



Research Paper

Comparative economics of *Kharif*, *Rabi* and summer cultivation of tomato in Latur district of Maharashtra

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ABSTRACT : Tomato (*Lycopersicon esculentum*) is an important vegetable crop in India. It is also called 'love apple' is an herbaceous plant belonging to the genus *Lycopersicon* under Solanaceae or Nightshade family. The world total area under tomato is 4562438 thousand ha with production of 150513813 thousand tons and with productivity of 32.8 tons/ha in the year 2010-1011 (Source: National Horticulture Board). India is the second largest producer of vegetable in the world after China (23%) with an estimated production of 99.4 million tones, which accounts for 12 per cent of world's production. There is an increase from 596.0 thousand ha in 2006-07 to 865.0 thousand ha in 2010-11, while in terms of production it has increased from 10055.0 to 16826.0 thousand tons. In 2011-12 area is 907.0 thousand ha with production of 18653.0 thousand tons (Source: National Horticulture Board). The research have conducted to study the socio-economic characteristics of *Kharif*, *Rabi* and summer tomato growers, to compare cost and return from *Kharif*, *Rabi* and summer tomato production, to study the season-wise variety utilization and consumer preference for tomato and to study constraints and suggestions of *Kharif*, *Rabi* and summer tomato production. The studies have conducted in different Tehsils of Latur. Use of hired human labour in *Rabi* season was the highest as 236.76 man days followed by 207.00 and 177.67 man days in summer and *Kharif* season, respectively. The result revealed that total expenditure as cost-C was Rs. 127785.94 in *Rabi* season followed by Rs. 108832.31 and 105270.92 in summer and *Kharif* season, respectively. Among all the individual items of expenditure, hired human labour was predominant. The proportionate expenditure on hired human labour was the highest 28.53 per cent in summer season followed by 27.79 per cent in *Rabi* and 25.32 per cent in *Kharif* season. The results revealed that, gross return from *Rabi* season Rs. 205495.20 followed by that of Rs. 186000.00 and Rs. 176400.00 from summer and *Kharif* season, respectively. It was observed that farm business income (GR-cost-A) was 119691.63 in *Rabi* season followed by 114546.45 in summer and 107675.53 in *Kharif* season. The data clearly reveal that the average fruit weight was maximum (105g) in variety Alankar which was followed by 5005 (Lakshmi) and minimum fruit weight (60g) was observed in fruits of variety US-440. The fruits of different varieties under studies were kept for storage studies at room temperature. As the fruits of variety Alankar has recorded higher ratings for all the quality parameters under study may be the cause for preference from the growers as well as from the consumer for this variety leading to maximum area under cultivation of this variety. It was observed that one of the most important problems faced by tomato growers was timely unavailability of labour 90.63 per cent in summer season followed by 78.13 per cent and 71.88 per cent in *Rabi* and *Kharif* season, respectively.

KEY WORDS : *Kharif*, *Rabi*, Summer, Minimum fruit weight, Farm business income

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