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AN EFFICIENT MARKETING FOR SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT - A CASE STUDY IN SOLAPUR DISTRICT OF MAHARASHTRA

Prof. B. B. Shitole

Associate Professor, Dept. of Commerce, Arts and Commerce College,
Madha, Dist. Solapur (M.S.)

Abstract

Agriculture is one of the major contributor of economic growth for Indian economy and still agriculture is livelihood of about 70% Indians living in the villages. At this juncture for the growth and development of rural area and to improve the "Human Development Index" (HDI); Production, Productivity and Marketing are the important aspects in the development of agriculture sector in India. Today India is on first rank in the production of fruits and second largest country in the production of vegetables in the world; the country also achieved highest growth in the rice, wheat, pulses and oil seeds. However it is the need of the hour to improve the efficiency of agricultural marketing both at local and global level.

Keywords: Agricultural Development, Human Development Index.

INTRODUCTION:

At present due to inefficient marketing, inadequate marketing infrastructure and poor post harvesting management the loss of foodgrains is estimated 5-10% of the total production of the foodgrains and for perishable agriculture produce it is estimated 25-30% of the total production. Many times these perishable products are thrown on the roads. The NHB (National Horticulture Board) Report 2009 shows the great success of fruits and vegetable growers in India. Since the last two decades the area and production of fruits and vegetables are continuously increases mainly the state Maharashtra, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh and Punjab are the Leading states in Production of fruits and vegetables. Grapes, mango, banana, orange and pomegranate are the important fruits and in class of vegetables onion, brinjal, cabbage and potato shows the great achievement. However, Agricultural producers are facing many problems in marketing process at domestic and global level. All India data of production of fruits and vegetables in recent five years is given below:

Table
All India Area and Production of Fruits and Vegetables

Sr. No.	Year	Fruits		Vegetables	
		Area '000' ha	Production '000' MT	Area '000' ha	Production '000' MT
1.	2004-05	5049	50867	6744	101246
2.	2005-06	5324	55356	7213	111399
3.	2006-07	5554	59563	7581	114993
4.	2007-08	5857	65587	7848	128449
5.	2008-09	6101	68466	7981	129077

source - Indian Horticulture Database 2009 page no. 22 & 23

The above table reveals that the area and production of fruits and vegetables for recent five years from 2004-05 To 2008-09. It is absolutely showing the area and production is continuously increasing. It indicates potential for marketing of fresh and processed fruits and vegetables in domestic market and export.

AN EFFICIENT AGRICULTURAL MARKETING -

Agricultural Marketing is a process in which Marketing functions are performed to show the results that reduction in production cost, distribution cost and improving in the quality of products, which helps to keep remunerative price to the agricultural producers and availability at reasonable price to the final consumer. Each agricultural producer should try to save the cost of production right from the plantation to harvesting of the produce. In addition to this distribution cost during packaging, transportation, cleaning, grading, warehousing and cold storage should kept adequate. Direct marketing and marketing through co-operative organization helps mostly in saving the distribution cost. This results final consumer can buy these produce in reasonable price.

ESSENTIALS OF AN EFFICIENT MARKETING -

Agricultural marketing involves all the activities of moving of agricultural produce from farm to final consumer. To keep entire process on proper track in producer and consumer point of view. Following important point should kept in mind -

1. Sound product planning
2. An effective quality improvement programme
3. Good packaging
4. Effective marketing channels
5. Sound marketing infrastructure
6. Ideal marketing information system
7. Continuous marketing research

SUCCESS STORY OF A PROGRESSIVE FARMER NAGNATH MALI-

"Need of an efficient marketing process for sustainable development of agricultural sector "

Shri. Nagnath Sapan mali (Bapu) born in medium farmers family in a small village named Ropale (Bk) of Pandharpur Taluka in Solapur District. Today at the age of 47 years he share his experience of 25 years, in this occupation. His father late Shri. Sapan Mali was medium farmer, however, the family income was good due to additional source of income from growing and selling various types of vegetables in local market. He completed his primary education in local Z.P. primary school and Secondary school in Rayat Shikshan Sanstha's New English School in the village and Higher education at taluka place. He believes on self employment; therefore during the college life directly entered in the farming.

Historically the area of Solapur District is known as drought -prone area hence, majority of farming was on rainfall. Due to this adversities father of Nagnath Bapu was taking the traditional crops like Jowar, Bajara, Grams, Moong, Groundnut and on small irrigated area vegetables. This results less marketable surplus therefore scope for marketing was limited to local market. To change entire situation of farming Nagnath Bapu decided to use new technology in farming as a educated farmer. He changed cropping pattern, on the basis of availability of water, average rainfall and fertility of soil. He started horticulture farming with plantation of Chickoo, Lime, Sweet lime, Banana and Vegetables on Two – Three acres of land. With continuous efforts, guidance through reading of books and periodicals, visits to the farms of successful farmers in nearby villages, farms of Pune, Solapur and Sangli District and use of modern technology for water management, soil conservation, he achieved saving in the cost of fertilizers and other inputs. An experiment to improve in the quality of produce with low production cost gives him great success in growing of various cash crops.

At present he created job opportunities to the local people on his 42 acres of land, with growing crops like Lime, Sweet lime, Chickoo and Sugarcane. Today through the micro irrigation with modern techniques he succeed in good productivity and quality of product and marketing of these produce. Now he became a progressive farmer in the village.

Cropping Pattern :

Cropping pattern he adopted after considering availability of water, local climatic changes, soil health and marketing environment. He utilizing his land for growing sugarcane, banana, lime and sweet lime and Chickoo .

**Table
Cropping pattern adopted by Nagnath Bapu**

Sr.No.	Crop	Area in acers	Percentage
1.	Sugarcane	16	38.09
2.	Banana	13	30.95
3.	Citrus Fruit (lime & Sweet lime)	07	16.67
4.	Chickoo	02	04.76
5.	Other	04	09.53
	Total	42	100.00

Primary Source : Direct Interview by researcher

The above table reveals the cropping pattern adopted by him and crop grown, he grown the fruits, vegetables and other crops on 61.91 percent of land and remaining land is used for growing sugarcane on micro irrigation for obtaining the advantage of sugar industries in their tehsil. It ensures health of soil, quality of produce, water management and saving in cost of production.

MARKETING CONSIDERATIONS FOR AN EFFICIENT AGRICULTURAL MARKETING -

Mr. Nagnath Bapu express his views and opinion on marketing consideration that he practices -

1. Production planning for maintain good quality of produce - He told that it is very complicated to prepare the quantitative plan for produce to be produced. However, some precautions should be taken for good quality of produce such as preparation of soil for plantation, use of certified seeds, scientific plantation, prevention of diseases and water management. These measures helps in maintaining good quality of produce.

2. Cleaning, Sorting, Grading and Packaging - Mostly for the fruits and vegetables cleaning, sorting, grading and packaging are the important processes for value additions. This results good remunerative price to the agricultural producer and consumer can satisfied their needs due to freshness and good quality. He also viewed that for the export marketing these processes are more important than the marketing at local level.

3. Own transportation vehicles - Transportation plays significant role in creating time and place utility for the agricultural produce. It also avoids the inconvenience and save the cost of distribution.

4. Warehousing and Cold Storage Facilities - Changing trend towards high value crops including fruits and vegetables required scientific warehousing and cold storages for an efficient marketing. Present efforts of the government are not sufficient for adequate growth and development, therefore government should directly participate in strengthening the cold storage chain in villages.

5. Group Farming - He suggested that group farming is the suitable remedy for small and marginal farmers. The spirit of "One for All and All for One", and focus on skill based division of work helps in improvement of production and productivity of agricultural produce in their farms and efficient marketing process.

6. Strengthening the Agricultural Marketing Information System (AMIS) - At present AMIS provides information for arrivals and prices of the agricultural produce. However, it is a need of the hour that aims should include production, variety and seasons of rivals countries for the purpose of export marketing and modern marketing techniques.

7. Marketing Training to the producers - Majority of the farmers are unknown about basic marketing skills and primary processing such as cleaning, sorting and grading. Agricultural department of the state government should prepare and organize basic training programmes with practical. The farmers can easily obtain the marketing skills and knowledge through this programmes which helps in promoting them towards efficient marketing process.

8. To promote agricultural research towards efficient marketing - Finally Mr. Nagnath Bapu expected that to promote agricultural research towards efficient marketing system. He expressed that present research trend of all the Agriculture Universities, Govt. Organizations like ICAR, NHB, DIM and NIAM are covers production, productivity, HYV seeds and modern technologies of post harvesting management. However, it is a need of the hour to promote research towards strengthening the agricultural marketing Process at local and global level.

In addition to this he suggested to promote village level Agro-processing industries which helps in value addition and creates employment opportunity for the village youth.

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