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A STUDY ON PRODUCTION AND MARKETING CONSTRAINTS OF CURRY LEAF CULTIVATION IN COIMBATORE DISTRICT

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ABSTRACT

Cultivation of curry leaf in Coimbatore provides significant level of income to the farmers. The study aims to find the problems in production and marketing constraints of curry leaf cultivation. The primary data required for the study were collected from the 239 selected respondents in Coimbatore district in order to analyse the problems in production and marketing constraints of curry leaf cultivation. To find out the problems in constraints Kendall's Ranking Coefficient Technique was used. Found that the pest diseases were the major problem faced by the farmers in production constraint, whereas, lack of information about the price and inability to predict prices of curry leaf ranks first among the marketing constraints faced by farmers

KEY WORDS: Cost, Returns, Benefit cost Return, IRR, and NPV.

INTRODUCTION

Curry leaves an inevitable part of spicing up dishes are not a part of mere garnishing. They are rich in medicinal properties and have even cosmetic uses. But from the age old days it is customary to pick up curry leaves from dishes and throw it out first before even tasting it. No curry in South India is complete without curry leaf. Indian cuisine experts, especially in South India made it a habit to include curry leaves in our daily diet. More than adding to the multi-hued look and spicy taste, there was definitely some other reason why the wise Indian ladies included curry leaf a necessary ingredient in all our dishes. Though it is customary to remove these deep green leaves from dishes we are truly unaware of its health benefits (Suman Singh et al., 2014).

India is popularly known as the "spice bowl of the world" for production of variety of

spices with superior quality, taste and fragrance. Out of 109 spices listed by ISO, India produces as many as 75 in its various agro climatic regions. Spices and condiments which can be broadly classified in to six groups based upon the plants used namely rhizomes and root spices, bark spices, leaf spices, flower spices, fruit spices and seed spices. Among that curry leaf comes under leaf spices.

Background and History of Curry Leaves (Murreyakoeningii L. Spreng)

Curry leaf (Murrayakoeningii L. Spreng) is a perennial leafy vegetable. It belongs to the family of Rutaceae. The curry leaf tree is native to India, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh and the Andaman Islands. Curry leaf is an aromatic pubescent shrub or small tree commonly known as curry leaf. It often forms undergrowth in forests throughout India and in Andaman Islands

(Anon,1962).Curry leaf tree are naturalized in forests and wasteland throughout the Indian subcontinent except in the higher parts of the Himalayas. From the Ravi river in Pakistan its distribution extends to east towards Assam in India and Chittagong in Bangladesh, and southwards to Tamil Nadu in India. The plant also found in the Tarai region of Uttar Pradesh, India is now widely found in the hills of Uttaranchal, Sikkim, Bengal, Assam, Central India, Western Ghats, Tamil Nadu, Maharastra, Karnataka and Kerala (Anon,1964; Chakravarti et al., 1964 & Krishna et al., 1948). It adorns every house hold of southern India and also cultivated in Burma, Ceylon China, Australia and the Pacific Islands (anon, 1962; Joseph and Peter, 1985).

Curry Leaf is grown in as many as all the states of India in every part of south, the plant is grown in India. On commercial basis, it is best grown in Tamil Nadu leaf farms and many other as well. The curry leaves are considered as a minor crop of spices. It was seen that 893 1.2 lakh kg of curry leaves were exported from India during the year 2014-15. Before the arrival of monsoon in May, planting of curry leaves is done mostly in the southern part of India. For the period of 15, months harvesting of the leaves is done after planting and yield of 100 kg leaves can be obtained from a tree each year.

Curry Leaves Cultivation in Tamil Nadu

Curry leaves are best grown in all parts of India but the major production of curry leaves and the exports of it are done in the Tamil Nadu states due to the presence of sufficient amount of climate conditions required for the growth of curry leaves. Other states include Utter Pradesh, Rajastan and Southern part of India. The best season for the cultivation of the curry leaves is during the onset of summer season usually between the month of April to May. It is now cultivated in large farms in India. Such a farm is seen in around Mettupalayamin Tamil Nadu in India. Indian curry leaves are considered the best in the world due to its fine aroma and flavour especially one that cultivated in Coimbatore district. The highest producers of is namely two blocks Karamadai, Periyanaikenpalayam. The highest area production in Karamadai was 22638.10 Tonnes, and in Periyanaikenpalayam it was 16265.93 Tonnes respectively.

Against the given background, the present study was undertaken to understand the production pattern, the constraints in production and marketing of curry leaf growers in Coimbatore district.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Fakayode et al (2011) assessed plantain production in Rivers State of Nigeria. They used gross margin analysis and regression analysis determine the farmers plantain production data.

Their study shows that the plantain farmers in the study area are aged and of poor literacy status. Land labour and plantain material (sucker) are under utilized in the production of plantain. Inadequate were reportedly the constraints to plantain production.

Ananya Borgohain (2013) analysed the area, production and productivity of Spices in Assam. The study is based upon secondary data collected from various publications and websites of director of Economics and statistics Government of India and CD department of Agriculture, Assam State. Karl Pearson's Coefficient of Correlation method is also used to analyse the area and production status of spices in Assam. Their results show that in the sphere of spices production, Assam occupies a very important position in the country. It is the highest ginger producing state in the country. India has been a traditional producer, consumer and exporter of spices. There are about 60 Of these spices. They also found that during the crop year 2010-2011, the country produced about 5351 thousand tons from 2940 thousand hectares of area under spices.

Job NdaNmadu and Philemon Lekwot Marcus, studied that the efficiency of ginger production in Nigeria. They used Cobb-Douglas Stochastic Frontier production function for this analysis. The results of their study revealed that ginger farmers cultivated 3.09 hectares of land on the average. This study indicate that ginger based enterprises are profitable in the study area. Their study also shows that ginger farmers should be encouraged to scaled down or additional quantity of other inputs should be employed. And they should use co-operative and farmers organization as well as other financial services effectively. Price fluctuation, unavailability of farm input, poor remunerative price and poor access to credit , are the major constraints faced by ginger farmers in the study area.

Janalin and Tripathi (2014)³ analysed the cost and returns of turmeric production. They found that the approximate yield of about 14.7q/ha of semi process (dried) turmeric. The share of variable cost is about 98% of the total cost. The total costs of Cultivation (cost c2) for the turmeric was estimated at 77,012 /ha. Whereas the net income was worked out to be 6,475/ha for fresh turmeric and 28,109/ha for dried turmeric It was also observed that a higher net income obtained when the farmers disposed to avoid distress sale. They also found that lack of knowledge about pest management is the major constraint faced by farmers in turmeric production.

STATEMENT OF THE RESEARCH PROBLEM

Limited investigations and studies have conducted related to this crop this was the main reason to conducting this study. Karamadai and

Perianaikenpalayam blocks in Coimbatore district have emerged at the most popular for curry leaf production because of best suited climate, soil, irrigation facilities, skill and intensive cultivation practices adopted by the farmers of this area was the reason of selecting area. The present paper is an analysis of the cost of production and method of sale of curry leaf in Coimbatore.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To identify the constraints in production and suggest measures for improvement.
2. To identify the constraints in marketing and suggest measures for improvement

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The present study was conducted in Karamadai, Periyanaikenpalayam block of Coimbatore District of Tamil Nadu. Multi stage sampling technique was used for the selection of samples in the present study. Out of 32 districts, Coimbatore district was selected for the study purposively since it contributes maximum to the acreage and production of curry leaf. Out of twelve blocks in Coimbatore district Karamadai and Periyanaikenpalayam were selected as they are largely known for highest acreage production (government of Tamil Nadu 2013-2014). Eight villages, belonging to Karamadai and Periyanaikenpalayam Blocks were randomly selected and after obtaining farmers list from village administrative officer it was decided to select 25percent of farmers randomly from each village. Thus the total came to 239 farmers and

they were interviewed by using a well structured interview schedule to collect the data.

This study was based on primary as well as secondary data. The secondary data were collected from the VAO office Vadavalli, curry leaf growers association. Primary data were collected with the help of a pre-tested interview schedule by face to face contact from the sample respondents. The information given was based on memory of the respondents. The on total land holdings, operational land on curry leaf, family size, educational level, cropping pattern, etc., were collected. The primary data from all the respondents were collected during the harvest period of 2014-2015. Kendal's coefficient technique was used to analyse the data.

CONSTRAINTS IN PRODUCTION OF CURRY LEAF CULTIVATION

An attempt was made to identify the problems faced by the farmers in the production and marketing of Curry leaf and the problems are presented in rank according to Kendall's ranking technique the problems faced by the farmers were collected and were given degree of severity as expressed by the respondents. The problems in production and marketing are presented in table 1 & 2.

There were four major problems in curry leaf cultivations stated by the sample farmers below in table 1.

Table-1:Problems in Production of Curry Leaf

Sl. No.	Items	Mean rank	Rank
1	Pest diseases	2.20	1
2	Non availability of credit	2.41	2
3	High cost of cultivation	2.57	3
4	Poor performance of variety	2.83	4

Source: Primary Data.

Lack of knowledge about pest management was the major problem which was ranked first. The second important problem faced by the sample farmers was the non-availability of credit. Curry leaf cultivation requires financial support from financial institutions and government agency for cultivation as it was found that farmers were using their own financial resources. High cost of cultivation ranked third, this includes high cost of

labour, pesticides, and fertilizers. And the fourth one is poor performance of variety which leads to poor performance in yielding.

CONSTRAINTS FACED BY THE PRODUCER IN MARKETING OF CURRY LEAF

There were five major problems faced by the curry leaf farmers ranked below in table 2.

Table-2: Problems Faced By Farmers in Marketing of Curry Leaf

Sl. No.	Items	Mean rank	Rank
1	Price	2.19	1
2	Lack of credit for the produce of distress sale	2.35	2
3	Market-More middlemen	2.61	3
4	High cost of labour for marketing functions	2.99	4
5	Physical	4.86	5

Source: Primary Data.

The price of curry leaf fluctuates from season to season within a period of four cuttings. According to the farmers the prices are non-remunerative and there is no regulated markets to market their product. And lack of credit for the produce of distress sale. There is more middlemen interference in curry leaf marketing. The absence of grading facilities made it difficult for the farmers to sell the produce according to its quality aspects. It was observed that the farmers have to incur high cost of labour for cutting the leaves for marketing. Further, farmers were of the opinion that long distance of market and high cost of transport facilities were their major problems.

MAJOR FINDINGS

1. Lack of knowledge about pest management was the major problem which was ranked first. The second important problem faced by the sample farmers was the non-availability of credit. It was found that farmers were using their own financial resources.
2. High cost of cultivation ranked third, this includes high cost of labour, pesticides, and fertilizers. And the fourth one is poor performance of variety which leads to poor performance in yielding.
3. According to the farmers the prices are non-remunerative and there is no regulated markets to market their product.
4. The absence of grading facilities made it difficult for the farmers to sell the produce according to its quality aspects.
5. It was observed that the farmers have to incur high cost of labour for cutting the leaves for marketing. Further, farmers were of the opinion that long distance of market and high cost of transport facilities were their major problems.

SUGGESTIONS

1. The output of curry leaf much depends upon the maintenance of curry leaf plants. The timely application of water, manure, pesticides and fertilizers are required for higher output. Weeding is an important maintenance in curry leaf cultivation.

2. The cost of the fertilizers and pesticides is more as the farmer buy them from private traders. The Government should come forward to supply them through agricultural co-operative organisations either as subsidies or at reasonable price.
3. The official of the horticultural department of the taluk levels should visit the farms and give their suggestions to the problem regarding the availability of hybrid saplings, pest management, and water management, use of manures and fertilisers and increased production.
4. The government should take steps to setting up of branches of regulated market in the block level markets could help to reduce the fluctuation in price and reduce middlemen interference.
5. Training on pest control and market oriented production is required to help the farmers tackle their problem
6. The curry leaf is seriously affected by various diseases. Therefore, a permanent research station may be set up to protect the curry leaf from disease.

CONCLUSION

The Findings obtained from the study of the constraints in production and marketing from curry leaf production revealed that the pest diseases was the major problem in production constraints. And following that the non- availability of credit, high cost of cultivation, poor performance of variety. In marketing constraint, lack of information about the price and inability to predict prices, more middlemen and high cost of labour.

The government should give financial support to farmers and take steps to reduce middleman interference. Co-operative marketing could solve extent and they could also Act as agents of regulated market. The government should take & an active role not only in disseminating farm technologies but also import knowledge of entrepreneurship to help the farmer find out their way in difficult circumstances.

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