

## A study on awareness and sources of market information of onion in Karnataka

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### ABSTRACT

A study on market information of onion in Karnataka indicated that awareness of farmers on different components of market information and its utility was very poor (11 to 37 %) as compared to those of traders (75%). Radio and newspapers (5.55 %) were the general sources of market information for farmers at household and village levels. However, commission agents were the most sought after sources of market information for all the categories of farmers (72 % of small, 56 % of medium and 68 % of large farmers) at the market level followed by input dealers. In view of the poor awareness of farmers on market information, it is suggested to strengthen the dissemination of market information through formal agencies like APMC's, KVK's etc using latest information and communication technology through mass media.

**Key words :** Awareness, Market information, Onion, Sources of information, Market intelligence.

Market information is an important facilitating function in the agriculture marketing system. It facilitates marketing decisions, regulates the competitive market process and simplifies marketing mechanisms. Market information is a means of increasing the efficiency of marketing system and promoting improved price formation. It is crucial to the farmers to make informed decisions about what to grow, when to harvest, to which market produce should be sent and whether or not to store it. Improved information should enable traders to move produce profitably from a surplus to a deficit market and to make decisions about the viability of carrying out storage where technically possible.

Introduction of economic reforms, ushering in liberalization policies in the country has brought new challenges to the marketing system including information requirements. Advancement in communication and information technology have made the world a smaller place and a larger market. To fully utilize the new emerging trade opportunities for the benefit of farming community, improved agricultural market information service is considered sine-quo-non (Anonymous, 2003). Thus, a study was taken up in Karnataka State to know the farmers' and market functionaries' market information awareness and information sources for onion crop as this crop stands out as an exceptional crop among vegetables

owing to the frequent volatility in its prices and supply at the consumer front. The upheavals in onion supply and prices often form major political issues and thus the crop is an object of much scrutiny. Therefore, the present study was undertaken with the following specific objectives : to find out the pattern of awareness of farmers and traders on different components of market information and to examine the sources of market information of farmers and traders at different levels.

### METHODOLOGY

To study the awareness and sources of market information on onion among the farmers and traders in Karnataka, a multistage sampling technique was adopted. In the first stage, four districts with one in each of the revenue divisions of Karnataka were chosen based on highest area under onion.

In the second stage, one taluka from each of the selected districts was selected based on the highest area under onion. From each of the taluka, 30 farmers growing onion atleast for the last 3 years were selected based on random sampling techniques.

In addition, ten traders were selected at random from selected markets namely Bangalore, Mysore, Hubli and Raichur. The data pertains to the agricultural year 2007-08. The data were analyzed using simple tabular analysis with percentages and averages. The responses of the traders were scored giving a weight of 3 for 'always', 2 for 'sometimes' and 1 for 'rarely' responses.

### FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

#### *Pattern of awareness:*

The awareness on market information as depicted

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