

**A STUDY ON THE PROBLEMS OF AGRICULTURAL MARKETING OF
BANANA IN THOOTHUKUDI DISTRICT, TAMIL NADU**

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Introduction

“Marketing is a total system of interacting business activities designed to plan, price, promote and distribute, satisfying products and services to present and potential customers” William Stanton. “Marketing is the process by which an organization relates creatively productively and profitably to the market place. Marketing is threat of creating and satisfying customers at a profit. Marketing is getting the right goods and services to the right people at the right places at a right time at the right price with the right communications and promotion” Philip Kotler.

India occupies the largest area under banana in the world. It may be noted that 11 percent of the total global area under banana cultivation belongs to India. India ranks first in banana production, contributing about 23 % in world pool of banana production. Banana is the second most important fruit crop in India next to mango. All parts of the banana plant have medicinal application, some of the specific diseases known to be cured by banana are Anemia, blood pressure, brain fever, constipation and depression.

Banana is the most widely consumed fruit, and is an attractive perennial fruit crop for small farmers. This is due to its high economic gains throughout the year compared to other

crops like rice and wheat. Among 29 districts of Tamilnadu, Thoothukudi district ranks first in exporting banana. So Thoothukudi is selected for the present study. The overall objective of the study was to examine problems of agricultural marketing of banana.

The country loses more than Rs. 58,000 crore worth of agriculture food items due to lack of post harvesting infrastructure such as transportation, and storage facilities. Production of food grains goes waste because of lack of proper retailing and adequate storage capacity. More than 72 percent of the vegetable and fruits are wasted in the absence of proper retailing. The marketing system should be so designed as to give proper reward or return to the efforts of the tiller of the soil.

Review of literature

¹Archarya and Agarwal (1987) insist on a sound knowledge of agricultural marketing system as proper understanding of it will help in efficient services in the transfer of farm products from the producers to the consumers. An efficient marketing system will minimize the cost of the product and maximise the benefits of the producers and the consumers too.

²Kolter (1988) remarked that marketing channel can be viewed as a set of interdependent organization involved in the process of making a product or service available for use or consumption.

³According to Dasanathan (1990) the market regulation system has to look into the socio economic problems that exist as the farmers sell their commodities at a less favourable place at the most convenient time. He is the least benefited. Centralization of trade with effective implementation of the regulatory provision of the act will undoubtedly result in the benefit of the farmers.

⁴Tarit Kumar Datta's (2004) study of the problems of the agri markets in Sunderban region, West Bengal has informed us how they lack even the minimum requisite for the agricultural transaction progress.

⁵Raghurama (2005) showed that the marketing was the be-all and the end all of all economic activities of a farmer. It will better the price of the produce, increase the income and thereby the standard of living of farmers and nullify the exploitation of such farmers by traders and money lenders. Globalization will not be an immediate answer to the marketing problems of rural area.

Objectives of the study

1. To examine the problems faced by the farmers in marketing of banana.
2. To offer suggestions to improve the marketing of banana in Thoothukudidistrict.

Study area

Thoothukudi district is divided into eight taluks for administration purpose and 12 revenue blocks for rural and urban developments. Since the study is on the marketing of banana, two taluks namely Srivaikuntam and Tiruchendur are selected for the study.

The banana in Thoothukudi District for the period of 2006-2011 is given in the table 1

Selection of farmers

For collecting the primary data one revenue block from Srivaikuntamtaluk viz., Srivaikuntam and one revenue block from Tiruchendurtaluk viz., Tiruchendur were selected, at random. In total, 200 farmers were selected, 100 farmers from each block mentioned above. The distributions of sample farmers are given in the table 1.

Table 1
Distribution of farmers in the study area

S.No	Taluk	Revenue Block	No. of farmers
1	Srivaikunatam	Srivaikunatam	100
2	Tiruchendur	Tiruchendur	100
	Total		200

Period of study

The study involves only primary survey; primary data has to be collected for the period 2012-2013.

Hypothesis

1. There is no relationship between the experience of the farmers and variety of banana cultivation.
2. There is no relationship between total annual income (in lakhs) of farmers and variety of banana cultivation.

3. There is no relationship between problems faced in marketing of banana and problem faced in banana cultivation.

Analysis and interpretation

Analysis and interpretation are central steps in the research process. The aim of the analysis is to organize, classify and summarize the collected data so that they can be comprehended and interpreted to give answers to the questions that triggered the research. Interpretation is the search for the broader meaning of findings. Analysis is not fulfilled without interpretation; and interpretation cannot proceed without analysis. So, both are interdependent.

Descriptive Analysis on Farmers

Percentage analysis is one of the statistical measures used to describe the characteristics of the sample in totality. Percentage analysis involves computing measure of variable selected for the study and the finding can be interpreted easily.

Table -2

Frequency Distribution of farmers by their experience

Experience in years	Frequency	Percentage
Below 5	8	4
6-10	35	17.5
11-15	49	24.5
>15	108	54
Total	200	100

Source : Survey Data

The above table-3 shows that 54% of the farmers are in the group of above 15 years experience, 24.5% of farmers are in the 11 to 15 years experience, 17.5% of farmers are in the group of 6 to 10 years of experience and 4% of farmers fall below 5 years of experience. Compare to all other categories above 15 years of experience category has higher number of respondents.

Table - 3**Frequency Distribution of farmers based on their age**

Age group in years	Frequency	Percentage
Below 30	30	15
31-40	36	18
41-50	64	32
Above 50	70	35
Total	200	100

Source: Survey Data

The table 3 exhibits that nearly 15% of the farmers are in the age group of below 30 years, 18% of the farmers are between 31 to 40 years, nearly 32% are between 41 to 50 years and about 35% of the farmers have crossed 50 years. Study reveals that majority of the farmers are in their prime production age of 50 years.

Table - 4**Frequency Distribution of farmers based on their occupation**

Occupation	Frequency	Percentage
Main	194	97.0
Subsidiary	6	3.0
Total	200	100

Source: Survey Data

In the table 4 above nearly 97 percent of the sample farmers have agriculture as main business and only 3 percent of the sample farmers have it as subsidiary occupation. Therefore it is proved that majority of the farmers have agriculture as main occupation.

Table -5**Frequency Distribution of farmers based on annual income**

Annual income in lakhs	Frequency	Percentage
Below 1	92	46
1-2	70	35
Above 2	38	19
Total	200	100

Source: Survey Data

It is observed from the table5 that 46% of the farmers have below one lakh as their annual income, 19% of farmers have above two lakhs as annual income and 35% of farmers are in the category of 1-2 lakh annual income. Compared to all other categories, below 1 lakh category has higher number of respondents.

Table -6

Frequency Distribution of farmers based on reason for cultivating banana

Reason for cultivating banana	Frequency	Percentage
Suitability of land conditions	100	50
More water supply	40	20
Less expenditure	20	10
Profitability	10	5
Continuous demand	20	10
Marketability	10	5
Total	200	100

Source : Survey Data

It can be observed from the table 6 that, 50% and 20% of the farmers cultivate banana because the land and soil is suitable for it and enough water supply is available to them.10% of the farmers cultivate banana because it is less expensive, 5% of the farmers cultivate banana because it yields more profit, 10% of the farmers cultivate banana because it has continuous demand and 5% of the farmers cultivate banana due to marketability. Compared to all other reasons most of the farmers prefer banana cultivation because the land and soil texture is suitable for it.

Table – 7

Frequency distribution of farmers based on problems faced in banana marketing

Problem faced in marketing	Frequency	Percentage
Lack of assured price	11	5.5
Low price per unit	21	10.5
High transportation charges	72	36
Perish ability of the banana	21	10.5

Collusion among the traders	28	14
Absence of cold storage	22	11
Lack of ripening chambers	25	12.5
Total	200	100

Source : Survey Data

From the above table 7, It can be noted that 5% of the farmers face the problem of lack of assured price, 10.5% get low price per unit, 36% have high transportation charges, 10.5% have to face the problem of perishability of banana, 14% have to face the problem of collusion among the traders, 11% of the farmers have absence of cold storage facilities and 12.5% of farmers face the problem of lack of ripening chambers. By compared to all other problems, high transportation charges represented the highest.

Table -8

Frequency Distribution of farmers based on reason for selecting particular market

Reason for selecting particular market	Frequency	Percentage
Less distance	60	30
More convenience	46	23
Profitability	28	14
Continuous demand	36	18
Marketability	30	15
Total	200	100

Source : Survey Data

It is observed from the table - 8 that 30% of the farmers have selected the market place to sell their produce based on less distance, 23% of the sample farmers selected their market place based on more convenience, 14% of the farmers selected market place on the basis of profitability, 18% farmers selected the market place based on continuous demand existing in the market and 15% of the farmers selected market place based on marketability.

Inferential analysis on sample

Hypothesis I

Null Hypothesis: There is no relationship between experience of the farmers and the variety of banana cultivation.

Chi square test for relationship between experience of the farmers and variety of banana cultivation

Table - 9

Experience in farming	Kathali	Nadu	Sakkai	Total	Chi square value	Table value
Below 5	2	1	5	8	8.767	12.592
6 to 10	13	8	14	35		
11 to 15	21	11	17	49		
Above 15	54	10	44	108		
Total	90	30	80	200		

Source : Survey Data

The calculated t value is 8.767 and the table value is 12.592 at 5% level of significance, 6 degree of freedom. The calculated value is less than the table value. Therefore the hypotheses is accepted. Hence, there is no relationship between experience of the farmers and variety of banana cultivation.

Hypothesis II

Null Hypothesis: There is no relationship between total annual income of farmers and variety of banana cultivation.

Chi square test for relationship between total annual income of farmers and variety of banana cultivation.

Table - 10

Total annual income (in Lakhs)	Kathali	Nadu	Sakkai	Total	Chi square value	Table value
Below 1	41	12	39	92	7.990	9.488
1 - 2	26	11	33	70		
Above 2	23	7	8	38		
Total	90	30	80	200		

Source : Survey Data

The calculated t value is 7.990 and the table value is 9.488 at 5% level of significance 4 degree of freedom. The calculated value is less than the table value. Therefore the

hypotheses is accepted. Hence, there is no relationship between total annual income of farmers and the variety of banana cultivation.

Hypothesis III

Null Hypothesis: There is no relationship between problems faced in marketing of banana and banana cultivation.

Chi square test for relationship between problems faced in marketing of banana and banana cultivation.

Table - 11

Problems faced in marketing of banana	Kathali	Nadu	Sakkai	Total	Chi square value	Table value
Lack of assured price	4	2	5	11	11.529	21.026
Low price per unit	10	3	8	21		
High transportation charges	39	6	27	72		
Perish ability of the banana	8	4	9	21		
Collusion among the traders	11	5	12	28		
Absence of cold storage	9	2	11	22		
Lack of ripening chambers	9	8	8	25		
Total	90	30	80	200		

Source : Survey Data

The calculated 't' value is 11.529 and the table value is 21.026 at 5% level of significance 12 degree of freedom. The calculated value is less than the table value. Therefore the hypotheses is accepted. Hence, there is no relationship between problems faced in marketing and banana cultivation.

The following suggestion are studied from the following table 13

Suggestions to overcome the problems of marketing

Table- 12

S.No	Suggestions'	Frequency	Percentage
1	Establishment of more market centre	40	20
2	Adequate export facilities	10	5
3	Provide tax concession	6	3

4	Easy customs formalities	6	3
5	subsidy from government	20	10
6	Provide loan on easy terms by the financial institutions	20	10
7	To reduce delay in loan sanction	10	5
8	to introduce uniform wage payment	14	7
9	Availability of skilled labour	10	5
10	Adequate cold storage facilities	10	5
11	Adequate transport facilities with cheap cargo	14	7
12	Establishment of information centre	6	3
13	To get training on marketing	4	2
14	Reduce the check post & toll gate charges	30	15
	Total	200	100

Source: Primary data

From the above table, it can be noted that 20% of the farmers need establishment of more market centres, 5% of the farmers need adequate export facilities, 3% of the farmers need provision of tax concession, 3% of the farmers need easy customs formalities, 10% of the farmers need subsidy from government, 10% of the farmers need the provision of loan on easy terms by the financial institutions, 5% of the farmers need reduction of delay in loan sanction, 7% of the farmers need more availability of skilled labour, 5% of the farmers need adequate cold storage facilities, 7% of the farmers need adequate transport facilities with cheap cargo, 3% of the farmers need training on marketing, 15% of the farmers need reduction of check post & toll gate charges.

Findings

- Among all, farmers having 15 years of experience are highest in the respondents.
- Study reveals that majority of the farmers are in their prime production age of above 50 years.

- Nearly 97% of the sample farmers have agriculture as main business and only 3% of the sample farmers have it as subsidiary business. Therefore, majority of the farmers have agriculture as main business.
- Compared to all other categories, below 1 lakh category has higher number of respondents.
- All farmers are aware of the market prices while selling.

When compared to all other problems, the high transportation represented the highest.

- No farmers attended farmer – buyer meet.
- All farmers are members of farmers association since there was no separate banana growers association.

Suggestion

- Bananas and plantains are second largest fruit crop and a very important staple food commodity around the world.
- Inter personal meetings must be conducted between farmers and buyers.
- As per sample survey, farmer community is literates. Government must motivate them to attend such meetings. Periodical meetings with film demonstration, along with cultural activities will be helpful in creating an interpersonal relationship between farmers and buyers.
- Farmers who have experiences more than 15 years can be involved in conducting sessions for the less experienced.
- They may be encouraged to form an association only for banana cultivators so that they can focus on the issues regarding banana cultivation.
- Journals should be released by the agricultural department in a simple language which will provide the information through updated technology, interstate marketing etc.,
- Healthy competition with regard to the cultivation of banana may be announced during the meetings so that the attendants will be more.
- A full pledged regulated marketing is needed for banana.
- Immediate need of cold storage of 2000 M.T.
- Ripening centres can be started with a capacity of 2000 M.T.

Conclusion

The agricultural development policy in the times of yore has intensified the interclass inequalities. Apart from the imputed value of family effort, the other effects like cost of production on the whole income etc., are not favourable to the small farmers. This should be measured by the government. The Government can lend its support to the farmers by providing transport convenience, maintaining good roads and provide financial assistance for suckers and fertilizers, so that the small and average farmers may also have more yield of banana.

Above all, a categorized agricultural marketing is necessary for banana promotion. The study is curbed to only one district in Tamilnadu to be precise in Thoothukudi district. Other studies on the condition in the various districts situation at diverse delta areas may be carried out, so that improved outputs can be made on banana cultivation.

By examining various research results as one, the government can generate awareness among the farmers concerning banana cultivation and may push more farmers to cultivate this precious food, which is greatly vital to our habitual diet system. The marketing system be so designed as to give proper reward or return to the efforts of the farmer.

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