

Knowledge of post harvest technology practices by the grape growers in Tasgaon tahsil of Sangli district of Maharashtra

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SUMMARY : The study was carried out in Tasgaon Tahsil of Sangli district where grape is extensively grown. Sample of 160 grape growers was drawn by using stratified random sampling method. It was observed that almost all the grape growers had complete knowledge about post harvest technological practices like major aspects of signs of maturity, harvesting of bunches, grading of bunches, packing of fruits and preparation of processed products like raisin and wine. But most of them had no knowledge about processed products like Jam, vinegar, grape syrup, grape chatni, storing grapes in syrup and canning of grapes.

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Success of the system of the agricultural development can be measured in term of achievement in research growth, production technology and post harvest technology. post harvest technology has potential to create rural industries. So fruit and vegetable processing industry has a significant role to play in development of the country, which was predominantly agricultural economy. The industries are equipped to absorb large quantities of fruits for processing purpose. This would ensure fair prices to the growers and avoiding distress sale in the season of gult. Besides, the industry helps in the economic utilization of horticulture produce of the relatively inaccessible are from where the transportation in fresh form is difficult. The rural fruit processing industry offers immense potentialities in providing employment both at factory level, results into growth in economy and standard of living of rural people.

Maharashtra state ranks first in cultivation of grape. Nearly 28,500 ha. area is under plantation of grape with total (production) income of 6 to 7 lakh metric tonnes. Out of total area in the country Maharashtra occupies about 66 per cent area under grape cultivation with 55 per

cent production. In Maharashtra grape growing is mainly concentrated in Sangli, Pune, Nashik, Solapur and Ahmednagar districts.

Now a days marketing of grape becomes difficult due to certain causes such as interference of middleman, long distance markets, fluctuation in market prices. This results into loss of grape growers. So this can be avoided by increasing the storage life of berries through processing into different value added products. Therefore, post harvest technology has great importance in preparation of processed products from increased production. Also post harvest technology plays major role in minimizing transportation costs, spoilage in transportation, avoiding fluctuation in market prices, exporting the fresh fruits and processed products to foreign countries and thereby getting maximum price to farmers and increasing their economic status. In view of this, the scientific understanding about the post harvest technology is must. Hence, it is necessary to find out the knowledge level of the post harvest technology practices by the grape growers for developing new suitable strategy.

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EXPERIMENTAL METHODS

The present study was undertaken in Tasgaon Tahsil of Sangli district of Maharashtra. A list of grape growing villages was obtained and out of these villages ten villages were randomly selected. Sample of 160 grape growers was drawn by using stratified random sampling method. The data from the grape growers were collected through