



Marketing problems encountered by coconut growers in Thanjavur district of Tamil Nadu

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ARTICLE INFO :

Received : 02.02.2016
Revised : 04.04.2016
Accepted : 10.05.2016

KEY WORDS :

Coconut growers, Market constraints, Financial constraints, Physical constraints

HOW TO CITE THIS ARTICLE :

Dhara, R., Umamageswari, M. and Porchezhiyan, S. (2016). Marketing problems encountered by coconut growers in Thanjavur district of Tamil Nadu. *Adv. Res. J. Soc. Sci.*, 7 (1) : 51-54, DOI: 10.15740/HAS/ARJSS/7.1/51-54.

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ABSTRACT

The study was conducted in two taluks of Thanjavur districts in Tamil Nadu to elucidate the constraints of coconut growers in marketing of their produce. A sample of 120 coconut were selected randomly from selected taluks of the districts and the information was collected through structured interview schedule. The study found that the Lack of exclusive market for coconut, lack of co-operative marketing system, scarcity of labour for transportation and marketing and lack of market information were the problems in marketing of coconut. Fluctuation in market price was the major trading constraints whereas, it was lack of availability of long term credit in financial aspects and lack of village level co-ordination was the major physical constraints.

INTRODUCTION

Marketing of coconut is more complicated as majority of the farmers are illiterate, unorganized and scattered. They do not have knowledge and skill for marketing of their produce. Furthermore, lack of storage facilities forced them to sell their produce immediately after the harvest at low prices in the village itself to the local traders. In addition, there are inadequate arrangements for grading, standardization, market information, credit availability, storage and transport. Moreover, the agricultural marketing is saddled with a

long chain of middlemen between the farmers and ultimate consumers and they take away the lion's share of the consumers' price. A realistic appraisal of the problems faced by the coconut growers would help the policy makers to make necessary changes which would brighten the prospects of coconut growers. Therefore, the present study aimed to elicit the constraints encountered by the coconut growers in marketing their produce.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

Shamitha and Ranjan (1995) considered constraints

as obstacles, which are encountered by the respondents in the course of action. Constraint analysis is becoming one of the important components of extension research. Without analysing the constraints, it is impossible to analyse the marketing behaviour of the respondents in the farming community.

The research was conducted in two villages named Thamarankkottai and Palanjur of Pattukkottai block in Thanjavur district of Tamil Nadu. A sample of 120 coconut growers was selected from the selected two villages by proportional random sampling technique to the total coconut growers present in those villages. The possible constraints were enumerated from related studies, in consultation with the development workers, social scientists and farmers. The constraints were categorized under the sub headings *viz.*, market, trading, finance and physical constraints. The identified constraints were administered through a two point continuum as “Yes” and “No” with ‘two’ and ‘one’ score values, respectively. The scores obtained by each Constraint were added and the mean constraint score was worked out.

OBSERVATIONS AND ANALYSIS

Constraint analysis is becoming one of the important components of extension research. Without analysing the constraints, it is impossible to diffuse the needed technologies among the farming community. The constraints encountered by the respondents in the cultivation of coconut are given in Table 1.

Market constraints :

It is evident from the Table 1 that lack of government procurement system was the major problem expressed by cent per cent of the respondents. Lack of exclusive market for coconut was also a major problem expressed by majority of the respondents (99.00 %). Lack of co-operative marketing system (87.00 %), scarcity of labour for transportation and marketing (85.00 %) and lack of market information (80.00 %) were the problems of coconut growers.

Trading constraints :

Fluctuation in market price was the major problem expressed by cent per cent of the respondents. Dominance of private lenders (98.00 %), lack of export facilities (88.00 %), lack of awareness of prevailing prices at other markets (75.00 %) and monopoly of traders in the market (72.50 %)

Table 1 : Constraints encountered by the coconut growers in coconut cultivation

Sr. No.	Constraints	Number	Per cent
Marketing facilities			
1.	Lack of exclusive market for coconut	119	99.00
2.	Lack of government procurement system	120	100
3.	Lack of co-operative marketing	104	87.00
4.	Lack of market information	96	80.00
5.	Scarcity of labour for transportation and marketing	102	85.00
Trading			
1.	Monopoly of traders in the market	87	72.50
2.	Inadequate traders	14	12.50
3.	Lack of co-operation from traders	75	62.50
4.	No marketing insurance in institutional channel	83	69.00
5.	Difference in counting	74	62.00
6.	Lack of awareness of prevailing prices at other markets	90	75.00
7.	Lack of export facilities	106	88.00
8.	No premium price for graded produce	67	56.00
9.	Delayed payment	75	62.50
10.	Fluctuation in market price	120	100.00
11.	Dominance of private lenders	118	98.00
Finance constraints			
1.	High commission	104	87.00
2.	Lack of credit	69	57.50
3.	High interest rate	89	74.00
4.	Lack of long term credit	109	91.00
5.	Lack of financial institution	59	49.00
6.	Inadequate funds to meet marketing expenses	90	75.00
7.	Finance not available at the time of requirement	88	73.00
Physical constraints			
1.	Lack of facilities in the market	102	85.00
2.	Poor approach to market	89	74.00
3.	Lack of adequate transport	55	46.00
4.	Lack of village level co-ordination	112	93.00
5.	Lack of storage facilities in farm	88	73.00
6.	Distant location of market	42	35.00

Multiple response obtained

were the major problems of coconut growers.

Finance constraints :

A major constraint faced by the coconut growers was lack of availability of long term credit (91.00 %), high commission paid to middlemen (87.00 %), inadequate funds to meet marketing expenses (75.00 %), high interest

Table 2 : Distribution of respondents according to their offered suggestions			
Sr. No.	Suggestions	Number	Per cent
Marketing facilities			
1.	Establishing exclusive market for coconut by government	120	100.00
2.	Government procurement at field level	120	100.00
3.	Installing more cooperative marketing facilities	108	90.00
4.	Stabilizing the price	118	98.33
5.	Wide publicity about the market information	99	82.50
6.	Establishing government institutional market for all crops	120	100.00
Trading			
1.	Availability of credit from market institutions	104	87.00
2.	Starting coconut growers association	112	93.33
3.	Distribution of market benefit to all the farmers equally	90	75.00
4.	Establishing coconut export department	120	100.00
5.	Adjustment premium price for graded produce	78	65.00
6.	Government traders should come in function	120	100.00
Finance			
1.	Providing more finance to meet marketing expenses	69	57.50
2.	Establishing more financial institutions	66	55.00
3.	Finance at the time of requirement	58	48.33
Physical facilities			
1.	Transport at reasonable price	90	75.00
2.	Providing all physical facilities in the market	56	47.00
3.	Providing transport during marketing season	96	80.00

Multiple response obtained

rate (74.00 %) and finance not available at the time of requirement (73.00 %).

Physical constraints :

Lack of village level co-ordination (93.00 %), lack of facilities in the market (85.00 %), poor approach to market (74.00 %) and lack of storage facilities in farm (73.00 %) were the major constraints of the coconut growers.

Suggestions to overcome the constraints faced by the coconut growers :

Since the farmers were expressed constraints, it was

decided to seek the suggestions to overcome the constraints from them, because they would be right persons to suggest solutions. Therefore, to overcome the constraints and also to improve their market facilities, the respondents were asked to suggest the solutions. The suggestions to strengthen the farmer friendly marketing of coconut are presented in the Table 2.

Marketing facilities :

It could be observed from the Table 2 that cent per cent of the respondents expressed the urgent for need of establishment of exclusive market for coconut as well as the other crops by government and government procurement at field level. Majority of the respondents felt the need for stabilizing the price of the produce (98.33 %), installing more co-operative marketing facilities (90.00 %) and wide publicity about the market information (82.50 %).

Trading facilities :

Establishing coconut export department and need of government traders to participate in the marketing were felt as most required items by cent per cent of the respondents. Majority of the respondents (93.33 %) felt that coconut growers association is most required by the farmers to put forth their trading demands to the government.

Finance and physical facilities :

It could be observed from the Table 2 that more than half of the respondents (57.50 %) were required finance to meet their marketing expenses and establishing more financial institutions (55.00 %). Majority of the respondents (80.00 %) felt that providing transport during the marketing season and making availability of transport at reasonable price (75.00 %).

Conclusion :

The lack of government procurement system was the major problem expressed by cent per cent of the respondents. Cent per cent of the respondents expressed the urgent need for establishment of exclusive market for coconut as well as other crops by government and government procurement at field level. Majority of the respondents felt the need for stabilizing the price of the produce co-operative marketing facilities. The regulated markets can also supply coconut seedlings, fertilizers and

pesticides during the planting season.

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