DOI: 10.15740/HAS/AU/10.4/340-342
Agriculture Update
Volume **10** | Issue 4 | November, 2015 | 340-342
Visit us : *www.researchjournal.co.in*
e ISSN-0976-6847

RESEARCH ARTICLE :

A study on problems and prospects of farmers in production of organic jaggary

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ARTICLE CHRONICLE :
Received :
21.09.2015;
Revised :
09.10.2015;
Accepted :
23.10.2015

SUMMARY : The Kolhapur district is the basket of the jaggary. Nearly eleven hundred jaggary preparation units are working (Feb., 2009) in this district. The farmers from Kolhapur district are preparing and selling organic jaggary. The study was undertaken in purposively selected Kolhapur district of Maharashtra state. The data were collected from 20 organic jaggary making farmers. Majority of them followed pre and post harvest practices of organic jaggary making like land preparation (100.00 %), use of pair row planting method for the supply of green manuring (100.00 %), use of organic manures (100.00 %). The respondents faced the constraints like decline in the yields in initial period (90.00 %), lack of separate market for organic jaggary (100.00 %) and lack of storage facility during rainy season (100.00 %), lack of guidance for certification (100.00 %).

How to cite this article : Gurav, Kumar V. (2015). A study on problems and prospects of farmers in production of organic jaggary. *Agric. Update*, **10**(4): 340-342.

KEY WORDS :
Organic gaggery, Benefits, Pre and post harvest practices, Constraints

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BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVES

The modern farming system aims at maximizing production through the use of increased quantities of external inputs such as fertilizers and plant protection chemicals without due consideration to their ill effects. Consequently, the traditional agronomic practices such as green manuring, use of farm waste either as such or after composting and other soil ameliorative measures have not become part of farming systems. This has resulted in a slow but steady decline in the productive and recuperative capacity of the soil (Thimareddy *et al.*, 2002).

In order to migrate health hazards and bring out natural balance and protection of ecosystem, organic movement has started in several parts of the world, in which no chemical fertilizers and plant protection chemicals are used in the cultivation of field crops, vegetables and fruits. Only organic manures are used to rebuild the fertility of the soil and non-chemical methods for controlling pests and diseases. The Kolhapur district is the basket of the jaggary. Nearly eleven hundred jaggary preparation units are working (Feb., 2009) in this district. Day to day there is increasing demand for the organic jaggary. The farmers from Kolhapur district are preparing and selling organic jaggary. Keeping in view the above situations, the present study was undertaken to document the practices for organic jaggary making, to identify the benefits

from organic jaggary making perceived by the respondents and to understand the constraints faced by the organic jaggary making farmers.

RESOURCES AND METHODS

The study was undertaken in purposively selected Kolhapur district of Maharashtra in the year 2008-09. A list of 30 organic jaggary making farmers from Kolhapur district was obtained from the office of the Chatrapati Shahu Gul Kharedi Vikri Sahakari Sanstha, Kolhapur and the office of the SAO, Kolhapur. Out of these 30 farmers, 20 organic jaggary making farmers were selected on the basis of minimum 5 years of experience in organic jaggary making. Thus, the data were collected from 20 organic jaggary making farmers from Kolhapur district. The data were collected personally with the help of pre-structured interview schedule. The same was analyzed and presented in the following tables.

OBSERVATIONS AND ANALYSIS

The results obtained from the present investigation have been presented in the following sub heads:

Benefits from the organic jaggary making:

It is seen from Table 1 that, reduction in cost of cultivation (95.00 %), consumption of chemical free jaggary leads to better health (90.00 %), gain in selling price of jaggary (70.00 %), soils become fertile (60.00 %) were major benefits perceived by the respondents. Dependency of external inputs was reduced (45.00 %) and it was eco. friendly practice (35.00 %) were the other benefits perceived by the organic jaggary making farmers.

Pre and post harvest practices followed for organic jaggary making:

Table 2 revealed that land preparation (100.00 %), use of plair row planting method for the supply of green manuring (100.00 %), use of organic manures (100 %), decomposition of dry and green material in the field (100.00 %) and use of okra plants at the time of jaggary preparation (100.00 %) were the pre and post harvest practices followed by the organic jaggary making farmers.

Constraints faced by the respondents in organic jaggary making:

The information regarding the constraints faced by the organic jaggary making farmers is given in Table 3.

It is observed from Table 3 that the organic jaggary making farmers faced the constrains like decline in the yields in initial period (90.00 %), lack of separate market

Table 1: Distribution of the respondents according to the benefits from the organic jaggary making as expressed by the respondents (n=20)

Sr. No.	Benefits	No. of respondents	Per cent
1.	Soils become fertile	12	60.00
2.	Gain in income from sugarcane	01	05.00
3.	Reduction in cost of cultivation	19	95.00
4.	Consumption of chemical free jaggary leads to better health	18	90.00
5.	Quality increased	12	60.00
6.	Gain in selling price of jaggary	14	70.00
7.	It was eco. friendly practice	07	35.00
8.	Dependency of external inputs was reduced	09	45.00

Table 2 : Distribution of the respondents according to the practices followed (n=20)

Sr. No.	Practice followed	No. of respondents	Per cent
1.	Land preparation	20	100.00
2.	Use of pair row planting method of sugarcane cultivation for the supply of green manuring	20	100.00
3.	Appropriate use of planting material for maintaining the plant population	13	65.00
4.	Use of organic manures	20	100.00
5.	Periodical application of “Jeevamrut”	11	55.00
6.	Decomposition of dry and green material in the sugarcane field	20	100.00
7.	Use of Bhendi plants at the time of jaggary preparation	20	100.00
8.	Use of soybean/groundnut powder at the time of jaggary preparation	08	40.00

Table 3 : Distribution of the respondents according to their constraints regarding organic jaggary making **(n=20)**

Sr. No.	Constraints faced	No. of respondents	Per cent
1.	Decline in the returns in the initial period (2 to 3 years)	18	90.00
2.	Non-availability of good quality of compost or FYM	17	85.00
3.	No support and encouragement from sugarcane factory management to follow organic method	12	60.00
4.	Lack of published literature on organic sugarcane farming	16	80.00
5.	No separate market for organic jaggary	20	100.00
6.	No remunerative price for organic jaggary	13	65.00
7.	Discouragement by people	15	75.00
8.	Lack of storage facility during the rainy season	20	100.00
9.	Non use of phosphoric and potash fertilizers affects the quality of jaggary	18	90.00
10.	Inefficiency in the continuous supply of organic jaggary to the traders due to the less area under organic sugarcane	18	90.00
11.	Lack of guidance for certification	20	100.00
12.	High cost of organic fertilizers	13	65.00

for organic jaggery (100.00 %), lack of storage facility during the rainy season (100.00 %), lack of guidance for certification (100.00 %), non use of phosphoric and potash fertilizers affects the quality of jaggary (90.00 %) and lack of published literature on organic sugarcane farming (80.00 %). Clothe and Borker (2001); Ramesh and Santha (2003) and Saxena and Singh (2000) also worked on similar lines. While Bhatkar *et al*. (1995) studied influence of socio-economics and psychological factors in gain in knowledge by sugarcane growers.

Conclusion:

– Majority of them followed pre and post harvest practices of organic jaggary making like land preparation (100.00 %), use of pair row planting method for the supply of green manuring (100.00 %), use of organic manures (100.00 %), decomposition of dry and green material in the field (100.00 %) and use of okra plants at the time of jaggary preparation (100.00 %).

– The respondents faced the constraints like decline in the yields in initial period (90.00 %), lack of separate market for organic jaggary (100.00 %), lack of storage facility during rainy season (100.00 %), lack of guidance for certification (100.00 %), non use of phosphatic and potashic fertilizers affects the quality of jaggary (90.00 %) and lack of published literature on organic sugarcane farming (80.00 %).

Recomendations :

– The government should make efforts to establish a separate market for organic jaggary.

– The storage facility should be made available to the organic jaggary making farmers during rainy season.

– The Department of Agriculture should develop a separate cell for giving guidance for the certification of organic jaggary to the farmers.

– The Department of Agriculture should take efforts for forming a group farming in organic jaggary making to acertain the continuous supply to the traders.

– The agricultural university should undertake the research for the supply of phosphoric and potash fertilizers from organic material for increasing the yields and quality of organic jaggary.

– Training should be given to the organic jaggary making farmers about the pre and post harvest practices to be followed.

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