Original Research Article

CONSTRAINTS FACED BY VEGETABLE GROWERS IN AMARAVATI DIVISION OF MAHARASHTRA

ABSTRACT

Vegetable cultivation involves intensive cultural operations since sowing to marketing, providing regular employment opportunities to unemployed youth and farm family.Vegetable production is now commercialized, but still traditional farming is done in far flung areas. Besides, they are not as well served by the extension system as the farmers growing food grains. Moreover, most of the vegetable growers in this region are small and marginal farmers, and they have their peculiar concerns and problems which need to be studied urgently and earnest.The present study was carried out in Akola and Amravati districts of Vidarbha region of Maharashtra state during the year 2019 with a sample size of 120 respondents to define the constraints faced by vegetable growers in Amravati division of Maharashtra. The major constraints faced by the vegetable growers were price fluctuation,electricity, fertigation, exploitation by middle menand lack of market knowledge.

KEY WORDS:Vegetables, Vegetable growers, Amaravati Division, Constraints

1. INTRODUCTION

India is principally a vegetarian country and second largest producer of vegetables, next to China. Vegetables occupy 38.90 percent of area and 61.00 percent of total horticultural area and production, respectively. Vegetables shares about 2.00 percent of cropped area. India shares about 14.00 percent of the total vegetable production of the world. Maharashtra is the leading producer of onions and fresh onion contributes 25.00 percent among horticultural crops export. But the Post-harvest handling losses in vegetables is high up to 20-30 percent. (Horticultural Statistics at a Glance, 2018).

In era of shrinking land holdingand more pressure per unit area of land, cultivation of fruit and vegetable has emerged as profitable venture. Cultivation of vegetable not only provide nutritional security; it also provides a substantial employment to rural people as well as open the door for export. Thus, plays an active role in increasing the livelihood condition of poor rural folks.

Vegetables are one of the cheapest sources of natural protective food, contributing carbohydrates, vitamins and mineral in human diet. Vegetable consumption provides taste, increase appetite, palatability and provides necessary fibre, essential for proper functioning of digestive system.

Vegetable cultivation has a number of added advantages like vegetables are of shorter duration than cereal crops so, more crops can be taken per unit area of land in a year, vegetable cultivation is helpful in diversification of agriculture, providing ample opportunities to conserve soil and moisture depletion. Most of the vegetable crops, if properly grown can give yield which is 5-10 times more than any cereal crop. A farmer can fetch more prices for his produce in comparison to cereal crops from the small unit area of land, he can take more produce than other crops. Vegetable cultivation involves intensive cultural operations since sowing to marketing, providing regular employment opportunities to unemployed youth and farm family. At the same time perishable nature of vegetables demand skill and comprehensive planning for storage, movement and distribution as well as processing of vegetable produce.

Now-a-days, people are aware regarding their health proposition, as a result they want to add more and more fruit and vegetable in their food basket. Vegetable production is now commercialized, but still traditional farming is done in far flung areas. Besides, they are not as well served by the extension system as the farmers growing food grains. Moreover, most of the vegetable growers in this region are small and marginal farmers, and they have their peculiar concerns and problems which need to be studied urgently and earnest.

2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

2.1 Research Design

The present investigation was conducted to study the constraints faced by the vegetable growers in Amravati division. Therefore, an exploratory design of social research was used for present study.

2.2 Selection of Districts

Maharashtra state comprises of six revenue divisions viz., Mumbai, Pune, Nashik, Aurangabad, Nagpur and Amravati. The Nagpur and Amravati together popularly known as Vidarbha region. Vidarbha region comprises of eleven districts namely Buldana, Akola, Amravati, Yavatmal, Wardha, Nagpur, Bhandara, Chandrapur, Gadchiroli, Washim

and Gondia. Out of which Amaravati division i.e. Akola and Amravati districts from Vidarbha region were selected for the present study.

2.3 Selection of Talukas

Two talukas namely, Patur taluka of Akola district and Achalpur taluka of Amravati district were purposively selected for the study as they were having high area under vegetable cultivation than other talukas of these selected districts.

2.4 Selection of Villages

In Patur and Achalpur talukas, 5 villages from each taluka were selected purposively based on high area under vegetable cultivation. Comprising total sample of 10 villages for the present study.

2.5 Selection of Respondents

A list of vegetable growers having minimum area of 0.20 ha under vegetable cultivation was obtained from Taluka Agriculture Office of selected talukas. Thus, from selected two talukas and selected 10 villages, 120 respondents were selected i.e. 12 respondents from each village were selected randomly and they were considered as sample respondents in the present study.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A perusal of table 1, revealed that32.50 percent of the respondents faced problem about initial investment followed by,problem with working capital 26.67 percent. These were the constraints faced by respondents regarding the finance. Among the resource constraints, 70.83 percent of respondents had electricity problem, followed by, problem with chemicals and fertilizers 45.00 percent, had problem with manures (35.00% and plants/seedlings (24.00%).In case of plant management constraints, more than half (57.50%) of respondents had problem about knowledge on proper dosage of weedicide/insecticide/fungicide, followed by difficulty in diagnosis of disease and insect pests (40.00%).

Table 1: Distribution of the vegetable growers according to constraints faced bythem

Sl.No	Particulars	Respondents (n=120)		
		Frequency(%)	Component wise Rank	Over all rank
1	**Financial constraints**			
	a) Initial investment	39(32.50)	I	XVIII
	b) Working capital	32(26.67)	II	XX

2	**Resource constraints**			
	a) Plants /Seedlings	24(20.00)	IV	XXIII
	b) Manures	42(35.00)	III	XV
	c) Chemicals and fertilizers	54(45.00)	II	XI
	d) Electricity (for irrigation)	85(70.83)	I	II
3	**Plant management constraints**			
	a)Knowledge on properdose ofweedicide/ insecticide	69(57.50)	I	VI
	b) Difficulty in diagnosis of disease and insect pests	48(40.00)	II	XIII
4	**Labour constraints**			
	a) High cost of labour	57(47.50)	I	IX
	b) Lack of skilled labour	41(34.17)	III	XVI
	c)Non- availability of labour	55(45.83)	II	X
5	**Technical constraints**			
	a) Improved varieties	45(37.50)	II	XIV
	b) Fertigation	81(67.50)	I	III
	c) Modern production techniques	37(30.84)	IV	XIX
	d) Soil testing facility	40(33.34)	III	XVII
6	**Marketing constraints**			
	a) Transportation cost	28(23.34)	IV	XXI
	b) Price fluctuation	97(80.83)	I	I
	c)Lack of market knowledge	74(61.67)	III	V
	d)Exploitationby middlemen	78(65.00)	II	IV
7	**Storage constraints**			
	a) Poor shelf life	51(42.50)	III	XII
	b) Lack of cold storages	61(50.83)	II	VIII
	c) Lack of processing units	68(56.67)	I	VII
8	**Others**			
	a) Wild animals	27(22.50)	-	XXII

Figures in parentheses indicate percentage

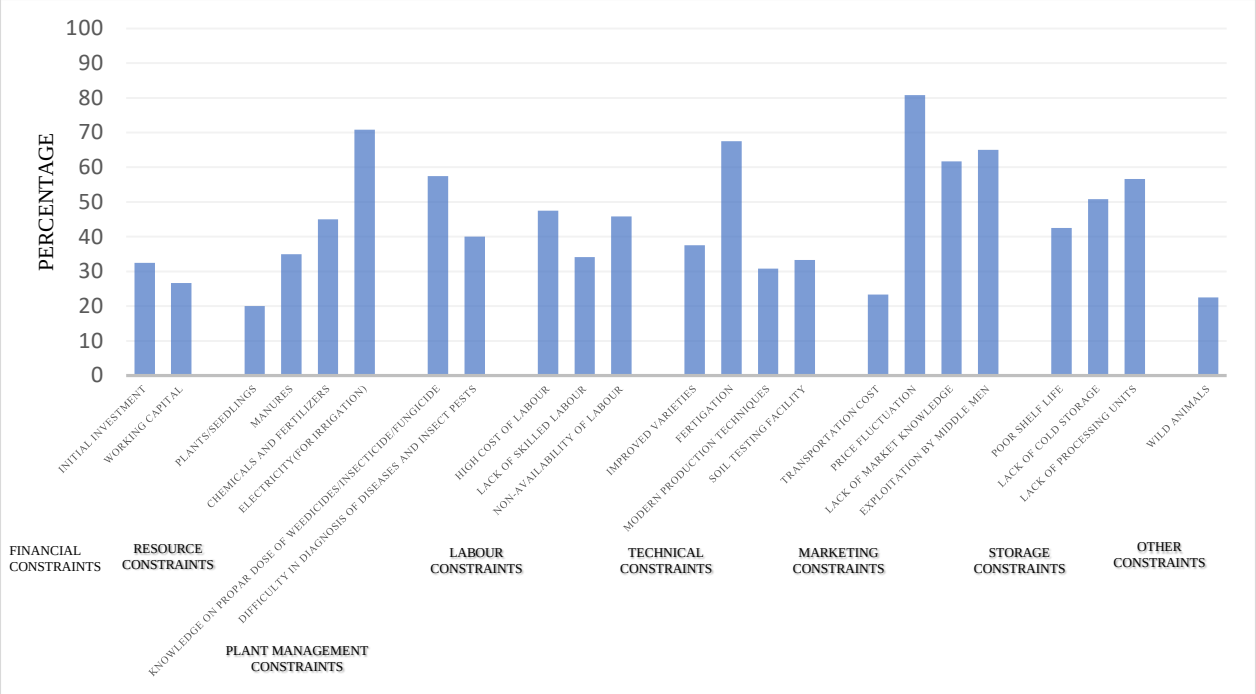

Fig 1. Distribution of respondents according to the constraints

Regarding labour constraints, nearly half (47.50%) of the respondents had problem about high-cost of labour, followed by problem on non-availability of labour (45.83%) and lack of skilled labour (34.17%).Among the technical constraints, nearly two-third (67.50%) had problem about fertigation, followed byabout improved varieties (37.50%), whereas,33.34 percent and 30.84 percent of respondents had problem about soil testing facility and modern production techniques, respectively.In case of marketing constraints, majority (80.83%) of the respondents had problem regarding price fluctuation, followed byexploitation by middle men (65.00%), lack of market knowledge (61.67%) andtransportation cost (23.34%).Regarding storage constraints, 56.67 percent of the respondents had problem about lack of processing units, followed by about lack of cold storages (50.83%), only 42.50 percent of respondents had problem about poor shelf life. Other than this 22.50 percent of respondents faced constraints regarding wild animals.

4. CONCLUSION

This study reveals that non-availability of improved variety, disease free seeds, financial problem, poor shelf life of vegetables, inappropriate equipments, poor storage facility, poor market infrastructure, less support price and price fluctuation were the main constraints faced by the vegetable growers in the adoption of recommended vegetable

cultivation practices, therefore planners should give importance to major constraints like technical literacy, infrastructure development and strengthening storage and marketing facility.

In order toovercomethe above mentioned constraints measures should be taken.Basic input to the farmers should be provided timely and in advance of cropping season. Financial assistance and subsidy should be provided timely to the farmer. Better marketing as well as transportation facility should be provided to the farmer. Training as well as extension programme should be well planned and before cropping season. Stringent measures should be taken against middle men who are exploiting farmers.Strengthening of storage infrastructures and make them available to the farmer at cheaper rate.

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