



Research Note

Constraints faced by plum growers in production and marketing and suggestion made by them in district Poonch of Jammu and Kashmir

■ NEERJA SHARMA, SANJAY KHAR, S.S. JAMWAL AND RAJU GUPTA

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SUMMARY : The study was carried out to find out the constraints faced by the plum growers of Poonch area in production and marketing of the produce and the suggestions made by them to overcome the problems. Two tehsils, Mandi and Surankot of district Poonch were selected, from each tehsil five villages and from these five villages fifty respondents were selected for the study. The findings of the study revealed that fluctuation in market prices was the major problem which accounted for 90 per cent, high commission charges accounted for 80 per cent followed by irrigation *i.e.* scarcity of water in summer (78%), non - availability of transport facility in time (76%), non - availability of labour in time (70%), high cost of fertilizers (64%), non - availability of quality planting material (60%) and fertilizers in time (58%) and non - availability of good packing material (52%). To overcome these problems suggestions were made them. They suggested transport facility in time, good quality packing material be available at low cost, availability of mechanical grading and packing facility, export facility outside the district, knowledge regarding pruning and production technology, facility provided for processing of fruits and cold storage van for their transportation.

KEY WORDS:

Plum, Production,
Marketing,
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Suggestions

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Plum (*Prunus saliciana*) is an important temperate fruit which is used both as a fresh and in preserved form as squash and jam . It ranks next to the peaches in economic importance. Only the Japanese plum is recommended for commercial cultivation in temperate regions. They are predominantly grown in Himachal Pradesh, Jammu and Kashmir and the hills of Uttar Pradesh and to some extent in Nilgiri hills of south India. Plum is one of the delicious fruit of intermediate and temperate region. It is highly productive with medium size, sub acidic fruit. They are rich in sugar, vitamin A and vitamin C.

The study was under taken in the Poonch district of Jammu province which is located on the

southern slopes of Pir Panjal and is rugged with spurs and valley. It lies between 33° 35' to 34° 10' North latitude and 73° 58' to 74° 35' east longitude. The climate of district varies from Inter-mediate to temperate and has made a commendable progress in fruit production. The total area under fruit production is 15400 hectare with a production of 20280 metric tons. Plum is one of the important and popular fruit of that region with an area of 1237 hectare and production of 1570 metric tons (Anonymous, 2010). Plum is found in abundance due to the congenial climatic conditions, but the farmers of the area face the problem of marketing of the fruit. The present study was under taken to know the constraints faced by the farmers in production and marketing of plum and suggestions

Author for correspondence :

SANJAY KHAR
Krishi Vigyan Kendra
(SKAUST-J) POONCH (J&K)
INDIA
Email: sanjaykhar2007@gmail.com

See end of the article for authors' affiliations

made by them to overcome these.

Multistage sampling was adopted in the selection of district, tehsils, villages and plum growers. At first stage, Poonch district was purposely selected on the basis of the number of plum growers. At second stage, two tehsils *viz.*, Mandi and Surankote of Poonch district were selected on the basis of the highest area under plum fruit crop. From tehsil, five village clusters were selected on the basis of availability of plum gardens. In the fourth stage, list of plum growers was taken from each village cluster and from that list, five growers were randomly selected. The data were collected on a pre-devised and pre-tested proforma and suitably converted into tabular form to draw the conclusions. The findings of the present study as well as relevant discussion have been summarized.

Constraints faced by plum growers in production and marketing :

Constraints faced by plum growers in Poonch district were calculated in the form of frequency and percentage and are presented in Table 1. It was elucidated that fluctuation in market prices were severe and expressed by 90 per cent growers. High commission charges were the next problem faced

by 80 per cent of the farmers. Scarcity of water in summer was also mentioned by 78 per cent of the growers. One another main problem of the farmers living in the far-furlong area was less availability of transport facility in time, 76 per cent of the growers were facing this problem. Thorat and Shelke (2012). Availability of labour is less because no outsider labourers were ready to do work in the agricultural fields and most of the work was done by their own, 70 per cent of the growers expressed their problems. Fertilizer was also important input for the growers. High cost of fertilizers and its non-availability at the time of requirement was shown by 64 per cent and 58 per cent of farmers, respectively. Similarly the problem of non-availability of quality planting material was also told by 60 per cent of the growers. One of the major constraint which creates the hurdle in marketing was non-availability of good packing material, 52 per cent of the farmers expressed the problem regarding packing of produce. Besides this, 46 per cent of plum growers suffer a lot due to lack of knowledge regarding scientific production techniques (Arora, 2004).

Suggestions by plum growers in production and marketing :

Suggestions told by growers were calculated in the form of frequency, percentage which are presented in Table 2. It

Table 1: Constraints in production and marketing of plum

(n=50)

Sr. No.	Problems	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Fluctuation in market price	45	90
2.	High commission charges	40	80
3.	Irrigation-scarcity of water in summer	39	78
4.	Non-availability of transport facility in time	38	76
5.	Non-availability of labour and their high wages	35	70
6.	High cost of fertilizer and pesticides	32	64
7.	Non-availability of quality planting material	30	60
8.	Non-availability of fertilizer in time	29	58
9.	Non-availability of good packing material	26	52
10.	Lack of knowledge regarding production technology	23	46
11.	Lack of proper post harvest management facilities	24	48

Table 2 : Suggestions in production and marketing of plum

(n=50)

Sr.No.	Suggestion in production and marketing of plum	Frequency	Per cent
1.	Transport facility should be made in time	42	84
2.	Good quality packing material be made available at low cost	40	80
3.	Need of mechanical grading and packing facility	36	72
4.	Export facility of plum outside the district	35	70
5.	Knowledge provided regarding training and pruning	32	64
6.	Facilities provided for processing of glut produce	29	58
7.	Need to establish a cold storage house and van	25	50
8.	Knowledge provided to the growers related to production technology through literature	24	48
9.	Training should be imparted to the plum growers	23	46

was noticed that 84 per cent of plum growers suggested that transport facility should be made in the time and at the cheap charges. According to 80 per cent of grower's quality packing material should be provided to them at lowest rates to get handsome rates in market. Availability of mechanical grading and packing facility was suggested by 72 per cent of growers. Export facility of plum outside the district demanded by the plum farmers, which was suggested by 70 per cent growers. Training and pruning are the main operation for temperate fruits. Knowledge regarding training and pruning in time was suggested by 64 per cent of growers. Need to establish a processing unit for plum and cold storage van and houses in the case of transportation and glut period was suggested by 58 and 50 per cent of growers, respectively. One of the important suggestions given by 48 per cent of growers was the knowledge regarding the production technology and insects- pest and disease control (Khunt *et al.*, 2003 and Chahil *et al.*, 1996).

Authors' affiliations :

NEERJA SHARMA, S.S. JAMWAL AND RAJU GUPTA, Krishi Vigyan Kendra (SKAUST-J) POONCH (J&K) INDIA

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