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MARKETING OF AGRICULTURAL PRODUCE IN CHHATTISGARH - A STUDY

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ABSTRACT -

A considerable part of the total produce was sold by the farmers to the village trader's and moneylenders often at prices considerably lower than the market prices. Marketing Co-operatives deals with the marketing of agricultural production such as food grains & commercial crops. Co-operative marketing also helps to meet the requirements of the farmers. Co-operative marketing are also involved in marketing of pesticides, chemical fertilizers, agricultural machinery, agricultural commodities, and equipments. The government is ready to purchase food grains at the declared minimum prices. Usually immediately just after the harvest the prices would be low and if the farmers are patient in holding the same for sometime it would fetch better prices.



KEY WORDS- Study Marketing, Agricultural, Produceetc.

INTRODUCTION -

Agriculture is the largest and most important sector of the Indian economy. Agriculture is an unorganised profession. Its success and failure depends to a large extent on climatic factors. Further it is not always possible to distinguish between productive and unproductive loans of the farmers. Because of these factors banks did not show much interest in advancing loans to agricultural and allied activities for a long time and farmers were forced to depend on money lenders and mahajans. Agriculture development has been an essential part of strategy of economic development since 1951. The government has perused special income creation and employment creation scheme to improve the economic condition of landless labourers and marginal farmers.

After Independence the Government of India adopted a number of measures to improve the system of agriculture marketing the important ones being establishment of regulated markets construction of warehouse provision for grading and standardisation of produce, standardisation of weights and measures, daily broadcasting of market prices of agricultural crops on All India Radio and improvement of transport facilities etc.

CONTENTS -

In the agricultural marketing systems in India presence of a large number of middlemen and widespread prevalence of malpractices in the mandies there were a number of other problems as well. For instance there was absence of proper warehousing facilities in the villages. As a consequence the farmer was compelled to store his products in pits mud- vessels, kutcha storehouses etc.

Transportation facilities were also highly inadequate and only a small number of villages were joined by railways and pucca roads to mandies. Most of the roads were kutcha roads not fit for motor vehicles and the produce as carried on slow moving transport vehicles like bullock cars. Obviously such means of transport could not be used to carry produce to far flung places and the farmer had to dump his produce in nearby market even if the price obtaining in this market was considerably low. But as noted in the section on 'Agricultural credit' there was a total lack of institutional sources of credit and the farmers were almost total dependent on the moneylenders whose sole objective was to exploit the farmers. In fact the moneylender often forced the farmers to sell produce to them at prices lower than the market prices in return for the loans granted to them.

CO- OPERATIVE MARKETING

Co- operatives sectors has played an important role in the economy of the country and has been recommended as an integral part of national economy. Co-operative marketing has made significant contributions in Agro-processing, distribution of inputs like fertilizers, storage and marketing. Though the above measures have improved the system of agriculture marketing to some extent major part of the benefits has been derived by large farmer who have adequate marketable surplus. However the small and marginal farmers continued sell a major part of their produce to moneylenders to meet their credit needs and these moneylenders offer them very low prices. Therefore, it is essential to form Co-operatives of the small and marginal farmers to enable them to obtain fair price for their produce. Marketing Co-operatives deals with the marketing of agricultural production such as food grains & commercial crops. Co-operative marketing also helps to meet the requirements of the farmers. Co-operative marketing are also involved in marketing of pesticides, chemical fertilizers, agricultural machinery, agricultural commodities, and equipments.

CHATTISGARH CO-OPERATIVE MARKFED LIMITED

The Chhattisgarh State Cooperative Marketing Federation (MARKFED) is an apex level federation of cooperative marketing societies in the State of Chhattisgarh. Chhattisgarh Cooperative MARKFED Raipur (Registration No 216 dated 31.10.2000) came into existence simultaneously with the creation of new Chhattisgarh State on 1st November, 2000. Chhattisgarh MARKFED executes the work of paddy procurement under price support scheme and supply of chemical fertilizers and plant protection material to the farmers of the state as per the instructions of Government. Chhattisgarh cooperative MARKFED has an extensive network of branches in the state (1) One Head Office (2) Sixteen District Marketing Offices. (3) Membership 463 Cooperative Marketing Societies. District offices are located at almost all the district headquarters. These offices undertake bulk of businesses and are well equipped with infrastructures and are manned with experienced staff.

FEATURES OF CO-OPERATIVE MARKETING

According to the committee on cooperative marketing there are certain special features attached to agricultural marketing which is different from that of manufactured goods. They are as follows.

Processing

Farm products have to be processed before their consumption by the ultimate consumers.

Seasonable Production

Farm products are mostly seasonal and cannot be produce thorough out the year.

Variation In Quality Of Products

There is a large variation in the quality of agricultural products which makes their grading and standardization somewhat difficult.

Irregular Supply

An agricultural product is uncertain and irregular because of the dependence of agricultural production on natural conditions.

Perish Ability of The Product

Farm products are perishable in nature, the period varying from a few hours to few months.

Bulkiness of Products

Bulkiness of most farm products makes their transportation and storage difficult and expensive.

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Small Size and Scattered Production

Farm products are produced throughout the country and most of the producers are of small size.

IMPORTANCE OF CO- OPERATIVE MARKETING

Provision of Credit

The Co- operative marketing societies provide credit and the farmers to save them from the necessity of selling their produce immediately after harvesting. This ensures better returns to the farmers.

Storage Facilities

The Co- operative marketing societies generally have storage facilities. Thus the farmers can wait for better prices; also there is no danger to their crop from, rains rodents and thefts.

Improved Marketability

It helps to improve market ability of products.

Market Intelligence

Co- operative can arrange to obtain data on market prices, demand and supply and other related information from the markets on a regular basis and can plan their activities accordingly.

Direct Dealings With Final Buyers

In certain cases the co-operatives can altogether skip the intermediaries and enter into direct relations with the final buyers. This practice will eliminate exploiters and ensure fair price both the producers and the consumers.

Processing of Agricultural Produce

The Co-operative societies can undertake processing activities like crushing oilseeds. Ginning and pressing of cotton etc.

ACTIVITIES OF CHHATTISGARH MARKFED

- Chemical fertilizers business and plant protection business.
- Paddy procurement kharif marketing year and milling of procured paddy.
- Storage facilities and kisan rice mills and cattle feed factory.
- Providing incentives declared by the central government as well as state government.
- Marketing of agricultural inputs such as pesticides and chemical fertilizers.
- Third large-scale production of paddy of paddy in international market at Indians largest farm.

PROCUREMENT IN KHARIF MARKETING YEAR	MILLING OF PROCURED PADDY	STORAGE FACILITIES AND KISAN RICE MILLS	CATTLE FEED FACTORY	CHEMICAL FERTILIZERS BUSINESS	PLANT PROTECTION BUSINESS
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Figure 1.1. Chhattisgarh MARKFED

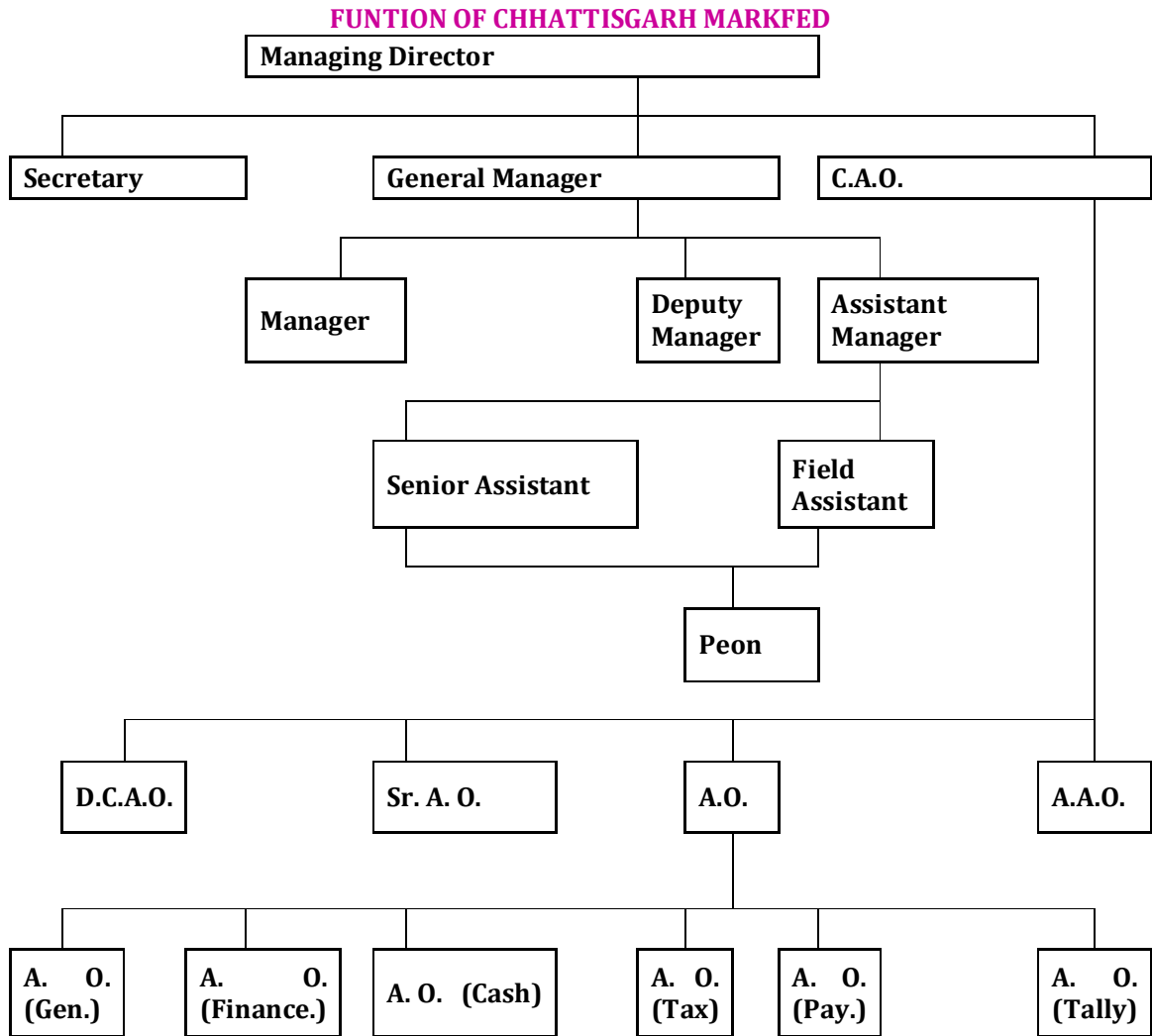


Figure 1.2. Funtion of Chhattisgarh MARKFED

Fertilizer Arrangement

As per demand from cooperative and departments, MARKFED is arranging proper distribution of fertilizers. The farmers through 1333 cooperative societies MARKFED owns godown having 325375 MT Capacities.

Kisan Rice Mills Management

29 Rice mills of MARKFED were established in 1970 out of which 16 mills are in running condition and MARKFED proposal for modification of 8 mills is in process.

Storage Facilities

For storage of paddy procured Under Price Support Scheme, 60 storage centres (108 godowns) have been established in the state. MARKFED has 322375 MT capacity godowns throughout the state.

Cattle Feed Production

For production of cattle and poultry feeds there is a plant at Durg, in which high quality feeds are produced, which are sold in public as well as private sector.

POLICY OF FIXATION OF MINIMUM SUPPORT PRICE AND THE PROCUREMENT PRICES

As part of agricultural price policy the government has been fixing the Minimum Support Prices and Procurement Prices for a number of agricultural commodities like wheat, paddy, etc. Minimum price or fixed so as to ensure that price of agricultural commodities do not fall below this prices. The government is ready to purchase food grains at the declared minimum prices.

FARMERS ROLE IN MARKETING AGRICULTURE PRODUCE

Direct Marketing of the agricultural produce is the need of the hour Efforts may be made to provide facilities for lifting the entire stocks that farmers are willing to sell with incentive price. There should be provision for storing the stocks such as godowns and warehouses. It helps the farmers to hold the stocks will the prices are stabilized. Usually immediately just after the harvest the prices would be low and if the farmers are patient in holding the same for sometime it would fetch better prices.

CONCLUSION –

For a long period of time India agriculture was mostly in the nature of subsistence farming. The farmer sold only a small part of his produce to pay off rents, debts and meet his other requirements. Such sale was usually done immediately after harvesting of crops since there were no storing facilities. A considerable part of the total produce was sold by the farmers to the village trader's and moneylenders often at prices considerably lower than the market prices. The farmers who took their produce to the mandies wholesale markets also faced a number of problems as they were confronted with powerful and organised traders. In mandies, business was carried out by arhatiyas with the help of brokers, who were the agents of arhatiyas. In fact there was a large chain of middlemen in the agricultural marketing system like village traders, kutchra arhatiyas, the share of farmers in the price of agricultural produce was reduced substantially. This study is applicable only on the study area i.e. Chhattisgarh and the result of its applicability may vary for other districts and states, depending upon the rule of state government, implementing functionaries, environmental climatic conditions personal and demographic characteristics.

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