

## An economic analysis of potato cultivation in Latur district of Maharashtra

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Accepted : November, 2008

### ABSTRACT

An attempt was made to work out costs, returns and net profit from potato cultivation in Latur district of Maharashtra. The study was based on cross section data collected from 70 cultivators from seven villages of Latur district. Farmers were divided into three groups viz., small (0-2 ha), medium (2.1 to 4.0 ha) and large (4.1 ha and above). Potato was grown in *rabi* season. Per hectare physical input utilization indicated that use of hired human labour (69 man days) was more than family human labour (16 man days). Per hectare bullock labour use was 12.13 pair days while per hectare use of manure was 4.78 cartloads. Regarding other inputs, use of seed was 1383.63 kg, N 61.48 kg, P 56.60 kg and K 56.60 kg and plant protection 4.24 lit. Analysis in respect of per hectare cost of cultivation of potato revealed that at an overall level, total cost i.e. 'C' was Rs. 59829.98 while cost 'A' and Cost 'B' worked out to Rs. 27340.02 (45.69 %) and Rs. 59013.92 (98.63 %), respectively. The net return per hectare was 122488.80 and benefit cost ratio was 3.04 which indicated that potato was a highly profitable crop.

**Key words :** Potato, Family labour income, Profitability, Net income.

**A**mong root and tuber crops, India ranks fifth in the world in area and production of potato. In India, potato is produced on area of 14.00 lakh hectares with production of 250 lakh tonnes and productivity of 17.86 tonnes/ha.

In Maharashtra potato is produced on an area of 1.28 million ha with a production of 22.49 MT and productivity of 17.57 tonnes/ha. In Maharashtra potato is grown in assured irrigated areas. Recently in Marathwada region, Latur district introduced potato cultivation in *rabi* season. Potato crop is extensively grown in Chakur and Sirur Anantpal tahsils of Latur district as a principal cash crop.

### METHODOLOGY

Multistage sampling design was adopted for present study. At the first stage, Latur district was purposively selected for study because *rabi* potato cultivation was newly introduced in the district. In the second stage, two talukas were also purposively selected from Latur district on the basis of highest proportionate area under potato. Talukas selected were Chakur and Sirur Anantpal. At the third stage, four villages from Chakur taluka and three villages from Shirur Anantpal talukas were selected on the basis of highest area. At fourth

stage, complete list of cultivators growing potato were obtained from village record of selected villages and from each village, 10 cultivators were selected randomly for study. They were grouped into three categories on the basis of their operational holdings viz. small farmers (up to 2 ha), medium farmers (2.1 to 4.0 ha) and large farmers (more than 4.00 ha). Thus, total sample of 70 potato growers were selected randomly comprising of 20 small farmers, 20 medium farmers and 30 large farmers. The required data were collected by survey method by conducting personal interviews in specially designed pretested schedules. Data were pertained for the agricultural year 2005-2006. The data were processed by using tabular analysis comprising of arithmetic mean, percentages, ratios etc. Accepted standard, cost concepts viz., cost A, cost B and cost C were used for working out the cost of cultivation and arriving at desired and meaningful conclusions.

### RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

#### *Composition of sample farmers:*

The selected sample farmers were classified into three different categories (Table 1).

The distribution of sample cultivator indicated that out of 70 cultivators, 20 each belonged to small and medium size group and 30 to large size group. An overall level per farm area under potato crop was 0.95 ha, the per farm areas under small, medium and large group were 0.44 ha, 0.79 ha and 1.40 ha, respectively.

#### *Per hectare physical input and output:*

The size group wise detail information about per

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