

Extent of knowledge level of medicinal and aromatic plants growers in Karnataka

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ABSTRACT

The study was conducted during 2007-08 at Dharwad, Belgaum and Gadag districts of Karnataka. The ex-post facto research design was used for the study. A total sample comprising of 140 medicinal and aromatic plants contract farmers were randomly selected. Most of the farmers (45.72 per cent) belonged to high level of knowledge about cultivation practices of Ashwagandha whereas, 28.57 per cent and 25.71 per cent of the respondents came under low and medium knowledge level category, respectively. Most of the farmers (65.72 per cent) belonged to high knowledge level about cultivation practices of Patchouli whereas, 20 per cent and 14.28 per cent of the respondents were categorized as low and medium knowledge level category, respectively.

KEY WORDS : Knowledge, Ashwagandha, Patchouli, Citronella, Lemongrass

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INTRODUCTION

The globalization of Indian agriculture in the recent years has resulted in the production of export-oriented quality products having comparative advantage. To fulfill the commitment of the World Trade Organization (WTO), the recent dismantling of the system of quantitative restrictions (QRs) on imports by the Union Government has provoked new challenge to the Indian farmers to compete in the world market. With the WTO's demand for trade liberalization and reduction in subsidy, the Indian farmers are facing threats to their survival from every quarter corner.

Parallel to this problem of fragmentation of land holding, hampering farm mechanization, have prevented the farmer from getting optimum yields from his farm. The lack of capital forces, the farmer to compromise on the farm inputs, again resulting in the less of productivity. In such a scenario, contract farming is fast emerging as the optimal model of farming.

In India, contract farming was initiated during 1920's by ITC by introducing Virginia tobacco in coastal in Andhra

Pradesh. Contract farming has existed in Karnataka for decades mainly in sugar mills. Gherkins have been recently introduced in India for commercial production mainly for exports. The credit for introducing cultivation of gherkins in Karnataka for processing and export in preserved form goes to a few private firms started during 1991. In the past three years, Karnataka stood first in export of preserved gherkins with a share of over 90 per cent in total export of preserved gherkins from India.

METHODOLOGY

The study was conducted in northern part of Karnataka i.e. Dharwad, Belgaum and Gadag districts of Karnataka. The ex-post facto research design was used for the study. A total sample comprising of 140 medicinal and aromatic plants contract farmers were purposively selected randomly from selected Talukas like Kalgatgi, Hubli, and Dharwad, Talukas from Dharwad district. Savdati, Hukeri, Gokak, Chikodi and Belgaum Talukas from Belgaum district, Ron and Gadag Talukas from Gadag district.

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