OVERCOMING MARKETING PROBLEMS OF HORTICULTURAL PRODUCES IN MANIPUR.

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ABSTRACT

India being an agrarian economy, agriculture is the main source of income for many of its population. Consequently Manipur a hilly state in the North Easter region of the country is a favorable location for many types of horticultural products. Manipur has been bestowed with a wide range of climate and physiographical conditions and provides ideal conditions for growing various types of horticultural crops. It lies between 95⁰59'E to 94⁰45'E longitude and 23⁰50'N to 25⁰41'N latitude. The total geographical area of the State is 22,327 sq.km. out of which forest area occupied about 67.3 percent, nine tenths of the total area of Manipur is hilly and valley plains is located at the central portion of Manipur. The average altitude ranges from 790 – 182 m from MSL. The agro climatic condition, rainfall, and the temperature of the state makes horticulture flourish in this short span of time. With the available production in the state it is high time for the farmers to have a better knowledge of management and marketing of the products to increase their per capita income which ultimately will lead the economic development of the state.

The present paper highlights the overall production of horticultural products in the country in general and in Manipur in particular. It will also suggest better marketing strategy for the upliftment of the available horticultural produce in the state. It will also suggest better social condition which can help the horticulturist grow in the state.

Key words: Horticulture, Horticulturist, Horticultural, production.

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INTRODUCTION:

With the technological development in the agricultural field, India has made rapid stride in horticulture too along with increased food grain production. The changing life style and food habit, the importance of cereals, fruits and vegetables in the human diet is being increasingly realized. Today our country has emerged as the second largest producer of fruit and vegetables in the world. It has been noticed that the marketing facilities for horticultural crops are not that adequate as compare with other agricultural commodities. The changing world has brought a new dimension in bringing the outright situation for its rectification in the sense of development and sustainability from the former traditional pattern of living and recognizes the needful diversification of growing system of crops. The socio economic condition need to gain by identifying the possible way to produce higher output with the available limited mechanisms.

A major emphasis was laid by the Government of India in achieving self sufficiency in food production immediately after attaining independence in 1947. The efforts successfully brought Green Revolution in the late Sixties and early Seventies. It is true that the project brought positive impact to some states but not to the entire nation. Green Revolution is a success story of some states of India viz., Punjab, Haryana, Maharashtra etc., but its impact is hardly seen in North Easter Region except excessive use of fertilizers. The North Eastern Region particularly, in the hilly areas continues to practice with the primitive method of cultivation and tools. The traditional practice of jhum cultivation caused a devastation to the economy by excessive deforestation is indeed enormous. Deforestation is directly responsible for greater frequency and intensity of flood, soil erosion, heavy siltation of dams built at enormous expense and change in climatic condition, continuing deforestation, therefore, has brought us to face with a major ecological and socio-economic problems.

Manipur is one of the most economically backward states of the North Eastern Region (NER) of India. Geographical location of the state makes more complicated to push her economic development. The economy of the state is mainly agrarian and 52.19 percent of the total working force is engaged as cultivator and agricultural labourer. The Net State Domestic Product (NSDP) at constant (2004-05) prices for the year 2009-10 is placed at Rs. 6,066 crores, which is higher than that of the preceding year by about 9.06 percent. The per capita income at
constant (2004 - 05) prices for the year 2009 – 10 is estimated at Rs.22,296 which is higher than that of the preceding year by about 7.03 percent. Further the Gross State Domestic Product (GSDP) of Manipur for 2009 – 10 at current prices is estimated to be Rs. 8,638 crores as against Rs. 7,649 crores for the year 2008 – 09 registering an increase of 12.93 percent. Agriculture is the mainstay of most of the people of Manipur in the North Eastern Region of India. Agricultural and allied activities accounts for about 23.35 of the total Net State Domestic Product of the state (NEHR, 2007).

Manipur is a small state with an area of 22,327 sq. km., which constitutes 0.7 percent of the India Union according to 2001 census. The population of Manipur as per final result of 2011 census was 27.22 Lakhs. The density of population of Manipur as per 2011 census was 122 persons per sq. km. as against 103 persons per sq.km. in 2001 census. The sex ratio for the state as a whole has improved from 947 females per 1000 males in 2001 to 987 females per 1000 males in 2011. The population growth rate of Manipur is found to be higher than that of India. The population growth rate of Manipur in 2011 is 18.65 percent as against 24.86 percent in 2001 and 29.29 percent in 1991. While the population growth rate of India in 2011 is 17.65 percent as against 21.56 percent in 2001 and 23.85 percent in 1991 (Census, 2011).

Manipur has been bestowed with a wide range of climate and physiolographical conditions and provides ideal conditions for growing various types of horticultural crops. It lies between 95°59’E to 94°45’E longitude and 23°50’N to 25°41’N latitude. The total geographical area of the State is 22,327 sq.km. out of which forest area occupied about 67.3 percent, nine tenths of the total area of Manipur is hilly and valley plains is located at the central portion of Manipur. The average altitude ranges from 790 – 182 m from MSL. The average temperature, rainfall per annum and sunshine hour per day are 20.1°C, 124.71cm and 6.19 hours respectively (Jayalaxmi, 2011).

Over the past few decades the productions and marketing of horticultural crops in this state has become increasing important as physical infrastructure and experience in the production of these crops has improved continuously. Horticulture product is the answer for future sustainable production of foods for Manipur. Horticulture encompasses a wide range of crops, fruits, vegetables, flowers, spices, aromatic and medicinal plants as well as plantation crops. In
order to meet the requirement of cereals, fruits and vegetables of the ever increasing population development of the need based cropping system is the need of the hour (Meitei, 2001). With reflection of the geo-climatic condition and the cultural inclination; cropping pattern such as horticultural crops grown in association with field crops in the same piece of land shows high degree of sustainability in present day scenario of crop production system. Cropping pattern should be focused on the sustainable system, technical feasibility and on economic viability.

LITERATURE REVIEW:

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.

METHODOLOGY:
The study is based on Secondary data. The data here are collected from the Department of Horticulture and Soil Conservation Government of Manipur, Indian Horticulture database 2010, Library ICAR and Library CAU. The period of study covers 10 years from 2001 to 2010.

OBJECTIVES

1. This paper will highlight the production of horticultural products in the country in general and in Manipur in particular.
2. The study will cite the problems of marketing horticultural produce in Manipur.
3. The present study will highlight the strategy for better marketing of horticultural produce in Manipur.

HORTICULTURAL PRODUCTION; AN OVERVIEW

Table No. - 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Fruits</th>
<th>Vegetables</th>
<th>Flowers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001 - 2002</td>
<td>4010</td>
<td>43001</td>
<td>6156</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002 – 2003</td>
<td>3788</td>
<td>45203</td>
<td>6092</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003 – 2004</td>
<td>4661</td>
<td>45942</td>
<td>6082</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004 – 2005</td>
<td>5049</td>
<td>50867</td>
<td>6744</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005 – 2006</td>
<td>5324</td>
<td>55356</td>
<td>7213</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006 – 2007</td>
<td>5554</td>
<td>59563</td>
<td>7581</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007 – 2008</td>
<td>5857</td>
<td>65587</td>
<td>7848</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008 – 2009</td>
<td>6101</td>
<td>68466</td>
<td>7981</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009 – 2010</td>
<td>6329</td>
<td>71516</td>
<td>7985</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Indian Horticulture Database (2010), National Horticultural Board, Department of Agriculture & Cooperation, Government of India.

A = Area (in 000’ Hectares)       P = Production (in 000’ Million Tones)
Table No. -1 show that the production of all the horticultural products viz. fruits, vegetables and flowers are increasing from the base year till then. It shows that Horticulturist are applying better techniques of production, better seeds and better harvesting techniques.

**Figure - 1**

The above figure no. - 1 shows that the percentage contribution of fruits in the total production is increased from 32.53 in 2001-2002 to 34.67 in 2009 – 2010 and flowers from 0.40 in 2001 – 2002 to 0.49 in 2009 - 2010, whereas that of the vegetables is decreased from 67.07 in 2001 – 2002 to 64.83 in 2009 – 2010.
Table No.- 2
Horticultural produce in Manipur (2001 - 2010)
(Million Tones)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Fruits</th>
<th>Vegetables</th>
<th>Spices</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2000 - 2001</td>
<td>118672</td>
<td>46932</td>
<td>37563</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001 - 2002</td>
<td>119173</td>
<td>47162</td>
<td>37985</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002 - 2003</td>
<td>134362</td>
<td>47208</td>
<td>47837</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2003 - 2004</td>
<td>172247</td>
<td>57018</td>
<td>52790</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2004 - 2005</td>
<td>193231</td>
<td>62709</td>
<td>56593</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005 - 2006</td>
<td>214232</td>
<td>75700</td>
<td>74102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006 - 2007</td>
<td>229124</td>
<td>91767</td>
<td>68389</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007 - 2008</td>
<td>279060</td>
<td>108821</td>
<td>81079</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008 - 2009</td>
<td>348489</td>
<td>174262</td>
<td>96431</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009 - 2010</td>
<td>276416</td>
<td>213045</td>
<td>104095</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Department of Horticulture and Soil Conservation, Govt. of Manipur, 2011.

Table No. - 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.

Figure: 2

The above figure No. 2 shows that the percentage production of fruits is decreased from 58.4 in 2000 – 2001 to 46.6 in 2009 – 2010 and spices from 18.5 in 2000 – 2001 to 17.5 in 2009.
The production of vegetables is increased from 23.1 in 2000 – 2001 to 35.9 in 2009 – 2010.

Table No. - 3

Area under some fruits and vegetables in Manipur during 2001-02 to 2009-10:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pineapple</td>
<td>0.45</td>
<td>1.03</td>
<td>0.73</td>
<td>1.45</td>
<td>0.04</td>
<td>0.59</td>
<td>1.96</td>
<td>0.32</td>
<td>0.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orange</td>
<td>2.11</td>
<td>1.13</td>
<td>1.71</td>
<td>1.74</td>
<td>1.69</td>
<td>3.40</td>
<td>4.98</td>
<td>4.94</td>
<td>4.59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lemon</td>
<td>0.92</td>
<td>0.07</td>
<td>0.36</td>
<td>0.31</td>
<td>0.34</td>
<td>0.10</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>0.54</td>
<td>````0.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Papaya</td>
<td>0.02</td>
<td>0.15</td>
<td>0.07</td>
<td>0.17</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0.05</td>
<td>0.09</td>
<td>0.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Banana</td>
<td>4.42</td>
<td>3.88</td>
<td>4.14</td>
<td>3.87</td>
<td>4.42</td>
<td>4.20</td>
<td>9.36</td>
<td>7.51</td>
<td>8.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Passion fruits</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>0.37</td>
<td>0.39</td>
<td>1.77</td>
<td>1.57</td>
<td>1.47</td>
<td>1.19</td>
<td>1.19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bean</td>
<td>1.66</td>
<td>2.29</td>
<td>2.75</td>
<td>3.29</td>
<td>3.62</td>
<td>5.01</td>
<td>4.97</td>
<td>5.54</td>
<td>6.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cabbage</td>
<td>2.71</td>
<td>3.22</td>
<td>6.63</td>
<td>2.42</td>
<td>3.20</td>
<td>2.75</td>
<td>4.11</td>
<td>4.45</td>
<td>5.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cauliflower</td>
<td>0.40</td>
<td>0.59</td>
<td>0.76</td>
<td>0.60</td>
<td>1.46</td>
<td>0.57</td>
<td>0.18</td>
<td>0.56</td>
<td>1.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pea</td>
<td>2.44</td>
<td>1.82</td>
<td>1.23</td>
<td>2.14</td>
<td>1.87</td>
<td>1.55</td>
<td>1.64</td>
<td>2.67</td>
<td>3.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Potato</td>
<td>3.04</td>
<td>4.22</td>
<td>4.98</td>
<td>2.96</td>
<td>4.87</td>
<td>2.87</td>
<td>1.95</td>
<td>3.34</td>
<td>5.87</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Nil

Source: Directorate of Economics & Statistics, Govt. of Manipur. 2010-11.

Table No. – 3 indicate that the production of almost all the horticultural products in discussion is increased from the base year to the end year of discussion. It proves that Manipur is favorably increasing the production of the horticultural products and most of the farmers are looking forward to sustainable production of horticultural crops.

PROBLEMS IN MARKETING HORTICULTURAL PRODUCES IN MANIPUR

Marketing of horticultural produce in Manipur has not been scientifically 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 spread. 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. Under the prevailing practice in the state farm produce is collected from the producers in the interior village and are brought to a central point, which is the assembling centre, by the womenfolk.

The transport that gives “place utility” to a farm product is one of the main problems in Manipur. As motor able roads do not properly attach most of the production areas, the farmers find it difficult to bring their produce to the principal and terminal markets for sale and thus deprive themselves of remunerative prices. In some interior areas, there is no road at all and even bullock carts as a means of transport for bringing farm products to the assembling centers cannot be used. Consequently the farmers have to sell their commodities at a lower and uneconomical price to the itinerant traders at their farm itself. Road transport is the only means of transport for farm products to distant places as there is no rail link in the state. During rainy and few months of post monsoon season water transport by boat is also used in some places. In the monsoon season due to bad road conditions and tear of landslides, the transport charges are very high. Again the cost of transport by road is not uniform as it varies according to the condition of the roads. Inadequate transport facility causes glut in the producing area and security in consuming centers at times affecting both the producer for receiving in lower price and the consumer due to irregular supply and high retail price.

So far there is neither any private nor corporate body to spread market information for the benefit of the producers and consumers. As such the farmers who are in the villages have no chance to know the prevailing prices at district and state level markets. However, despite this positive natural conditions, 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.

Mentioned here may be some of the marketing problems faced by the horticultural products as follows
1. Lack of organization among farmers.
2. Forced sales.
3. Presence of intermediaries.
4. Lack of financial assistance.
5. Inadequacy of institutional marketing.
6. Weak bargaining power.
7. Lack of infrastructure development.

SUGGESTION FOR BETTER MARKETING STRATEGY

The study has proved that horticultural production is favorable in India in general and in Manipur in particular. It is the right time to sort out better strategies of marketing practices to the farmers in order to have the maximum benefit of the consumers’ rupee. In order to have a right marketing strategy a horticulturist should have the following in mind:

a) Supply of produce:
   Supply of the product should be made adequate by manipulating both production and transport factors to level and extend the supply.

b) Transport to other markets:
   Under supply and over supply should be balanced by transporting the produce between districts with surplus and scarcity.

c) Changing volume of production:
   The growers should try to increase the production volume in the area if the products are highly demanded and is under supplied.

d) Seasonal supply:
   Farmers should try to extend the period of supply by applying pre harvest and post harvest manipulations which can lengthen the production period and marketing period.

e) Market Information:
   The grower must have the idea of the information relating to the product. They must access the accurate, adequate and timely information on all aspects of the commodities being dealt with.

f) Price of the product:
Market price is the most important information required by the producer. Data relating to the price of the product at the farm gate, assembly markets, central wholesale markets and retail outlets need to be known by the producers.

Above all these, the horticulturist need to be provided with better training facilities regarding the production of the product and post harvest management of it. The transportation facilities need to be strengthened for transporting horticultural products to the consuming markets so as to take the benefit of higher prices in these markets. The state government should develop a regulated market and should also fix reasonable and remunerative prices for the products. The storage facilities need to be created which suits all types of horticultural products. Bands, blockades, strikes, curfew etc. hinders business so the Government as well as the private organization should try to avoid such kind of unwanted situations as far as possible.

CONCLUSION

Most of the growers/horticulturists are illiterate and unaware of the best practices and solutions. And latest technology cannot be imposed on them immediately. So the authorities should come forward for their enlightenment and should not simply leave them out as their problem. Also the farmers of small smaller holdings should make a collective effort to pull together their produces and market them to achieve economies of scale to some extent. Even if the technology is growing and brings change, capacity to bridge the gap between scientific knowhow and field level is inadequate in relation to the challenges faced by the farmers. So a pragmatic solution needs to be devised. Government should try to development of infrastructure as it is the backbone for developing the marketing procedure.

The production of horticultural produce in the state is increasing by the passage of time. With the increase in production it is the right time for the farmers to have more and more knowledge of marketing and management of the products. The Government of the state should plan and organize various activities which will lead to the growth of the economic condition of the growers which ultimately bring the economic growth in the state.
REFERENCES


