

MARKETING OF HORTICULTURAL PRODUCE IN MANIPUR

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Abstract

Horticulture is the science and art of gardening and of cultivating fruits, vegetables, flowers etc.. Manipur has highly suitable agro – climatic conditions for a wide variety of horticultural crops especially in the foothills, mild hill slopes and along the river banks. Various potential horticultural crops of Manipur are Pineapple, Khasi Mandarin, Passion fruit, Kachia Lemon, Banana, Papaya, Tomato, brinjal, chilli, capsicum, Allium hookeri (Maroi Nakopi), Ginger, turmeric, King Chilli, Coriander, Onion, Garlic, and many types of flowers etc. The varied climate conditions and its topography with average temperature of 15.40C to 25.0C, rainfall of 161.62cm, and an altitude of about 750 meters in the valley to about 3000 meters in the hills and mountain peaks. Manipur favors for the cultivation of all horticulture plants. With the changes of the environmental process, herbal products are in great demand as a medicinal plant which solely depends on the development of Horticulture cultivation. Many of the foods that share the same medicinal properties reap the benefits, balance variety and moderation of life is the key to success from horticulture.

Marketing of horticultural produce in Manipur has not been systematically organized. The lion's share of the consumers' rupee goes to the pockets of innumerable middlemen working in between the producer and the ultimate consumer. The Horticulturists of Manipur are generally the persons of small means. Their holdings are small and scattered. As such, they have got very

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little quantity of horticultural produce available individually as a marketable surplus to be disposed off. Obviously it becomes uneconomical to carry the small quantity of produce to the assembling markets located at distant places where middlemen operate at different stages.

The present study highlights the important issues of marketing the horticultural produce. It also covers the main sectors of marketing systems which remain unorganized that ultimately uplift the economic development of the State in particular and country in general.

Key Words: Environmental, horticulturists, assembling, moderation, unorganized.

Agriculture is the dominant occupation of the people of Manipur. It is not only the main source of livelihood of the overwhelming majority, but also a tradition and a way of life that moulds the socio- economic status of the people. More than half (52.2 percent) of the total working population of the state are directly dependent on agriculture for their livelihood. Of the total working population of 9, 45,213 persons 2, 48,837 persons or 26.3 percent in the valley and 2, 44,498 persons or 25.9 percent in the hills are agricultural workers. In the state is a large section of the population whose primary occupation is not agriculture but pursue agriculture as secondary occupation. This shows that agriculture has been the most important occupation of the people and provides almost the entire food requirement of the people. This sector also provides raw materials for limited agro- based industries.

Horticulture is the science and art of gardening and of cultivating fruits, vegetables, flowers etc. The varied climatic conditions and its topography with average temperature of 15.40C to 250C, rainfall of 161.62cm, and an altitude of about 750 meters in the valley to about 3000 meters in the hills and mountain peaks. Manipur favours for the cultivation of all horticulture crops. The hills of the state are well defined for temperate fruits and the valley for sub-tropical fruits. Various potential horticultural crops of Manipur are Pineapple, Khasi Mandarin, Passion fruit, Kachia Lemon, Banana, Papaya, Tomato, brinjal, chilli, capsicum, Allium hookeri (Maroi Nakopi), Ginger, turmeric, King Chilli, Coriander, Onion, Garlic, and many types of flowers etc. With the changes of the environmental process, herbal products are in great demand as a medicinal plant which solely depends on the development of Horticulture

cultivation. Many of the foods that share the same medicinal properties reap the benefits, balance variety and moderation of life is the key to success from horticulture.

Objectives of the study

1. The present study will discuss the production process and problems faced by the producers.
2. The study will show pricing and distribution systems used in horticultural marketing.
3. It also defines the issues relating to the promotion of horticultural produces in Manipur.
4. The study will suggest measures for improvement in the overall marketing of horticultural produces.

Review of Literature

Yadav D.S. and Yadav R.K. (2007) in their book “Post harvest handling and management of Horticultural crops in North-Eastern region” have mentioned that the horticultural practice in this region are largely limited to backyard farm activities and are characterized by lack of technical know-how, low level of productivity, improper post harvest management and poor marketing.

Singh V.B and Akali K.(2006) in their book “Horticulture for sustainable income & environmental protection” state that horticulturists being small mean persons could not carry on marketing activities and had to sell the products to the middlemen and hence benefits goes directly to the middlemen.

Prakash N., Roy, S.S., Singh, I.M and Ngachan S.V (2011) in their book “Post harvest management and value addition of horticultural crops in north eastern India with special reference to Manipur” have suggested that mere emphasizing quantitative increase will not carry meaning unless appropriate post harvest management practices like marketing, storage etc. are devised and practiced.

Sharangi, A.B. and Acharya, S.K (2008) in their book “Quality Management in Horticulture” have pointed out that a market plan for value-added horticulture should be a comprehensive statement on the basic components of the target markets comprising of market segments, market networks, market intelligence and market behavior.

Research Methodology

The study is based on Secondary data. The data here are collected from the Department of Horticulture and Soil Conservation Government of Manipur, Library ICAR and Library CAU. The period of study covers 8 years from 2002 to 2010.

Production and Area under Fruits & Vegetables:

At present, the reliable estimates of the total acreage of the various fruits and vegetables are not available for the state. The following table shows a rough estimate on data collected in the Crop Estimation Survey conducted by the Directorate of Economics & Statistics

Table 1 Area under horticultural crops in Manipur during 2002-03 to 2008-09(P)

(Area in '000hectares)

Name of the crop	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09
Pineapple	1.03	0.73	1.45	0.04	0.59	1.96	0.32
Orange	1.13	1.71	1.74	1.69	3.40	4.98	4.94
Lemon	0.07	0.36	0.31	0.34	0.10	0.03	0.54
Papaya	0.15	0.07	0.17	0.00	-	0.05	0.09
Arum	7.22	9.18	9.33	9.94	9.48	9.47	6.72
Banana	3.88	4.14	3.87	4.42	4.20	9.36	9.91
Passion fruit	-	0.37	0.39	1.77	1.57	1.47	1.19
Bean	2.29	2.75	3.29	3.62	5.01	4.97	5.54
Cabbage	3.22	6.63	2.42	3.20	2.75	4.11	4.45
Cauliflower	0.59	0.76	0.60	1.46	0.57	0.18	0.56
Pea	1.89	1.23	2.14	1.87	1.55	1.64	2.39
Potato	4.22	4.98	2.96	4.87	2.87	1.95	4.14

Nil

(P): Provisional

Source: Directorate of Economics & Statistics, Govt. of Manipur.

The above table shows that in the year 2007-08, the production of banana is 9.36 hectares but it is increasing in the year 2008-09. In case of bean, the production has been increasing 5.54 hectares in 2008-09 as against the production in 2007-08 is 4.97. Again in the year 2007-08 the production of pea is 1.64 hectares but the production of pea in the year 2008-09 is 2.39 there is increasing in production. The cultivation of horticulture crops is by and large practiced as non-commercial enterprise by farmers in their homestead and orchard; it hardly helps in development

of proper market of horticulture crops. But in recent years, cultivation of horticulture crops like pineapple, potato and vegetables are being developed on commercial scale in many places of the state.

Table 2
Horticultural produce in Manipur (2001 - 2010)
(Million Tones)

Year	Fruits	Vegetables	Spices
2000 - 01	118672	46932	37563
2001 - 02	119173	47162	37985
2002 - 03	134362	47208	47837
2003 - 04	172247	57018	52790
2004 - 05	193231	62709	56593
2005 - 06	214232	75700	74102
2006 - 07	229124	91767	68389
2007 - 08	279060	108821	81079
2008 - 09	348489	174262	96431
2009 - 10	276416	213045	104095

Source: Department of Horticulture and Soil Conservation, Govt. of Manipur.

Table 2 shows there is increase in the production of horticultural produce in all the years of the study except a decrease in the production of fruits in the year 2009 – 10. It shows that horticultural crops are favorable in the soils of Manipur.

Pricing and distribution system

Promotion of horticultural produce in Manipur has not been systematically organized. The lion's share of the consumers' rupee goes to the pockets of innumerable middlemen working in between the producer and the ultimate consumer. The Horticulturists of Manipur are generally the persons of small means. Their holdings are small and scattered. As such, they have got very little quantity of horticultural produce available individually as a marketable surplus to be disposed off. Obviously it becomes uneconomical to carry the small quantity of produce to the assembling markets located at distant places where middlemen operate at different stages.

In horticultural farming, where prices are rarely regulated, financial viability depends as much upon business and marketing skills as on the farmer's technical expertise. It is high-value

crops which are often a crucial component of viable small farms. This manual is a response to that growing farmer's need for commercial and marketing knowledge.

The channels through which fruit and vegetables move from grower to consumer varies widely as the marketing pattern is governed by the local traditions. The channel along which the largest volume of the produce move is pre-harvest contractors, commission agents and distributors. The distributions are the merchants dealing with the wholesale trade in the hinterland. The forwarding agents support the wholesalers and the exporters in supplying the produce from the growers.

Problems of Horticultural Marketing

The success of horticultural marketing is not merely dependent on the efficient use of the factors of production but it is also greatly dependent on the proper and effective marketing of horticultural produce. It is not possible for the farmers to complete the whole process of production and marketing efficiently because of the fact that the farmers know little about marketing and generally having poor quality of management. As a result, they have to face many problems as to marketing of their horticultural produce. The various problems and challenges for marketing of horticultural produce are explained in the paragraphs that follow.

1. Lack of Organization among Farmers

There is an utter lack of any collective organization among the farmers. Moreover, the farmers come to the weekly markets having no markets information. They are ignorant and deal individually. On the contrary, the buyers of horticultural produce are well organized and possess strong bargaining capacity over the unorganized framers. As a result, the farmers are, therefore, capable of being easily deprived of and get much lower price to what it would actually be.

2. Forced Sales

'Producers in general sell their produce at an unfavourable place and at unfavourable time and usually they get very unfavourable terms.' The existing position of horticultural marketing could be assessed in the light of these three phrases, viz. unfavourable place, unfavourable time and unfavourable terms. It would be pertinent to note that the farmers in general and small farmers in particular, are forced to sell their produce soon after harvesting crops in a period when there is glut in the market due to poverty, lack of holding capacity and the need for finance. As a

result, price offered to them is very low. Nevertheless, farmers have to borrow heavily for growing crops, often mortgage crops well in advance so that the sale is a mere formality which takes place in the field soon after harvesting crops.

3. Presence of Intermediaries

The farmers could never have all produce to sell. A large portion of horticultural produce is utilized for their family consumption. Again, another considerable portion is generally pledged to the village Mahajans (i.e. money-lenders) who provide them loans for cultivation as well as sustenance for their families for a good part of the year. As a result, saleable produce in their hands is far lower than actual output. Moreover, there are too many intermediaries between the farmers and the final consumers. The farmers sell their produce to the village brokers who sell it to the village wholesalers who again sell it to the city wholesalers. The city wholesalers sell it to the retailers and the retailers to the final consumers. Therefore, there is a long distance between the farmers and the final consumers. Consequently, although, the final consumers have to pay high price for the produce but only a small portion for it goes to the pocket of the farmers, the greater portion is going to the pockets of the intermediaries in various proportions.

4. Lack of Financial Assistance

To carry on horticultural operation, the farmers have to discharge financial obligations. They also have to maintain livelihood. Moreover, holding capacity of the farmers, particularly of small farmers is very low. In order to meet financial needs, almost all the farmers bring their produce together immediately after harvesting the crops, the law of demand and supply would naturally operate. Hence, the farmers would get depressed price which is very lower than fair price. To escape the farmers from getting low prices and to carry on horticultural operations and to maintain their livelihood, financial assistance is, therefore, badly needed.

5. Inadequacy of Institutional Marketing

The tradition of Manipur horticultural marketing is that the farmers, particularly of small farmers sell their produce on individually basis. The farmers, in fact, possess weak bargaining capacity against the intermediaries who have strong bargaining and enough intuitive capacity. The farmers are, however, not organized and usually come to the markets individually having no clear perception as to the prices of agricultural produce. On the contrary, buyers of horticultural produce are well organized, well aware and possess strong bargaining capacity. They virtually

dictate over the prices of agricultural produce. Consequently, farmers suffer losses. The arrangement of institutional agricultural marketing is inadequate.

Suggestions and Conclusion

The horticultural marketing helps in accelerating the pace of economic development by stimulating demand and production. Due to the green revolution, Manipur is able to feed its large population and minimize starvation. The development of high yielding seeds, use of chemical fertilizers, use of plant protection methods and use of modern agricultural implementations are reasonable in increasing food production and generate large marketable surplus's good marketing system only can guarantee the tempo of development and good prices to farmers for their produce with large agro-resources. The farmers have shifted from traditional methods to modern farmings. The development of agricultural economy has led to increase in demands for related products. Agricultural marketing helps in the development and specialization of crops which yield large profits. A good marketing system helps in giving price signals and development of non- agricultural sectors in the economy, agricultural production and marketing must develop hand in hand. They are partners in progress.

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