

Marketing of vegetables of Parbhani market

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The study of cabbage and cauliflower marketing in terms of marketing channels, number of agencies and price spread in Parbhani district of Maharashtra indicated that farmers mostly adopted Channel II in marketing of their surplus produce having wholesaler as one of the intermediaries. The estimation of price spread for these crops indicated lower share of farmers (52 to 54 per cent) due to both higher marketing costs and margins charged by the intermediaries. The marketing margins were as high as 37 to 39 per cent in sale of these crops. The study thus suggests that in order to promote efficient vegetable marketing system both for producers and consumers have to encourage increased vegetable production. The regulatory measures to protect the interests of vegetable growers should be rationally modified by the government. The introduction of Apni Mandi concept in recent times is a novel idea for reducing the role of market middleman and bringing farmers in direct contact of the consumers and thus, reducing the price variation in the two groups of the society in the economy.

India is the second largest producer of vegetables (next to China) in the world. This high level of production can supply 120 gms of vegetables per capita per day as against the recommended dietary allowance of 200 gms vegetables per capita per day. Thus, for an increasing population of the country there is a need to increase the production of vegetables to a level of 95 million tones by 2010 A.D. This level of production can be achieved by making this enterprise a profitable entity as it is mostly taken by the small sized farmers.

The cultivation of vegetables is most suitable in a country like ours with preponderance of small land holding, varied climatic conditions and surplus family labour. However, the level of profitability of the vegetable crops depends upon how marketing of vegetables is undertaken by the farmers in

addition to adoption of technology in growing them. Time of sale, price of sale and agency through whom these are sold are some of the factors which influence the net prices received by the farmers for their surplus vegetables. High transport and packing costs, malpractices by the middlemen and existence of a large number of intermediaries reduce the producer's share in the consumer's rupee.

There is need to bring improvement in the marketing efficiency for vegetable marketing. The efforts made by the Government to improve the marketing system could improve the efficiency and help in increasing the producer's share in the consumer's rupee in the case of food grains, oilseeds and fibre crops to a great extent but very little has been done for improving the marketing efficiency in the case of fruits, vegetables, flowers and other perishable commodities.

Marketing of vegetables poses more problems compared to other agricultural commodities as they have a high degree of perishability, bulkiness, existence of large number of middleman in their trade due to low capital requirements and are grown mostly by the small and marginal farmers. The middleman manipulates the situation by offering low prices to the growers under the pretext of low demand falsely rejecting the produce as sub-standard. Sometimes, the vegetables also get accumulated in particular areas due to climatic conditions resulting in surfeit. Growers then make distress sale and get substantially low prices in addition to wastage of a large quantity of the produce. On the other hand this causes acute shortages in other areas and forces the consumers of such areas to pay a higher price. The prices of vegetables are generally much higher in the Mandi than in their growing areas due to both high marketing costs and high margins of the middleman. As such the interests of both producers as well as consumers are poorly served with the existing

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