

Short Communication

Socio-personal and socio-economic characteristics of the fig growers and information sources used by them in fig cultivation technology

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Horticulture is an effective instrument for generating greater income per unit area, additional employment, provision of nutritive and proteinous diet, conservation of soil, environment and prevention of shifting cultivation. Horticulture also plays a vital role in export and import substitution. Horticulture crops can be grown in the area where other crops are not suitable to grow it effectively.

Fig is one of the oldest Horticultural fruit crop known to the mankind. The edible fig (*Ficus Carica*) is small deciduous tree, which has been under cultivation since antiquity in the Western Mediterranean region. It was first brought to cultivation in the southern part of the Arabian Peninsula by least 300 B.C.

Fig is consumed fresh or dried, preserved or candied and canned fresh fruits are very delicious, wholesome and nutritious. From nutritional point of view, fig fruits are much valued and contain high sugar and low acid. The mineral content is 2-4 times more than that of other fruits.

The total area under fig cultivation in Maharashtra is 1080 ha. Out of which 483.35 ha. (44.75 per cent) is alone in Pune district. However, of the total area under fig in the district about 50 per cent area is in Purandhar Tahsil.

The average yield of fig fruits and the area under cultivation is comparatively less. This is because of lack of knowledge about improved and recommended package of practices and post harvest technology in the fig farming business. If the present knowledge of the farmers is identify and steps are taken to improve their knowledge and provision of infrastructure marketing facilities through the process of training. Then only it is possible to increase in area and production of the fig.

In view of this, the present investigation entitled "Knowledge level and training needs of fig growers in Pune district" was undertaken with the following specific objectives.

1. To study the personal, social, economic and psychological characteristics of the fig growers.
2. To study the sources of information used by the fig growers and;
3. To obtain the suggestions made by the respondent to overcome the problem.

The present study was carried out in Purandhar and Bhor Tahsils of Pune district during the year January, 2005 because fig is grown extensively in these tahsils.

The list of fig growing villages was obtained from the Panchayat Samiti of Purandhar and Bhor. Out of 288 villages, 15 villages from Purandhar (out of 96 villages) and 5 villages from Bhor (out of 185 villages) tahsils were selected on random selection basis. In all 20 villages were

selected for the study purpose.

The list of fig growing farmers from the selected 20 villages was prepared. Out of these fig growers 10 fig. Growers from each villages were selected on random basis. Hence, in all two tahsils, 20 villages and 200 fig. Growers were selected for the present study purposes.

The data were collected by conducting the personal interview of the respondents with the help of pre-tested interview schedule specially designed for the study purpose. The information collected through interview was transferred from the interview schedule in to the primary tables and then to the secondary tables. Whenever, necessary the information of qualitative nature was converted in to quantitative form. In this way, the collected information was analysed and tabulated. The results are presented under following heads.

Personal, social, economic and psychological characteristics of the fig growers :

The information pertaining to the personal, social, economic and psychological variables were collected and analysed. The results are presented in Table 1. It is revealed that a majority of the fig growers (58.50 per cent) were from middle age group and having education upto the 10th standard (33.50 per cent), belonging to the medium size of families (47.50 per cent), having medium type of land holding (73.50 per cent) with medium level of the socio-economic status (49.00 per cent). Most of them having the medium level of annual income (64.50 per cent) with medium experience (47.00 per cent) in fig farming. They used lease amount of sources of information. The only sources of information used by most of the fig growers were television (63.0 per cent) as an entertainment, friends (58.00 per cent) and neighbours (54.50 per cent). Very few of them had contacts with villages extension workers (23.00 per cent) for information. Most of the fig growers having medium level of knowledge (67.50 per cent).

Suggestions made by the fig growers regarding fig cultivation :

The data in respect of suggestions made by the fig growers regarding fig cultivation were collected and analysed. The results are presented in table 2. The data indicates that, almost all the (100.00 per cent) fig growers suggested that they should be made available the availability of efficient and effective marketing system over the present one on the one hand and provision of credit supply at lower interest rate for them may be managed on the other hand.

About 75 per cent of the fig growers suggested that,

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