

Original Research Article

Constraints and Suggestions of Fruit Crop Growers

ABSTRACT

The study was conducted in Vijayapura district of Karnataka during 2019-20 to analyse the entrepreneurial behaviour of fruit crop growers. Forty each grape, lime and pomegranate growers were selected by use of simple random sampling technique. Thus, making a total sample size of 120. Personal interview method was used to collect data and appropriate statistical tools were applied to analyse the data. The findings revealed that, with respect to the constraints faced by fruit crop growers in fruit crop production, production constraints were lack of irrigation facilities followed by high cost of inputs. Major financial constraints were non-availability of credit at right time followed by inadequate credit. High wages and non-availability of labourer were the main issues relating to labour constraints. Regarding marketing constraints, fluctuating price followed by delayed cash payment and exploitation by middlemen were the major constraints. The suggestions offered by the fruit crop growers are provision for irrigation facility followed by provision of timely and adequate information regarding availability of prices, inputs, arrivals etc., protection from exploitation by middlemen. Provision for suitable market infrastructure, timely and adequate credit, timely and adequate cash payment, continuous power supply, interest free credit and longer repayment period for credit were other suggestions offered to improve the returns from fruit crop cultivation.

KEYWORDS

Constraints, Suggestions, Fruits, Grape, Lime, Pomegranate

INTRODUCTION

Horticulture is an essential component in the economy of our country. Cultivation of horticultural crops has led to the improved economic condition of farmers because of higher returns from many perennial fruit crops, vegetables, seasonal flower crops and marketing of produce throughout the year. Raising horticultural crops has been recognized as an ideal option to improve the livelihood security, attaining food security, enhancing employment generation and also to get additional income through value addition for the farming

community. Horticulture crops, particularly fruit and vegetable crops are comparatively resilient to changes in weather conditions and are mostly taken up by small and marginal farmers to augment their income. This sector also enables the countrywide population to enjoy a diverse and balanced diet for a healthy living. This sector has gained prominence over the last few years contributing a growing share in the total output of agriculture and allied sectors.

The scenario of horticulture crops in India has become very encouraging. The percentage share of horticulture output in agriculture has increased up to 33%. Under the purview of agriculture and allied activities, the share of outlay for horticulture which was 3.9 % during the IX five-year plan, was increased to 4.6 % during the XII five-year plan. India's presence in the global horticulture market has also been growing at a rapid rate. In India, fruit and vegetable production has outpaced food grain production.

The surge in production and productivity of horticulture crops, especially fruit crops is a testament to how far we have come and improved. In India, total horticulture production has increased from 211.2 million MT in 2007-08 to 311.71 million MT in 2017-18 and the fruit production has increased from 50.9 to 97.35 million MT since 2004-05 to 2017-18. During, 2017-18, the total horticulture production was highest in case of Uttar Pradesh (392.48 lakh tonnes) followed by West Bengal (324.2 lakh tonnes) and the total production of fruits was highest in case of Andhra Pradesh (152.15 lakh tonnes) followed by Maharashtra (117.28 lakh tonnes).

Horticulture plays a crucial role in the lives of the farming community of Karnataka as well. Karnataka is a prominent player in the fruit sector by occupying the sixth position in the production of fruit crops in India with a 7.4% share. The total area under horticulture cultivation in Karnataka stood at 21.09 lakh hectares with a production of 21.3 million MT. The total area under fruit crop cultivation in Karnataka is at 4.31 lakh hectares with a production of 7.1 million MT. The major fruit crops grown in the state include mango, grape, pomegranate, banana, papaya, watermelon and citrus fruits.

Vijayapura district occupies a special place as a major fruit producing district of Karnataka. Though facing the constraints of water scarcity and dry land throughout the year, farmers have still diversified their farm with raising fruit crops such as grape, lime, pomegranate, banana and papaya. Fruit crops occupy 24.4 thousand hectares of area with production up to 4.43 lakh tonnes in Vijayapura district. Fruit crops grown in the district such

as grape, lime, pomegranate, banana, sapota, mango and papaya are the major source of livelihood.

Entrepreneurship is the capacity of a person to introduce innovative techniques in business operations. It has been accepted globally as an effective tool for widening the entrepreneurial base for those who have poor financial resources or managerial background. Entrepreneurship paves the way for multidimensional development in several ways, viz., bearing the risks, assembling and harnessing various inputs, innovating the techniques of production to reduce the cost and increase its quality and quantity, expanding the horizons of the market, and coordinating and managing the manufacturing unit at various levels. The need for agricultural development combined with the problems of poverty and unemployment has brought the concept of rural entrepreneurship to the fore. The future progress of the farming community in the country depends on the entrepreneurial behaviour of farmers.

Rural development is positively linked to entrepreneurship. Entrepreneurship is seen as the tool to hasten the rural development process by both individuals and developmental institutions. Fruit crops are an excellent prospect for entrepreneurship for farmers as they give higher yield per unit area, higher returns per unit area, ensure efficient utilization of resources on the farm and have various post-harvest, processing and value addition opportunities. A farmer who is willing to take risks and manage the farm well, then they can reap the entrepreneurial benefits and that will pave the way for the farming community's overall growth. Entrepreneurship in fruit crops can be seen as a forefront of the new age development in the agriculture sector. The time has come to change the traditional subsistence farming view of agriculture to a business endeavour.

METHODOLOGY

Vijayapura district of Karnataka state is well known for its fruit production. It is one of the leading producers of fruit crops in Karnataka and also, fruit crop cultivation is being taken up in almost all the taluks of district. Hence, Vijayapura district was purposively selected for the study purposively. Out of five taluks in the district, Vijayapura and Indi taluks were selected based on having maximum area under fruit cultivation, highest production and productivity of fruit crops. Two villages from each of these two taluks having the highest area under fruit crop cultivation were selected for the study. Then, from each village, 10 grape growers, 10 lime growers and 10 pomegranate growers were selected randomly. Thus, the total respondents constituted for the study were 120. Personal interview

method was used to collect data and appropriate statistical tools were applied to analyse the data.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Constraints of fruit crop growers

The overall constraints faced by the fruit crop growers are listed in the Table 1. Among production constraints, the major constraints faced were lack of irrigation source (I Rank) followed by high cost of inputs (II Rank), irregular supply of electricity (III Rank), lack of technical guidance (IV Rank) and non-availability of inputs (V Rank).

The major financial constraints as expressed by fruit crop growers were, non-availability of credit at right time with first rank followed by inadequate credit (II Rank), inadequate subsidy (III Rank), high interest rate on loan (IV Rank) and insufficient repayment time (V Rank). Labour problems include high wages (I Rank) and non-availability of labourer (II Rank).

Major marketing constraints as expressed by fruit crop growers were fluctuating price (I Rank) followed by delayed cash payment (II Rank), exploitation by middlemen (III Rank), lack of cold storages (IV Rank) and transportation (V Rank). The findings are supported by the studies of Sharma (2009), Chavan (2013), Doddamani (2014), Shiralashetti and Mahesh (2016) and Sumana (2017).

These above-mentioned constraints are faced by majority of fruit crop growers which hinders the production and productivity of the fruits. To overcome the above problems, Karnataka State Department of Horticulture (KSDH) should focus on providing irrigation sources by subsidizing farm pond construction, establishing custom hiring centres for provision of farm equipment at low cost. Extension specialists should educate the farmers by providing proper guidance about improved practices, timely information about market prices and create efficient marketing channel which will benefit the fruit growers in overcoming the constraints in fruit production.

Suggestions of fruit crop growers to overcome the constraints in fruit crop production

The Table 2 mentions the important suggestions given by fruit crop growers to overcome the constraints in fruit production. The other important suggestions as given by fruit crop growers were provision for irrigation source (I Rank), timely and adequate

information regarding availability of inputs, prices, arrivals etc. (II Rank), Protection from exploitation by middlemen (III Rank), provision for suitable market infrastructure viz. cold storages etc. (IV Rank), provision for timely and adequate credit (V Rank), timely and adequate supply of inputs (VI Rank), provision for timely and adequate cash payment (VII Rank), provision of continuous power supply (VIII Rank), providing interest free credit (IX Rank), longer repayment period for credit (X Rank) and providing labour saving technologies like mulching, drip irrigation etc. (XI Rank). The findings are in line with the studies of Sharma (2009), Gotyalet al. (2010) and Sumana (2017).

These suggestions must be incorporated in planning and execution of developmental activities by Karnataka State Department of Horticulture (KSDH) to improve the overall fruit production and productivity.

CONCLUSION

While the fruit crops are extensively grown in the district, it has been observed that less number of fruit growers belong to the high category of entrepreneurial behaviour. This calls for improvement of entrepreneurial behaviour of fruit crop growers by organizing effective entrepreneurship development programmes by the department of horticulture in collaboration with the entrepreneurship development organizations like Centre for Entrepreneurship Development of Karnataka (CEDOK), Rural Development and Self Employment Training Institute (RUDSETI) and Association of Women Entrepreneurs of Karnataka (AWAKE). Fruit crops can be used for various post-harvest and processing activities, which are huge entrepreneurial opportunities. Thus, periodic and intensive training programmes need to be organized for creating awareness, followed by vigorous follow-up, guidance and counselling for sustainability of the entrepreneurial activity. Micro enterprises like juice making, pickle making can be promoted through SHG (Self Help Group) approach especially in rural areas for women to supplement the family income.

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Table 1: Constraints of fruit crop growers

Sl. No.	Constraints	Extent of constraints						Score	Rank
		Larger Extent		Moderate extent		Lesser extent			
		f	%	f	%	f	%		
A. Production									
1	Non availability of inputs	58	48.33	34	28.33	28	23.33	270	V
2	High cost of inputs	88	73.33	20	16.67	12	10.00	316	II
3	Lack of technical guidance	79	65.83	26	21.67	15	12.50	304	IV
4	Lack of irrigation source	105	87.50	09	7.50	06	5.00	339	I
5	Irregular supply of electricity	82	68.33	22	18.33	16	13.33	306	III
B. Financial									
1	Inadequate credit	85	70.83	22	18.33	13	10.83	312	II
2	Inadequate subsidy	81	67.50	27	22.50	12	10.00	309	III
3	High interest rate on loan	83	69.17	22	18.33	15	12.50	308	IV
4	Insufficient repayment time	72	60.00	27	22.50	21	17.50	291	V
5	Non availability of credit at right time	88	73.33	23	19.17	09	7.50	319	I
C. Labour									
1	High labour wages	84	70.00	22	18.33	14	11.67	310	I
2	Non availability of	74	61.67	27	22.50	19	15.83	295	II

	labours								
D. Marketing									
1	Transportation	43	35.83	43	35.83	34	28.33	249	V
2	Fluctuating price	101	84.17	13	10.83	06	5.00	335	I
3	Lack of cold storage	89	74.17	18	15.00	13	10.83	316	IV
4	Delayed cash payment	93	77.50	16	13.33	11	9.17	322	II
5	Exploitation by middlemen	92	76.67	17	13.33	11	9.17	321	III

f- Frequency, %- per cent

Table 2: Suggestions of fruit crop growers to overcome the constraints in fruit crop production

Sl. No.	Suggestions	Very important		Important		Not important		Scores	Rank
		f	%	f	%	f	%		
1	Provision of continuous power supply	82	68.33	24	20.00	14	11.67	308	VIII
2	Provision of irrigation facilities	102	85.00	13	10.83	05	4.17	337	I
3	Timely and adequate information regarding availability of inputs, prices, arrivals etc.	92	76.67	20	16.67	08	6.67	324	II
4	Timely and adequate supply of inputs	84	70.00	22	18.33	14	11.67	310	VI
5	Provision for timely and adequate credit	83	69.17	25	20.83	12	10.00	311	V
6	Longer repayment period for credit	81	67.50	18	15.00	21	17.50	300	X
7	Providing interest free credit	81	67.50	24	20.00	15	12.50	306	IX
8	Providing labour saving technologies like mulching, drip irrigation etc.	48	40.00	34	28.33	38	31.67	250	XI
9	Provision for suitable market infrastructure viz. cold storages etc.	87	72.50	23	19.17	10	8.33	317	IV
10	Protection from	90	75.00	20	16.67	10	8.33	320	III

	exploitation by middlemen								
11	Provision for timely and adequate cash payment	81	67.50	27	22.50	12	10.00	309	VII

UNDER PEER REVIEW