

Price spread in marketing of potato (*Solanum tuberosum* L.) in Latur district of Maharashtra

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ABSTRACT

An attempt was made to study price spread in marketing of potato (*Solanum tuberosum* L.) in Latur district of Maharashtra with cross sectional random sample of 70 potato growers and 30 intermediaries involved in marketing of potato. In marketing of potato four channels were observed viz., Producer - Commission agent cum Wholesaler - Retailer - Consumer, Producer - Village Merchant - Commission agent cum Wholesaler - Retailer - Consumer, Producer - Retailer - Consumer, Producer - Consumer. Maximum quantity was sold through channel - I (75.74 per cent) followed by channel - II (19.52 per cent), channel-III (3.88 per cent) and channel - IV (0.86 per cent). Marketing cost was maximum in channel - I as compared to other channels. Producers share in consumers rupee was the highest in channel - IV (95.18 per cent) followed by channel-III (87.26 per cent), channel - II (73.79 per cent) and channel-I (73.69 per cent).

Key words : Potato, Marketing channels, Producers share, Price spread.

Tuber crops are the third most important food crops of man after cereals and grain legumes. The tubers being rich in starch are being increasingly used as raw material for many industries and as animal, fish and poultry feed.

Among root and tuber crops, India ranks fifth in the world in area and production of potato and with 24 per cent share in total vegetable production. In India, potato is produced on an area of 14.00 lakh hectares with a production 250 lakh tonnes and productivity of 17.86 tons/ha. In Maharashtra, potato is produced on an area of 1.28million ha. with a production of 22.49 MT and productivity of 17.57 tons/ha. In the peak marketing months after harvest, the supply is much more than the fresh market demand. One of the important problems of agricultural marketing is the existence of number of intermediaries between producer and the final consumer. The nature of these intermediaries are often exploitative. They charge a high price from the consumer, but share only a small part of it with the producer. However, an attempt in this paper has been made to study price spread in marketing of potato in Latur district (M.S.).

METHODOLOGY

A cross section random sample of 70 potato growers

was selected from two tehsils of Latur district. Selected cultivators were grouped in three size groups on the basis of operational holding viz. Group - I (upto 2.00 ha), Group - II (2.0 to 4.00 ha) and Group - III (above 4.00 ha). In addition to this, 30 market intermediaries i.e. 10 wholesalers-cum-commission agents, 10 retailers and 10 village merchants were selected randomly to collect the information on marketing aspects of potato. For present study, tabular analysis and percentage method were used to analyse the data.

Price spread:

Price spread is the difference between price paid by ultimate consumer and net price received by producer. Price spread in this study involves not only the actual prices at various stages of marketing channels but cost incurred in process of movement of the produce from the farm to the consumer and margin of various intermediaries.

Producer's share in consumer's rupee (PSCR) :

It is worked out as follows:

$$PSCR = \frac{\text{Net price received by producer}}{\text{Price paid by consumer}} \times 100$$

Marketing cost and marketing margin:

Marketing costs are the actual expenses incurred in marketing process. Marketing cost includes the transportation charges, cost on octroi, commission charges, hamali, weighing charges etc. Marketing margins are the actual amounts received by the marketing agencies in the marketing process.

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