



Research Article

Study on problems of cotton farmers in Vidarbha region of Maharashtra

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SUMMARY : This paper presents the study on the problems of the cotton farmers in Maharashtra with respect to effect of insecticides and unpredictable climate, labour problems, black marketing by the private traders, failure of Govt. policies and problem of electricity. The detailed information was collected on analysis about the total input cost required for producing cotton crop per acre for an average farmer .

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Cotton producers,
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BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVES

In 1971, when Garibi Hatao and nationalization were in the flavour , Maharashtra launched the Cotton Monopoly Scheme(CMS). Its aim was to capture the whole economic value for the farmer ie from growing cotton to selling finished cloth. It was in 1984 that the state government set up The Maharashtra State Coop Cotton Growers Mktg Fed Ltd (MSC), an apex cooperative society. It administered the CMS for the state government and was responsible for procurement, processing, storage and sale of cotton. At the time of payment, the Kharidi Vikri Sangh (sub agent of MSC) deducted loans taken by farmers from Co-operative banks (up to a maximum of 50 per cent of payment) and paid the balance. Under CMS cotton traders gave way to 'Kheda Kharidi wale' (KKW). Numerous small farmers preferred to sell their produce to KKW at a discount to MSP(Nayyar, 2007). In Maharashtra, the cotton is known as the 'white gold' but the current situation of cotton producers is really very pathetic.

Objectives :

To examine the problems faced by the cotton producers in Vidarbha (Maharashtra)

Problems faced by the cotton producers:

Effect of insecticides and unpredictable climate:

The unpredicted nature of weather, various harmful insecticides (Lalya) had attacked the crop. This problem shows a direct effect on the seasonal period of cotton also *i.e.* normally the production and collection of cotton take place upto March 2012 but this period has been shortened till November 2011 only (less than 3–4 months). This shows a decrease in the productivity rate of about 25 to 30 per cent *i.e.* about a loss of Rs. 400 crores.

Problem of electricity :

There was a load shading of 16 hours a day which has forced the less productivity of cotton production. The farmers could not provide the crop the required and proper amount of water and at the end of the day, the yield of the crop got stagnant. The electricity board has outlined the time schedule of agricultural pumps for load shading but they were carrying this activity even beyond the time stated by them.

Labour problems:

There was steep hike in the labour charges. They are taking charges of about Rs 100 -150/- per day or Rs. 5–7 per kg . The Govt. provides around

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