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Research Paper

Economics of production of *Rabi* onion in Ahmednagar district

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ABSTRACT

Attempt has been made to examine the economics of production of *Rabi* onion in Ahmednagar district. The investigation was based on the data collected by survey method from 96 onion growers from Ahmednagar district. The result indicated that the main production of *Rabi* onion was 215.13 q/ha. In production, rental value of land, hired human labour, seed and fertilizer were the major item of the cost. Per hectare total cost (cost-C) was Rs.54321.21. The proportion of cost-A in total cost was 62.30 per cent, while proportion of cost-B was 90.67 per cent. Output input ratio was 1.64 and cost of production was Rs.252.5/q.

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INTRODUCTION

The primary centre of origin is of onion (*Allium cepa* L.) Central Asia and Mediterranean is a secondary centre of origin. Onion is commodity of mass consumption and is grown almost all over the country mainly by small and marginal farmers as this is labour intensive crop. Maharashtra is reckoned as the leading onion producing state in India.

The onion growers in western Maharashtra are able to harvest good yield, however the net return obtained are fluctuating due to uncertainty of price. The literature indicated that onion growers are not able to keep consistency in productivity, cost and return structure. The efforts were made to estimate cost and return structure as well as marketing costs of onion by the researchers. The cultivation of onion can become economically profitable provided that, the production of the onion done efficiently, for which adequate management of resources as well as to increase per unit resource use efficiency are necessary. It can also help to reduce the cost of production. Keeping in view the importance of the crop the study was carried out with the objective to estimate costs and returns of onion.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Multistage sampling design was used to select district, tehsil, villages and growers. In the first stage, Ahmednagar district was purposively selected, because of availability of area under onion production, predominance in area after Nasik and Pune. In the second stage, Parner Tehsil was selected, on the basis of highest area under *Rabi* onion. In the third stage, eight villages from Parner Tehsil were selected on the basis of availability area under *Rabi* onion cultivation. In the fourth stage, from each selected village on the basis of total land holding they were divided into three size groups *i.e.* small (up to 2.0 ha), medium (2.1 to 4.0 ha) and large (above 4.0 ha). Thus, 32 cultivators were selected for each group. In all the total respondents were 96.

For evaluation, data were converted into per hectare basis. Statistical tools like arithmetic mean, percentage and ratio were used for estimating the results. Cost concepts like cost-A, cost-B and cost-C were used. Man days refers to a measurement of human labour whereas female labour is equal to 0.80 man day in case of both hired and family labour because the prevailing wage rates for female and male labour were Rs.80 and Rs.100 per day, respectively. Bullock labour cost was evaluated by considering the hiring rate of a bullock pair for Rs.350 per day. Machine labour rate was Rs.360 per hour. The rate prevailing for nitrogen, phosphorus and potash were Rs.12.17, Rs.23.75 and Rs.8.66 per kg, respectively. Rates of above ingredients were estimated by considering the prevailing market prices