Feasibility of food processing as an enterprise for rural women

■ PAYAL BATRA, SHASHI KANTA VERMA **AND** KANTA SABHARWAL

See end of the paper for authors' affiliations

KANTA SABHARWAL
Department of Home Science
Extension Education and
Communication Management,
C.C.S. Haryana Agricultural
University, HISAR (HARYANA)
INDIA

■**ABSTRACT :** It was found that the sample in Siswal village food processing was perceived very easy to understand and use, most profitable, somewhat compatible, somewhat observable and most triable. In Dhani Premnagar village, food processing was perceived very easy to understand and use, most profitable, somewhat compatible, somewhat observable and most trialable. Maximum number of respondents in pooled sample perceived the food processing technology as simplicity (mean score 4.50, 1st rank), relative advantageous (mean score 4.32, 2nd rank), triability (mean score 3.78 3rd rank) observability (mean score 3.00, 4th rank) and cultural compatibility (mean score 2.96, 5th rank).Thus, it can be concluded that most of the respondents considered food processing as simplicity, relative advantageous, triable, observable and cultural compatible.

■ **KEY WORDS:** Food processing, Feasibility, Enterprise, Rural Woman

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Women form the major workforce in agriculture. In the food processing sector, participation of women is substantial particularly in upstream activities. In sectors such as marine products, cashew processing, pickle manufacturing, the involvement of women is as high as 90 per cent. Food processing sector generates significant employment. The multiplier effect of investment in food processing industry on employment generation is 2.5 times than in other industrial sectors, higher than any other sector. Even within food processing industry, the employment intensity is significantly higher in the unorganized sector as compared to the organized sector for the same level of investment.

India's major exports are fruit pulp, pickles, chutneys, canned fruits and vegetables, concentrated pulps and juices, dehydrated vegetables and frozen fruits and vegetables. Food processing industry which is based mostly on perishable products cannot survive and grow. Even at current level of production, farm produce is being wasted every year only because there is no adequate storage, transportation, cold chain facilities and other infrastructure supports. In production, processing and preservation of fruits and vegetables industry, Haryana ranks 13th in terms of per cent share in all India production. Keeping all these facts in mind this study is an attempt to assess the growing and consumption pattern of fruits and vegetables and to assess perceived feasibility of food processing as an entrepreneur for rural women for their empowerment.

■ **RESEARCH METHODS**

The study was conducted in two Blocks namely, Barwala and Adampur of Hisar district. One village from each block was selected randomly. Two villages *viz.,* Siswal from Adampur and Dhani Premnagar from Barwala Block were selected randomly. Total 100 respondents 50 from each block were selected to find out growing and consumption pattern of fruits and vegetables and this pattern was studied on three point rating scale. The aggregate scores were taken to find out the mean score for a particular fruit and vegetable. Perceived feasibility of food processing was measured by taking into account the various parameters *viz.,* knowledge, attitude, skill and decision. It was assessed village-wise by taking into account the various attributes of innovations like relative advantages, cultural compatibility, simplicity / complexity, observability and triability. These parameters were taken as the degree to which the technology was perceived better and

advantageous in terms of economic gains. The responses were obtained under the five point rating scale. Data were collected personally through pre-structured interview schedule. Data were quantified with percentage of respondents regarding awareness.

■ RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The results obtained from the present investigation as well as relevant discussion have been summarized under following heads :

Growing and consumption pattern of fruits and vegetables :

Growing pattern of fruits and vegetables was studied and it was found that in Siswal village, majority of the respondents grew potato (mean score 2.72 ranked I) followed by *Aonla*, turnip and cauliflower (mean score 2.60 ranked II), chilli (mean score 2.56 ranked III), carrot (mean score 2.48 ranked IV) and lemon and tomato (mean score 2.28 ranked Vth). As far as consumption pattern is concerned, it was found that potato was at the first rank (mean score 2.72 ranked I) followed by chilli (mean score 2.60 ranked II), cauliflower (mean score 2.48 ranked III), carrot, lemon and turnip (mean score 2.40 ranked IV), tomato and *Aonla* (mean score 2.28 ranked V) (Table 1).

In Dhani Premnagar village majority of the respondents grew potato (mean score 2.90 ranked I), followed by carrot (mean score 2.80 ranked II) and chilli and lemon (mean score 2.72 ranked III) and tomato (mean score 2.60 ranked IV), *Aonla* (mean score 2.56 ranked V) and cauliflower (mean score 2.48

ranked VI), turnip (mean score 1.96 ranked VII). As far as consumption pattern of vegetables is concerned, it was found that potato was at the first rank (mean score 2.60 ranked I) followed by carrot and chilli (mean score 2.56 ranked II), tomato (mean score 2.48 ranked III), cauliflower (mean score 2.40 ranked IV), turnip and lemon (mean score 2.28 ranked V), *Aonla* (mean score 2.24 ranked VI). Growing pattern of fruits and vegetables by rural women in pooled sample indicated that most of the respondents grew potato (mean score 2.75 ranked I) followed by chilli and carrot (mean score 2.64 ranked II), cauliflower (mean score 2.6 ranked III), *Aonla* (mean score 2.58 ranked IV), lemon (mean score 2.5 ranked V), tomato (mean score 2.44 ranked VI) and turnip (mean score 2.28 ranked VII). As far as consumption pattern in pooled it is found that potato was at the first rank (mean score 2.58 ranked I) followed by cauliflower (means score 2.56 ranked II), chilli (mean score 2.52 ranked III), carrot (mean score 2.50 ranked IV), tomato (mean score 2.38 ranked V), lemon (mean score 2.34 ranked VI) and *Aonla* (mean score 2.26 ranked VII). Thus, it can be concluded that most of the respondents grew and consumed potato in both the villages as the pooled sample indicated. It was also noted that the production and consumption of pomegranate fruits has increased.

Perceived feasibility of food processing :

Perceived feasibility for food processing by rural women was measured in terms of extent of merit of technology for future adoption or rejection. In the present context, feasibility was defined as the extent to which rural women perceived food processing as relatively advantageous, situational and

Table 1: Growing and consumption of fruits and vegetables						
Sr. No.	Fruits and vegetables	Siswal village (n=50)		Dhani premnagar (n=50)		Total (n=100)	
		Mean score	Rank	Mean score	Rank	Mean score	Rank
1.	**Growing**						
	Aonla	2.60	II	2.56	V	2.58	IV
	Lemon	2.28	V	2.72	III	2.50	V
	Tomato	2.28	V	2.60	IV	2.44	VI
	Carrot	2.48	IV	2.80	II	2.64	II
	Turnip	2.60	II	1.96	VII	2.28	VII
	Cauliflower	2.60	II	2.48	VI	2.60	III
	Potato	2.72	I	2.90	I	2.75	I
	Chilli	2.56	III	2.72	III	2.64	II
2.	**Consumption**						
	Aonla	2.28	V	2.24	VI	2.26	VII
	Lemon	2.40	IV	2.28	V	2.34	VI
	Tomato	2.28	V	2.48	III	2.38	V
	Carrot	2.40	IV	2.56	II	2.50	IV
	Turnip	2.40	IV	2.28	V	2.34	VI
	Cauliflower	2.48	III	2.40	IV	2.56	II
	Potato	2.72	I	2.60	I	2.58	I
	Chilli	2.60	II	2.56	II	2.52	III

culturally compatible, simple, observable and triable.

It is clear from data in Table 2 and Fig. 1 that in Siswal village, food processing was perceived as very easy to understand by 22 per cent respondents followed by easy to understand (14%) and neither easy nor difficult to understand. Regarding relative advantage, most of the respondents (22%) perceived food processing as somewhat profitable followed by profitable (16%) and somewhat profitable (12%).

Regarding cultural compatibility, food processing was perceived as somewhat compatible (22%) followed by least compatible (18%) and compatible (10%). Regarding observability, most of the respondents reported as somewhat observable (26%) followed by least observable and (16%) and observable (4.0%). Regarding triability attribute related to food processing, it was perceived as most trialable (20%) followed by trialable and somewhat triable (12%) each. Only few respondents (6%) perceived it as least triable in Siswal
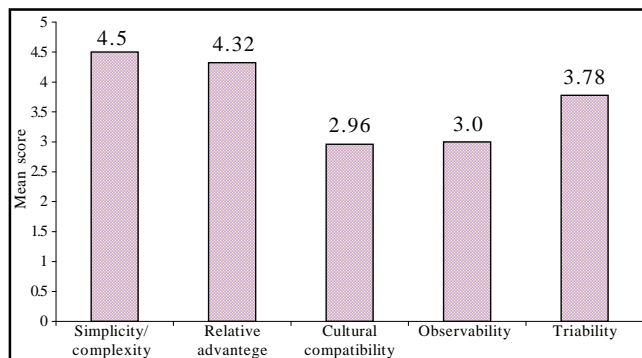

Fig. 1 : Perceived feasibility of fruits and vegetables processing

village. Sunita (2002) expressed that the most of the respondents perceived feasibility of grape chutney as profitable (48.3%), cultural compatible (63.3%), simple to make

Table 2 : Perceived feasibility of food processing							
Sr. No.	Attributes	Siswal		Dhani Premnagar		Total (n=50)	
		F (%)	Mean and rank	F (%)	Mean and rank	F (%)	Mean and rank
1.	**Simplicity/Complexity**						
	Very simple	11(22)	55 4.16	15(30)	75 4.84	130	4.50(I)
	Simple	7(14)	28 (II)	7(14)	28 (I)	56	
	Neither simple nor complex	7(14)	21	6(12)	18	39	
	Complex	-	-	-	--	-	
	Very complex	-	-	-	-	-	
2.	**Relative advantage**						
	Most profitable	11(22)	55 4.20	15(30)	75 4.44	110	4.32(II)
	Profitable	8(16)	32 (I)	6(12)	24 (II)	56	
	Somewhat profitable	6(12)	18	4(8)	12	30	
	Least profitable	-	-	-	-	-	
	Not at all profitable	-	-	-	-	-	
3.	**Cultural compatibility**						
	Most compatible	-	- 2.84	2(4)	10 3.08	20	2.96(V)
	Compatible	5(10)	20 (V)	6(12)	24 (IV)	88	
	Somewhat compatible	11(22)	33	9(18)	27	120	
	Least compatible	9(18)	18	8(16)	16	68	
	Not at all compatible	-	-	-	-	-	
4.	**Observability**						
	Most observable	2(4)	10 2.92	3(6)	15 3.08	25	3.00(IV)
	Observable	2(4)	8 (IV)	3(6)	12 (IV)	20	
	Somewhat observable	13(26)	39	12(24)	36	75	
	Least observable	8(16)	16	7(14)	14	30	
	Not at all observable	-	-	-	-	-	
5.	**Trialability**						
	Most trialable	10(20)	50 3.92	7(14)	35 3.64	85	3.78(III)
	Trialable	6(12)	24 (III)	6(12)	24 (III)	48	
	Somewhat trialable	6(12)	18	8(16)	24	42	
	Least trialable	3(6)	6	4(8)	8	14	
	Not at all trialable	-	-	-	-	-	

(53.3%), most compatible in situational compatible (48.3%) and most triable (55%) by rural women.

Whereas in Dhani Premnagar village, food processing was perceived as very simple (30%) followed by simple (14%) and neither simple nor complex (12%). Regarding relative advantage, most of the respondents (30%) perceived food processing as most profitable followed by profitable (12%) each and somewhat profitable (8%). Regarding cultural compatibility, food processing was perceived as somewhat compatible (18%) followed by least compatible (16%), compatible (12%) and only few 4 per cent perceived it most compatible. Regarding observable, most of the respondents (24%) reported as somewhat observable followed by least observable (14%) most observable and observable (6%). Regarding triability attribute, food processing was perceived as somewhat triable (16%) followed by most triable (14%) and triable (12%). Only few (8%) perceived it as least triable in village Dhani Premnagar. Study also compared with the result that the mushroom technology profitable (mean score 3.5, I rank), cultural compatible (mean score 3.45 II rank), situational compatible (mean score 3.35, III rank), simple to adopt (mean score 3.20, IV rank), easy to try (mean score 3.15, V rank) before its final adoption in order of sequence. Overall feasibility

mean score was 3.33 /4.00 (Anita, 2000).

Authors' affiliations:
PAYAL BATRA and SHASHI KANTA VERMA, Department of Home Science Extension Education and Communication Management, Chaudhary Charan Singh Haryana Agricultural University, HISAR (HARYANA) INDIA

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