

Review Form 3

Journal Name:	Asian Journal of Agricultural Extension, Economics & Sociology
Manuscript Number:	Ms_AJAEES_125778
Title of the Manuscript:	Constraints faced by the farmers in the production and marketing of sesame in Onattukara region of Kerala
Type of the Article	

General guidelines for the Peer Review process:

This journal's peer review policy states that **NO** manuscript should be rejected only on the basis of '**lack of Novelty**', provided the manuscript is scientifically robust and technically sound. To know the complete guidelines for the Peer Review process, reviewers are requested to visit this link:

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PART 1: Review Comments

Compulsory REVISION comments	Reviewer's comment	Author's Feedback <i>(Please correct the manuscript and highlight that part in the manuscript. It is mandatory that authors should write his/her feedback here)</i>
Please write a few sentences regarding the importance of this manuscript for the scientific community. Why do you like (or dislike) this manuscript? A minimum of 3-4 sentences may be required for this part.	The manuscript offers an important analysis of the challenges faced by sesame farmers in the Onattukara region of Kerala, focusing on both production and marketing issues. Utilizing the Garrett ranking technique, it provides empirical insights that can greatly inform farmers' decision-making and assist policymakers in developing targeted interventions. This research is especially significant given sesame's historical and cultural importance, as it grapples with mounting pressures from market fluctuations and environmental challenges. I commend the comprehensive nature of the study, which not only identifies key obstacles but also lays a foundation for future research and practical solutions to improve sesame cultivation and market access. Overall, this manuscript is a valuable contribution to the scientific community, illustrating the connection between agricultural practices, economic viability, and policy implications. However, it could have benefited from exploring alternative crop options or diversification strategies to offer farmers more sustainable income opportunities. This study effectively situates local agricultural challenges within a broader socio-economic framework, making it an essential addition to the literature on agricultural economics and rural development.	
Is the title of the article suitable? (If not please suggest an alternative title)	The title of the article effectively conveys the focus on the challenges faced by sesame farmers in the Onattukara region. However, it could be more concise and engaging. A suggested alternative title could be: "Challenges in Sesame Production and Marketing: Insights from Kerala's Onattukara Region" This title emphasizes both aspects of the study while maintaining clarity and relevance.	

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<p>Is the abstract of the article comprehensive? Do you suggest the addition (or deletion) of some points in this section? Please write your suggestions here.</p>	<p>The abstract provides a comprehensive overview of the study, detailing the challenges faced by farmers and processing unit owners in sesame production and marketing in the Onattukara region of Kerala. It effectively communicates the scope, methodology, and potential implications of the research. Below are specific comments and suggestions for improvement.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Objective Clarity: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Comment: While the objective of the study is implied, it could be stated more explicitly. - Suggestion: Include a clear statement at the beginning that articulates the primary aim of the research, such as, "This study aims to examine the challenges faced by farmers and processing unit owners in the production and marketing of sesame in the Onattukara region of Kerala." 2. Methodology Description: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Comment: The abstract mentions purposive sampling but does not clarify how the sample size was determined. - Suggestion: Consider providing brief details about the sampling method and its rationale, such as how the selected farmers represent the diversity of the region. 3. Presentation of Findings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Comment: The challenges faced by farmers and processing unit owners are listed but could benefit from clearer and more concise phrasing. - Suggestion: Instead of listing challenges in a long sentence, consider breaking them up or summarizing them for easier readability. For example, "Key challenges include inadequate seed availability, high input costs, low yields, labor shortages, and price fluctuations." 4. Implications and Applications: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Comment: While the implications for producers and policymakers are mentioned, providing specific examples of potential interventions could enhance this section. - Suggestion: Include a sentence that specifies the kind of interventions or decisions that could be informed by the study's findings, which would underscore the practical importance of the research. 5. Conciseness: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Comment: Some phrases could be made more concise to improve clarity and flow. - Suggestion: For instance, rephrase "making a total sample size of 163" to "forming a total sample of 163." 6. Overall Structure: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Comment: The overall structure is logical, but slight adjustments in flow could enhance readability. - Suggestion: Consider reordering certain sections for improved coherence; for example, present the methodology before detailing the findings, which can set a foundation for understanding the results. 7. Grammar and Writing Comments <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Sentence Structure: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Original: "The districts of Alappuzha, Pathanamthitta and Kollam were purposively selected ..." - Comment: A comma should be included before "and" in a list of three or more items (Oxford comma). - Suggestion: "... Pathanamthitta, and Kollam were purposively selected..." b. Word Choice and Clarity: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Original: "making a total sample size of 163 farmers with 80 each from Kollam and Alappuzha and three from Pathanamthitta." - Comment: The phrase "making a total sample size of" can be simplified for better readability. - Suggestion: "resulting in a total sample of 163 farmers: 80 from Kollam, 80 from Alappuzha, and 3 from Pathanamthitta." c. Parallel Structure: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Original: "The processing unit owners also faced certain problems like raw material shortage, lack of skilled workers, costly production processes..." - Comment: Ensure parallelism in the list. For example, use "shortage" instead of "shortages" for consistency. - Suggestion: "... faced certain problems such as raw material shortages, a lack of skilled workers, costly production processes..." d. Wordiness: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Original: "the producers can make informed decisions and assist the policymakers to take corrective measures." - Comment: This phrase can be made more concise. - Suggestion: "to help policymakers implement corrective measures." e. Tense Consistency: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ensure that verb tense is consistent throughout the abstract. The original uses the present tense appropriately, but double-check that the entire piece remains in the same tense. 6. Clarity: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Original: "These insights can help producers make informed decisions and assist the policymakers to take corrective measures to improve sesame production, productivity, and market stability." - Comment: Although clear, this sentence can be tightened for efficiency. - Suggestion: "These insights can guide producers in making informed decisions and assist policymakers in implementing corrective measures to enhance sesame production, productivity, and market stability." 	
<p>Are subsections and structure of the manuscript appropriate?</p>	<p>The manuscript is well-structured and logically organized, guiding the reader through the study's objectives, methods, results, and conclusions. Each main section is appropriately divided into subsections, which enhances clarity and allows for easier navigation through the document.</p> <p>Overall Recommendations:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Consistency: Maintain consistency in formatting throughout the manuscript, including how citations are presented and tables are referenced. 2. Clarity and Conciseness: Where possible, aim to consolidate information to enhance clarity. This may involve breaking up long sentences and ensuring that complex ideas are expressed simply. 3. Figures and Tables: Ensure that tables and figures are appropriately titled and referenced in the narrative to guide the reader effectively. 4. Use of Technical Language: While the manuscript is aimed at an academic audience, ensure that the use of technical jargon does not hinder understanding, particularly for those unfamiliar with specific terms. <p>Final Note:</p> <p>Overall, the manuscript makes a valuable contribution to the understanding of sesame production and marketing constraints in the Onattukara region of Kerala. Addressing the minor grammatical, formatting, and clarity issues noted will enhance the quality and readability of the manuscript.</p>	
<p>Please write a few sentences regarding the scientific correctness of this manuscript. Why do you think that this manuscript is scientifically robust and technically sound? A minimum of 3-4 sentences may</p>	<p>The manuscript demonstrates scientific robustness through its systematic approach to identifying and analysing the challenges faced by sesame farmers in the Onattukara region. The use of the Garrett ranking technique is appropriate for prioritizing constraints based on farmers' perceptions, providing empirical insights that are grounded in quantitative analysis. Additionally, the study employs a well-defined sampling method, ensuring that the findings are representative of the region's farming community. The integration of relevant literature further strengthens the manuscript's credibility, situating its findings within the broader context of agricultural research. Overall, the thorough</p>	

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<p>be required for this part.</p> <p>Are the references sufficient and recent? If you have suggestions of additional references, please mention them in the review form.</p> <p>-</p>	<p>methodology and data-driven conclusions contribute to the manuscript's technical soundness.</p> <p>The references provided in the manuscript are a mix of recent studies and foundational texts relevant to the topic. However, the number of references is limited, and expanding this section could significantly enhance the depth and relevance of the literature review. To improve the discussion of the results and to provide a thorough understanding of the importance of the manuscript topic, it may be beneficial to include more recent studies (from the last 3-5 years) that specifically focus on sesame production and marketing in India or in similar contexts.</p> <p>Here are a few suggestions for additional references:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Recent Agricultural Policy Reports**: Consider including reports from the Government of India or relevant agricultural institutions that address sesame cultivation trends, challenges, and policy responses. 2. Current Journal Articles: Look for articles published in the last few years in journals focused on agricultural economics or rural development that may provide new insights or data on sesame production challenges. 3. Global Perspectives: Incorporating studies from other countries that face similar issues with sesame cultivation can offer a comparative perspective that enriches the discussion. 	
<p><u>Minor</u> REVISION comments</p> <p>Is the language/English quality of the article suitable for scholarly communications?</p>	<p>The language and overall English quality of the article appear to be generally suitable for scholarly communication. However, there are several areas where grammatical clarity, sentence structure, and coherence could be improved. Here are some observations and suggestions for enhancing the language and ensuring that the manuscript meets the standards expected in academic publishing:</p> <p>Areas for Improvement:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Grammar and Syntax: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ensure subject-verb agreement and correct article usage. For example, in "the constraints faced by farmer in sesame cultivation," "farmer" should be "farmers". - There are instances of missing or poorly placed commas, which can create run-on sentences and hinder readability. 2. Clarity and Conciseness: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Certain phrases can be simplified or restructured for clarity. For instance, "the absence of an institutional market mechanism" might be simplified to "lack of institutional market mechanisms." - Aim for concise sentences. For example, "As part of a crop diversification initiative, plans are in place to expand sesame cultivation in this area to 750 hectares" could be shortened to "Plans to expand sesame cultivation to 750 hectares are underway as part of a crop diversification initiative." 3. Consistency in Terminology: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Be consistent with terms such as "labor" and "labour." Choose one variation (American English vs British English) and stick to it throughout the document. 4. Use of Technical Terms: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ensure that technical terms are well-defined. For example, the Garrett ranking technique is a specialized method; a brief explanation of its relevance and practical application context could enhance comprehension for readers unfamiliar with it. 5. Proofreading: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A thorough proofreading session to catch typographical errors, inconsistencies in tense, and other miscellaneous grammatical errors would be beneficial. 	
<p><u>Optional/General</u> comments</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1- The introduction could benefit from improved coherence and flow. Consider adding context about the global and regional significance of sesame, as well as simplifying statistical data to enhance accessibility. The mention of the Geographical Indication (GI) tag for Onattukara sesame is valuable, but a brief explanation of its implications for local farmers would enrich the text. Clearly categorizing the identified challenges into production and marketing categories would also aid clarity, and a stronger emphasis on the research gap and how your study will address specific challenges could strengthen the rationale for your research. Additionally, including more recent citations would help situate your work in current discourse within the field. 2- The methodology section is generally well-structured and provides a clear account of the research design and methods used in the study. However, there are several areas that could be improved for clarity and rigor. First, while the selection criteria for the gram panchayats and municipalities are mentioned, it would be beneficial to provide more detail about why these specific locations were chosen beyond their sesame cultivation area and production. Additionally, the sample size of 163 farmers appears reasonable, but it would be helpful to clarify how the random sampling was conducted to ensure representativeness. Regarding the Garrett ranking technique, the explanation is concise but could benefit from a more comprehensive rationale for choosing this method over other possible ranking techniques, addressing any limitations it may have. Furthermore, including information on how the structured interview schedule was developed and validated would enhance the credibility of the data collection process. Lastly, consider discussing any ethical considerations taken during the study, such as informed consent from participants. Overall, while the methodology provides a strong foundation for the study, these enhancements could further strengthen its robustness and transparency. 3- The Results and Discussion section presents a comprehensive analysis of the challenges faced by sesame farmers and processing unit owners, with a clear structure that facilitates understanding. The use of Garrett ranking technique is appropriate for the study, allowing for a systematic approach to identifying key constraints. However, there are a few areas that could enhance the clarity and depth of the discussion. First, while the challenges are well-ranked, it would be beneficial to provide more context regarding the implications of these constraints on the overall livelihood of the farmers and the local economy. For instance, illustrating how weather-related issues or labor shortages specifically impact farm income or community sustainability could strengthen the argument. The comparisons made with previous studies, such as those by Sreepriya and Girija (2020) and Mary et al. (2023), provide a good foundation for discussing the relevance of findings. However, a more critical analysis of why discrepancies exist between studies, especially in the context of varying geographical and socio-economic landscapes, would enrich the discussion. Additionally, some statistical results (Garrett scores and rankings) presented in tables could be more effectively integrated into the narrative to avoid redundancy. In Table 3 and Table 4, the findings regarding processing unit owners are well-articulated, but further elaboration on the perspectives of these stakeholders—such as highlighting their economic role within the sesame supply chain—could provide a more holistic view. Furthermore, the suggestions for improvement in the last section are insightful, but they could benefit from a prioritization based on the constraints identified, which would help focus on actionable areas. Lastly, consider discussing potential limitations of the study, such as sample size or geographical constraints, and how these may affect the generalizability of the findings. This acknowledgment will enhance the study's credibility and help contextualize the results. Overall, this section is detailed and informative, but further depth and critical analysis would strengthen the impact of the findings. 4- The conclusion effectively encapsulates the main findings and recommendations of the study, but adding depth and specificity would improve its clarity and impact. 	

PART 2:

	Reviewer's comment	Author's comment (if agreed with reviewer, correct the manuscript and highlight that part in the manuscript. It is mandatory that authors should write his/her feedback here)
Are there ethical issues in this manuscript?	<i>(If yes, Kindly please write down the ethical issues here in details)</i>	

Reviewer Details:

Name:	Rula Awad
Department, University & Country	National Agronomic Institute of Tunisia (INAT), Jordan