

Marketing cost of *kharif* tomatoes in Western Maharashtra

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ABSTRACT

Cross sectional data were collected and separate questionnaire schedules were formulated for tomato growers, as well as for various intermediaries like wholesaler, retailer, distant trader and processor operating in Ahmednagar markets. Marketing margin in Channel-II, III, IV were Rs. 201.00, Rs. 205.25 and Rs. 235.50, respectively. Price spread in Channel-I, II, III and IV were Rs. 31.00, Rs. 372.75, Rs. 390.50 and Rs. 412.50, respectively. In *kharif* season the highest efficiency in Channel-I and lowest in Channel-IV i.e. Rs. 23.19 and 0.89.

Key words : Tomato, Producer, Wholesaler, Retailer, Distant trader, Consumer.

Vegetable crops are more economical than foodgrains due to their higher production per unit area in less time. They provide a good source of income to farmers. The production of vegetables has increased considerably during the recent years because of introduction of modern inputs and development of new production technique.

Vegetables are rich source of protective elements live minerals, vitamin and salts. The human body needs all these elements to maintain good health. They supply carbohydrates, fats, proteins, vitamins and mineral elements, live calcium, iron and phosphorus. Among the various economic vegetables grown in India, tomato is one of the most popular vegetables and tops the list of canned vegetables.

The marketing of the farm produce is equally, rather more important function from the farmers point of view. The harvesting of tomato should be done at proper stage of maturity without affecting quality, careless handling and stacking result in reducing the market value and keeping quality. The important factors which determine the quality of product are careful picking operations, suitable packaging material, method of packaging, grading and standardization and quick transportation. The negligence in any of these operations adversely affects the quality and value of the produce which influences the prices of the product. Harvesting stage generally depends on the type of market to which the produce is to be sent. For distant markets, greenish and half ripened tomatoes are suitable, while for local markets yellowish red to

reddish tomatoes are suitable. There is no specific time for harvesting but most of the farmers preferred harvesting in the evening so that produce can be disposed off either at night or early in the morning.

METHODOLOGY

Multistage sampling techniques was used to select district, tehsils, villages and tomato growers. Ahmednagar district was purposively selected on the basis of highest area under tomato crop. Sangamner tehsil 10 villages viz., Hivargar Pavas, Chandanpuri, Dhandharphal Kurdh, Dhandaarphal Budruk, Anandwadi, Savargaon, Zole, Nimji, Khadgaon and Sukarwere selected randomly. From each of selected villages, the list of tomato cultivators was obtained. From this area, different middlemen were selected randomly for study of marketing of tomato. The sample size of wholesaler, retailer, distant trader and processor was selected as 10, respectively for the year 2005-06. Cross sectional data were collected from the sample tomato growers by personal interview method with the help of pretested schedule.

The data thus collected were analysed by statistical tools like tabular method on the following lines like marketing intermediaries involved in tomato trade, marketing channels and marketing costs in different markets.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Marketing cost incurred by tomato growers:

Marketing cost:

The study on marketing cost was undertaken to estimate the per quintal cost of marketing of tomatoes in different markets in *kharif* season. Marketing cost constituted the expenses on the items like packaging, transportation, hamali, weighing charges, commission, market rent, postage, etc.

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