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Economic analysis of FIG (*Ficus carica* Linn.) in Maharashtra

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ABSTRACT

For the present study, Pune and Aurangabad districts were selected purposively because these are the well known districts for fig cultivation. Data were collected from 120 farm families. Study reveled that at an over all level per hectare total cost of production was Rs. 111958.76 with gross return of Rs. 258750.7 and net return of Rs. 146791.94. Net profit was comparatively more in Aurangabad district than Pune district. Output-input ratio for Aurangabad was 2.35 and for Pune district it was 2.27 and at an overall level it was 2.31. It indicated that fig cultivation was a profitable enterprise. At an overall level per quintal cost of production was Rs. 863.99. The knowledge of cost, returns and profitability will be useful to the farmers. The findings of the study will help to increase the area under fig by knowing profitability of the crop.

Key words : Costs, Returns, Profitability, Amortized cost, Fig.

The fig (*Ficus carica* Linn.) is one of the oldest fruits known to mankind. The fig is native of Southern Arabia. It is grown in all tropical and subtropical countries around the Mediterranean region, specially in Italy, Spain, Turkey, Greece, Portugal and Algeria.

It is extensively cultivated in California, U.S.A. and Afghanistan. In the world production, Spain ranks first and contributes about 30 per cent of world production and other producers are Italy (20 per cent), Turkey (15 per cent) and Greece (10 per cent).

In India, fig cultivation is mostly confined to western part of Maharashtra, Gujarat, Uttar Pradesh (Lucknow and Saharanpur), Karnataka (Bellory, Chitradurga and Sriranga patnam) and Tamil Nadu. Among the states, Maharashtra is leading state followed by Karnataka and Uttar Pradesh. The fig is an important fruit and is consumed fresh or in processed form. The dried form being the most popular. It can also be canned or used for candy or jam making. It is a delicious and nutritious fruit. It has some medical uses such as application against boils and other skin infection. From human nutrition point of view, fig fruits are valued as they contain high sugar and low acid. The mineral content of fig fruit is 2.4 per cent. It is richer in iron and copper contents than most other fresh as well as dry fruits (Waskar *et al.*, 2003). The fresh fruit is rich in carbohydrates, vitamin A and C. It is said that about 750 g of fig contain enough carbohydrates to meet four fifth of daily requirement of human body. It comes very near to human milk in comparison, specially in organic salt. Dried figs contain 45 to 60 per cent sugar.

There are various fig products commonly processed throughout the world. The dominant among these products are fig jam, fig pickle, dried figs, canned figs, fig preserve etc. Other than these products there are some less prominent products like fig burfi, fig bar and fig leather (Dharmadhikari, 2000). No doubt fig cultivation is profitable but it requires initial investment in the form of capital, labour and skilled management. In this context, the present study was undertaken to study the costs, returns and profitability in fig production.

METHODOLOGY

Multistage sampling design was adapted for the present study. Aurangabad and Pune districts were selected purposively because these are the well known fig growing districts in Maharashtra state. Fig is cultivated in Daulatabad Tehsil in Aurangabad district and Purander Tehsil in Pune district. Hence, these two Tehsils were selected purposively. From each Tehsil, five villages were selected on the basis of highest area. In all, 60 cultivators from each Tehsil constituting total sample size 120. Fig plantation has a gestation period of about 2-3 years to reach the bearing stage. Thus, initial investment is high for reasons of the cost involved in digging pits, manure, fertilizer application and fig plant transplanting etc. Taking into consideration all items of initial investment, a sample of 20 cultivators establishment cost was worked out and it is amortized over useful life and amortized cost included while working out cost of cultivation of bearing orchard. The required data were collected by personal interview method in specially designed pretested schedules. Data

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