

**RESEARCH ARTICLE :**

Constraints faced by onion growers in adopting improved practices and suggestions from onion growers to overcome constraints

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SUMMARY : The present study was conducted in Vijayapur district of North-Karnataka during 2017-18. The findings of the study revealed that cent per cent of the respondents faced the constraint of fluctuations in market prices, followed by scarcity and high cost of labour (86.67%), problem of electricity (81.33%), Lack of proper market (78.67%), High commission rates of middle men and commission agents (66.67%). Cent per cent of the respondents suggested that market price should be high, followed by timely input availability at cheaper rate (73.33%), availability of proper market to sell their produce (66.67%), availability of efficient credit facilities to meet crop production expenses (61.33%).

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KEY WORDS :

Constraints,
Improved practices,
Onion growers,
Suggestions

BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVES

Vegetable cultivation holds ancient significance in India and it is regaining its popularity on account of its significant contribution towards food and nutritional security of growing population of the country. Among commercially grown vegetable crops in India, onion occupies predominant place. Onion is used as green leaves, immature and mature bulbs for eating either raw as salads or for cooking of various different recipes worldwide. It is very important in cookery; hence it is called the “Queen of kitchen” by Germans. However, Indian onion yield is still considered to be low. The inherent lower

productivity of onion in Indian sub-continent may be related to factors like shortage and high prices of quality seeds, high incidence of pests and diseases typically under tropical conditions, moisture stress or excess rains during critical growth stages which constraints its yield. Wide price fluctuations make it a risky crop discouraging large scale adoption of input intensive production techniques and good management practices by farmers. All these factors make onion cultivation to be considered less profitable by farmers. Keeping in view above facts, this study was conducted with the following specific objective :

- To identify the constraints and to seek suggestions from onion growers to overcome

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constraints

RESOURCES AND METHODS

In the present investigation, *Ex-post-facto* research design was used. The study was conducted in the Vijayapur district of Northern Karnataka in the year 2017-18. Among five taluks of Vijayapur district, Vijayapur and Basavana Bagewadi taluks were selected and five villages from each taluk namely Jainapur, Bellubbi, Mamadapur, Uppaladinni and Kanabur from Vijayapur taluk and the other five namely Telgi, Kaulgi, Cheeraldinni, Ronihal and Sulakhod from Basavana Bagewadi taluk were selected for the study based on the criteria of highest area under onion cultivation. From each of the selected villages, a list of farmers cultivating onion was obtained from the Department of Horticulture and among them, 15 Respondents from each village were selected by random sampling procedure. This constituted a total of 75 farmers from each taluk making total sample size of 150 respondents. The selected farmers were interviewed and desired information was collected with the help of predesigned and pre-tested schedule. The data collected were scored, tabulated and analyzed by using appropriate statistical tools.

OBSERVATIONS AND ANALYSIS

The results obtained from the present study as well as discussions have been summarized under following heads:

Constraints faced by onion growers :

Table 1 showed the constraints faced by onion growers in adoption of improved technologies.

The results showed that cent per cent of onion

growers faced the constraint of fluctuations in market prices; the probable reasons for this might be that onion production is highly seasonal and onions don't go to market in consistent quantities throughout the year. Given general inadequacies of storage facilities and the fact that India severely limits onion imports, production fluctuations significantly affect prices. The supply of onions typically declines and prices trends up between July and September, over the monsoon season and before major harvests which also alters the demand for onion in market. Further, majority of the respondents (86.67%) faced the problem of scarcity and high cost of labour during peak periods of crop production like harvesting and weeding. The probable reasons for labour scarcity might be higher wages in other jobs available locally, seasonal nature of agriculture job and improved educational status leading to migration to urban areas for higher wages.

It was seen that 81.33 per cent of the respondents faced the problem of electricity because of low-quality supply of electricity in the form of unscheduled power cuts, load shedding, fluctuating voltage and erratic frequency in villages.

About 78.67 per cent of the respondents faced the problem of lack of proper market to sell their produce. The main reason could be less exposure of growers to alternative markets, current market prices and lack of organized markets in their locality. Problem of high commission rate of middle men and commission agents was faced by 66.67 per cent of the farmers. Farmers tend to sell their produce to middle men in bulk because of perishable nature of onion produce and lack of storage facilities, due to lack of knowledge about current market prices and policies, farmers end up selling at lower prices to middlemen and finally suffering a loss. Many (58.67%)

Sr. No.	Constraints	F	%	Rank
1.	Fluctuation in market price	150	100.00	I
2.	Scarcity and high cost of labour	130	86.67	II
3.	Electricity problems	122	81.33	III
4.	Lack of proper market	118	78.67	IV
5.	High commission rates of middle men and commission agents	100	66.67	V
6.	Costly agricultural inputs	88	58.67	VI
7.	Water scarcity during summer	82	54.67	VII
8.	Lack of sufficient resources and capital	70	46.67	VIII
9.	Non-availability of inputs during peak period	64	42.67	IX
10.	Non-availability of quality seeds	50	33.33	X

of the respondents felt that agricultural inputs like plant protection chemicals, fertilizers, etc. were costly, due to reasons that many of the farmers still belong to lower socio-economic status in the country and are resource poor. Constraints like water scarcity during summer was faced by about 54.67 per cent of the respondents due to the fact that scanty or no rainfall usually occurs in summer season and as a result water bodies are dried up and thus water for irrigation facilities is not available. Other constraints like lack of sufficient resources and capital to carry out agricultural operations (46.67%), non-availability of inputs (42.67%) and non-availability of quality and high yielding variety of seeds (33.33%) were faced by the respondents. The above findings were in line with the findings of Sunil kumar (2004), Ashok (2015) and Khating (2017).

Suggestions given by the onion growers to overcome constraints :

The suggestions given by the respondents to overcome the constraints faced by them in adoption of improved technologies in onion were revealed in Table 2.

The suggestions given by them are as follows, cent per cent of respondents felt that higher market price for produce due to the reason that onion crop always faces major price fluctuations due to wide fluctuations in quantity demanded and quantity supplied in the market. Most of the respondents suggested the timely input availability at cheaper rate (73.33%), this might be due to the reason that all the farmers carry out same operations during same time of the season so availability of inputs to all the farmers at peak time is difficult. Availability of proper market to sell their produce is another suggestion given by majority (66.67%) of

farmers, this is due to the reason that farmers get low prices for their produce as compared to market prices because of many factors like intervention of middle men, loss in quality of produce during storage and transport which results in reduction in market prices for their produce.

Availability of efficient credit facilities to meet crop production expenses was suggested by majority (61.33%) of farmers, this might be due to the reason that as onion is a highly price sensitive crop, farmer is uncertain about the profit or loss that is going to be attained after selling of the final produce, thus credit facilities help farmer cope with any upcoming financial losses. Usage of labour saving improved implements to cope with labour scarcity was suggested by considerable number of farmers (46.67%) to overcome the constraint of labour scarcity during peak period of crop production. Suggestion like more subsidized supply of inputs should be made available (42.67%) was given to overcome resource poorness by low income level farmers. About 33.33 per cent farmers need facilities for proper storage to protect crop from any damage because onion crop is perishable in nature. Very less number of respondents suggested measures like provision of extra incentives to onion growers (29.33%), provision of training programmes regarding improved production practices (27.33%) and demonstration of package of practices need to be given (22.67%). The above findings were in line with the findings of Roman (2015) and Laxmi (2017).

Conclusion :

With the rapid invention of innovative agricultural technologies in the recent years, the opportunity for the onion growers to increase their economic benefits has expanded. But, the process of adoption of new agricultural

Sr. No.	Suggestions	F	%	Rank
1.	High market price for produce	150	100.00	I
2.	Timely input availability at cheaper rate	110	73.33	II
3.	Proper marketing facilities	100	66.67	III
4.	Availability of sufficient and timely credit facilities	92	61.33	IV
5.	Usage of labour saving improved implements	70	46.67	V
6.	More subsidized supply of inputs	64	42.67	VI
7.	Facilities for proper storage	50	33.33	VII
8.	Provision of extra incentives to Onion growers	44	29.33	VIII
9.	Provision of training programmes	41	27.33	IX
10.	Demonstration of package of practices needs to be done	34	22.67	X

technology has been sluggish due to some of the above discussed constraints. Due to such constraints, onion growers get discouraged from intensive production and good farming practices, which leads to lower productivity and unrest among the farmer and traders. Further, onion is highly price sensitive and perishable farm produce. The wide fluctuation in prices ultimately hit the economics of respondents; hence government needs to make adequate arrangement for storage of substantial quantities of the onion crop. This can be mitigated by intervention of the Government, developmental departments, Marketing Boards and NAFED by way of providing timely market information and strengthening the market infrastructure at taluk and district levels to ensure efficient marketing system for the produce. Timely intervention by the Government agencies by way of extending/ announcing government support price in case of onion crop may help farmers overcome the problem of price fluctuation.

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