmers are being exploited by middlemen in one way or the other way. In order to overcome the challenges and difficulties which are being faced by horticulture cultivator's exploitation should be properly abolished as it reduces the net amount of the horticulture cultivators.
4. In order to make horticulture sector more profitable unauthorized deductions on crops and high cost of transportation should be reduced
5. Government should keep separate funds for this sector so that farmers can get timely relief in times of natural disasters like floods, earthquakes, landslides and premature snow fall.
6. Export oriented technologies and methodologies for fruit industries in the state should be setup
7. In order to promote export of fresh and dry fruits in the state export zones should be encouraged to be setup.

8. Quality control laborites should be that can earn foreign exchange and that can get international standard in foreign market. established to provide proper facilities and to ensure the exporters the commodities to export
9. Only NH-1A connects J&K with rest of the India. Due to hilly, rocky cliffs, mountainous area and landslides national highway remains blocked for weeks even in the harvesting season. The result is that the horticulture produce spoils and does not reach to the mandies and markets. Government should think to develop Mughal road of J&K or some alternative road should be open for traffic particularly for horticulture products.

Conclusion:

Horticulture sector is an emerging and is contributing to the J&K economy but there are certain marketing challenges which are creating hindrances and are becoming obstacles for the future progress of the sector. The major problems which the Jammu and Kashmir farmers are facing are with regard to marketing and storage facilities. Due to lack of storage facilities a good proportion of fruits go waste due to its perishable nature and lack of well-organized and regulated marketing facilities is the main factor which slows the growth and development of the sector.

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