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Research Paper

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MARKETING OF ORIENTAL ONION AND ITS CONSTRAINTS IN KOHIMA DISTRICT OF NAGALAND

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ABSTRACT

The present study was conducted in Kohima district covering two blocks namely, Northern and Southern block. Multi stage sampling was adopted for the selection of sample farmers. The study was comprised of 78 oriental onion farmers. Three villages were selected from each block and 13 farmers were randomly selected from each village. The selected farmers were classified into three groups namely, Group I marginal (less than 1ha), Group II small (1.01-2ha) and Group III medium (2.01-4ha) respectively based on their area of land holding. Only one type of marketing channel was identified namely, Producer – Consumer (Channel I) through which the farmers marketed 100 percent of their produce. Marketing cost was ₹ 10.73 per kg having marketing efficiency of 8.32. Producer's share in consumer's rupee was estimated to be 89.27 percent. In marketing of oriental onion poor marketing facility, lack of market information, poor transportation, lack of storage facility, etc. were some constraints faced by the oriental onion growers. To mitigate marketing problems, policy should be towards providing required infrastructures and facilities to the farmers to enable them to sell their produce.

KEY WORDS: *Oriental onion, marketing channel, marketing efficiency, constraints*

INTRODUCTION

Oriental onion (*Allium chinense*) is a perennial hardy plant. Oriental onion is being cultivated mainly in Angami villages in Kohima district of Nagaland on commercial basis and is locally known as '*Khuovie*' which is a local delicacy. It is an evergreen, perennial herb. The bulb divides and forms a cluster of sprouting shoots which can divide again and finally produce new bulbs.

Oriental onion has a mild onion flavour, though milder and more subtle, their distinctive smell and taste is derived from a volatile oil, rich in sulphur common to the onion family. As it is mild onion like flavour, most of the farmers use this crop as a substitute for onions during its peak season. The crop is cultivated both in terrace fields as well as jhum areas in January and February and harvested in June and July. It is also quite unique and common amongst the farmers that at the time of harvest, due to the strong smell of oriental onion, some of the farmers fall ill, suffering from high temperature as a result of close contact with the crop in large quantities for longer duration.

The production of oriental onion in Nagaland needs to be marketed efficiently. Sangtam *et al.* (2008) also reported that the study of marketing cost is important as they reveal price structure and the efficiency of marketing system. This study also compares the price paid by the consumers and the price received by the

producers. Singh *et al.* (2016) also reported that marketing plays an important role to stimulate production and consumption and accelerates the pace of economic development.

METHODOLOGY

The study was conducted in Kohima district covering two blocks namely, Northern and Southern block, during 2014-15. Multi stage sampling was adopted for the selection of the sample farmers. Three villages were selected from each block and 13 farmers were randomly selected from each village. The study was comprised of 78 oriental onion farmers. The selected farmers were then classified into three groups namely, Group I, marginal (less than 1ha), Group II, small (1.01-2ha) and Group III, medium (2.01-4ha) respectively based on their area of land holding. The study was based on primary data which were collected from oriental onion growers through personal interview method with the help of pre-tested schedules.

The marketing channel for oriental onion was identified based on the growers directly involved in the process from production to the ultimate consumer. The efficiency of marketing channel was calculated through Shepherd's formula. Marketing cost was calculated by estimating the cost incurred in the process of marketing of oriental onion. The marketing cost constituted the cost incurred after harvesting of oriental onion till it reached the consumers. The difference between the price paid by the consumers and the price received by the producers also calculated. To examine the efficiency of the marketing system, producer's share in consumer's rupee was calculated.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Distribution of land holding of the farmers

Table 1 represented the total land holding of the sample farmers. The table indicated that among the marginal, small and medium groups of farmer, the average size of operational holding was observed to be 0.73 ha, 1.6 ha and 3.3 ha respectively. The aggregate average size of land holding for all groups of farmer was 2.14 ha. The total land owned by sample farmers was found to be 8.8 ha for marginal farmers, 57.5 ha for small farmers and 102.4 ha for medium farmers. There was cent percent owned land across all size groups of farmer.

Table 1. Distribution of farmers according to land holding across various size groups (ha)

Group size	No. of households	Total land	Owned land	Average
Marginal	11	8.8 (5.22)	8.8 (5.22)	0.73
Small	36	57.5 (34.08)	57.5 (34.08)	1.6
Medium	31	102.4 (60.7)	102.4 (60.7)	3.3
Total	78	168.7 (100)	168.7 (100)	2.14

(Figures in parentheses indicate percentage to the total) (Field Survey: Solo, 2016)

Area and production

Table 2 depicted the total area under oriental onion production across various size groups was 3.64 ha where the total average area under oriental onion was 0.129 ha. The production of oriental onion was found the highest in medium at 3100 kgs, followed by small at 1590 kgs and marginal with 168 kgs.

Table 2. Area and production of oriental onion across various size groups

Farm size group	Area under oriental onion (ha)	Production (kg)	Average area under oriental onion (ha)	Per ha yield (kg)
Marginal	0.3	168	0.025	560
Small	1.32	1590	0.037	1204.5
Medium	2.02	3100	0.065	1534.7
Total	3.64	4858	0.129	3299.2

(Field Survey: Solo, 2016)

Marketing pattern

Table 3 indicated the marketing pattern followed by the oriental onion growers. It is evident from the table that only one channel was identified where farmers of all groups sold their produce through this channel, which is Producer-Consumer (Channel I). Through this channel, the farmers marketed 100 percent of their produce as the channel benefited them maximum profit by avoiding the hassle of paying extra commission to retailers or middlemen.

Table 3. Marketing pattern of oriental onion farmers according to various size groups

Channel I	Marginal		Small		Medium		Total	
	Qty (kg)	%	Qty (kg)	%	Qty (kg)	%	Qty (kg)	%
Producer - Consumer	168	100	1590	100	3100	100	4858	100
Total	168	100	1590	100	3100	100	4858	100

(Field Survey: Solo, 2016)

Marketing efficiency

Marketing efficiency is essentially the degree of market performance and computed by using Shepherd's formula. Table 4 indicated that marketing efficiency in channel I was 8.32 as the farmers sold all their produce only in this channel. Chaudhary *et al.* (2016) also reported that the efficient marketing channels which have minimal intermediaries are profitable for the farmers.

Table 4. Estimates of marketing efficiency in different marketing channels of oriental onion

Items	Channel I
Consumer's price (?/kg)	100
Total marketing cost (?/kg)	10.73
Marketing efficiency	8.32

(Field Survey: Solo, 2016)

Producer's Price

Producer's price was estimated to determine the net price received by the farmer at first sale. Table 5 indicated that the price received by the farmers in selling their produce, all the farmers received Producer's price through Channel-I was Rs. 89.27, which was the producer-consumer channel.

Table 5. Estimation of producer's price (?/kg)

Items	Channel - I
Consumer's price	100
Total marketing cost	10.73
Producer's price	89.27

(Field Survey: Solo, 2016)

Producer's share in consumer rupee (%)

Producer's share in consumer rupee is expressed as a percentage of the retail price, *i.e.*, the price paid by the consumer. Table 6 revealed the Producer's share in consumer's rupee for all groups of farmer was estimated to be 89.27 percent in Channel-I.

Table 6. Producer's share in consumer rupees (%)

Items	Channel - I
Consumer's price	100
Total marketing cost	10.73
Producer's share in consumer's rupee (%)	89.27

(Field Survey: Solo, 2016)

Constraints

The sample farmers cultivating oriental onion faced major constraints in marketing their produce and these problems were identified and indicated in descending order in Table 7. Amongst the major problems the farmers faced in selling their produce, poor marketing facility ranked I. The unavailability of proper marketing sheds caused major problem for the farmers to market their produce.

Lack of market information also ranked I amongst the constraints faced. The farmers sold their

produce directly to the consumers due to an absence of an efficient marketing system which gave accurate information regarding the price and demand in the market.

Transportation problems such as high cost and lack of transportation also ranked I amongst the constraints faced.

Lack of storage facility for the farmers to store their produce especially in marketing areas ranked II amongst the constraints faced. Interference by the municipality such as collection of unauthorized tax repeatedly from the producers while selling their produce in the market areas ranked III amongst the constraints.

Forced sale of their produce ranked IV amongst the constraints the farmers faced.

Table 7. Constraints faced by farmers

Constraints	Frequency	Percentage	Rank
Poor marketing facility	78	100	I
Lack of market information	78	100	I
Poor transportation	78	100	I
High cost of transportation	78	100	I
Lack of storage facility	50	63.29	II
Interference by municipality	48	61.53	III
Forced sale of crop	30	37.97	IV

(Field Survey: Solo, 2016)

SUGGESTION

1. To mitigate marketing problems, basic marketing facility such as proper farmers' markets and marketing sheds have to be established and provided to the farmers for selling their farm produces.
2. Proper storage infrastructures are required for storing the surplus of oriental onion and also reducing the vulnerability of market functionaries to risk. Unlike other crops, oriental onion is not highly perishable in nature where, its shelf-life can be increased to a great extent after proper drying of the crop by providing proper storage facility to enable the farmers to sell their produce at their will.
3. Proper transportation should be provided to make the farmers easily accessible to the nearby towns and markets with less damages and losses in the process of transportation.
4. Government and municipal board must intervene to reduce unauthorized tax collection in marketing areas and also set up strong farmers and marketing organizations to market the agricultural produce not to fall prey into market functionaries' exploitation.

CONCLUSION

To conclude from the present study that only one marketing channel of oriental onion was identified in the study area. The total marketing cost per kg (₹ 10.73) was observed in channel I. The producer's share in consumers' rupee was 89.27 percent. The marketing efficiency in channel I was found to be 8.32. In marketing of oriental onion poor marketing facility, lack of market information, poor transportation, lack of storage facility, etc. were some constraints faced by the oriental onion growers. To mitigate marketing problems, policy should be towards providing required infrastructures and facilities to the farmers to enable them to sell their produce.

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