

Constraints Faced by Potato Farmers in District Kannauj (U.P.)

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ABSTRACT

Potato has been considered to be one of the unavoidable necessities of life and it is demanded by the people belonging to all the classes of the society. The consumption of the potato has been rising at faster rate. Uttar Pradesh is the leading potato growing state in the country with a production of 9.93 million tonnes and Kannauj district leads in production but in respect of average production has 8th place in Uttar Pradesh, therefore, to know the constraints for lagging behind of the productivity of potato, present study was conducted in Jalalabad block and from Talgram block on 240 potato growers. Statements related to different constraints were framed and responses were recorded on three point Likert's scale; Always, Sometimes and Never. Important constraints always faced by maximum responded in cultivation was "lack of availability of sufficient good quality high yielding seed", while in post harvest handling 'lack of processing unit' was maximum faced constraint, and in marketing 'fluctuations of prices' was major of constraints faced by farmers. The suggestions to overcome the problem of production were; reduced cost of fertilizer, supply of good quality of seed by government agencies at their door step and training regarding scientific potato production technology, post-harvest handling and processing.

Keywords: Constraints, Potato, Suggestions

INTRODUCTION

Potato is most widely grown vegetable crop in the country with 25.70 per cent share. The area under potato cultivation is 1.28 million hectare with total production 22.49 million tonnes. UP produced 15.5-16 million tonnes of potato in 2019-20 and is the largest producer in the country. Kannauj district is the highest in area but in respect of average production has 8th place in Uttar Pradesh. Total area covered for potato is 36,000 hectare with a productivity of 250 quintals/ hectare. The present rate of agricultural production could be substantially increased if the available technology is brought to bear with the production processes and programmes, focusing more and more on transferring new technologies away

from the confines of laboratories and researchers. Fortunately, India has favourable agronomic climatic conditions for potato cultivation but may not fulfil the need of people, when our farmer are not trained with skilful utilisation of technology. The farmers face a number of problems in production, marketing and storage of potato like inadequate supply of inputs, unawareness about the improved technology of potato production, high transportation cost, use of home produced seed, lack of availability of sufficient good quality seed well in time, irrigation problem, non-availability of sufficient finance non- remunerative market price for the produce, lack of sufficient storage space and malpractices exercised by traders (Arneja *et al.*, 2009; Lal *et al.*, 2011 and Katayani *et al.*, 2017). Therefore, it is necessary to know the

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constraints faced by farmers so the study Constraints faced by farmers in cultivation, post harvest handling and marketing of potatoes was planned with specific objective to identify the issues and challenges faced by farmers in potato production and marketing.

METHODOLOGY

Descriptive research design with multistage purposive random sampling technique was adopted to carry out the study. District Kannauj was purposively selected for being major potato growing area of the state. Two blocks of district Kannauj namely Jalalabad and Talgram were selected and two villages from each selected block were randomly selected. 60 farmers from village Moosar and Tilpai village of Jalalabad block and Katkaiya and Tighara from Talgram block were selected randomly and thus making 240. Pre coded interview schedule was used as a tool for data collection. Statements related to different constraints faced by the respondents related to cultivation, post harvest handling and marketing were framed and responses were recorded on three point Likert type statements as always (3) sometimes (2) and never (1). Mean score was processed for each and every statement and accordingly ranked to know the maximum and minimum faced constraints to show what was the biggest challenge to be addressed first for enhancing productivity.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Analysis of Table 1 reveals that in potato cultivation 73.33 per cent farmers always face constraints related to lack of availability of sufficient good quality seed followed by 66.66 per cent who always faced lack of awareness of insecticides and pesticide constraint. Sixty five percent farmers were found unaware about seed treatment and 61.66 per cent always underwent with poor electric facilities constraint. But in contrast 55.00 per cent farmers sometimes felt shortage of fertilizers on time. Poor and uneven germination was least experienced followed by over dosage of fertilizer, lack of improper soil moisture level, poor fertility of land respectively. Further 'poor electricity facilities' and high cost of input for potato cultivation was also a major problem faced by farmers with Mean Score 2.65 and 2.61, respectively. Further, the table reveals that 69.16 per cent respondents

always faced constraints 'lack of producer processes link' followed by 66.66 per cent who always perceived lack of processing unit. A little less than sixty percent farmer faced lack of quick efficient and low cost transport system while more than 56 per cent faced storage loss due to delay process of storing and marketing constraints. High charges of cold storage were also one of major constraints which farmers undergo. Lack of cold storage facilities in nearby areas was the minimum faced constraints with Mean Score 1.60 whereas, lack of quick efficient and low cost transport system' was always faced by 58.33 per cent farmers while about more than thirty percent faced this 'sometimes'. On the other hand about fifty six percent farmers complaint about distance of cold storage from field and market as a big constraint in post harvest handling of potato.

It is clear that 'fluctuation of price' was the biggest constraint in marketing of potato with Mean Score 2.66, followed by 'low price due to quality deteriorated during storage (Mean Score 2.62, rank II). The 3rd important constraint reported in marketing of potato was 'lack of marketing information' (2.60), whereas, 'lack of investment in transportation' and no minimum support prices were least mentioned constraints in marketing of potato with Mean Score 2.4 and 2.33, respectively. Maximum (66.66%) farmers always faced problem of 'fluctuations in prices' followed by 62.50 per cent who always underwent with low price due to quality deteriorated in storage. Sixty per cent farmers reported that they always felt problem of lack of marketing information while 58.33 per cent always faced lack of linkage between producer and market as a constraint. Only 13.33 per cent respondents never reported problem of lack of marketing facilities through cooperative societies, followed by 12.50 per cent who opined that high investment on transportation from field to market and no fixation of support prices problems were faced by them.

CONCLUSION

The global area under potato during 1998 was about 18 million ha with a total production of about 295 million tonnes. U.P. is the major potato growing state in India. Potato is the main source of important nutrient but the

Table 1: Various constraints faced by potato growers (N = 240)

S. No.	Statement	Always	Some-times	Never	Mean score	Rank
A. Related to Cultivation						
1.	Lack of availability of sufficient good quality seed	73.33	26.66	–	2.73	I
2.	Poor/ uneven germination in the field	34.16	53.33	30	2.15	XII
3.	Poor electric facilities	60.00	40.00	-	2.65	II
4.	Attack of pest and disease	58.33	41.66	–	2.58	V
5.	Lack of personal irrigation facility	55.83	29.16	36	2.40	VIII
6.	Unawareness about seed treatment	65.00	31.66	8	2.60	IV
7.	Lack of awareness of insecticides and pesticides	66.66	23.33	24	2.56	VI
8.	Lack of improper soil moisture level	52.50	33.33	34	2.29	X
9.	Poor fertility of land	45.88	37.50	40	2.29	X
10.	High cost of input for potato cultivation	60.00	33.33	16	2.61	III
11.	Shortage of fertiliser and time being demand	37.50	55.00	9	2.37	IX
12.	Over dosage of fertiliser	45.00	38.33	40	2.28	XI
13.	Problem due to weed	56.66	31.66	28	2.45	VII
B. Related to Post Harvest Handling						
1.	Improper handling of products	50.00	37.50	12.50	2.37	VIII
2.	Lack of quick efficient and low cost transport system	58.33	33.33	8.30	2.50	IV
3.	High charges of cold storage	54.16	45.83	-	2.54	III
4.	Lack of cold storage	18.33	31.66	50.00	1.60	IX
5.	Lack of producer processes link	69.16	25.00	12.50	2.63	II
6.	Distance of cold storage from field to market	55.83	34.16	10.00	2.45	V
7.	Lack of processing unit	66.66	33.33	-	2.66	I
8.	Improper shorting of damaged and infected tubers	50.00	43.33	6.66	2.43	VI
9.	Storages loss due to storing and marketing	56.66	29.16	14.16	2.42	VII
C. Related to marketing						
1.	Lack of linkage between producer and marketing	58.33	35.00	6.66	2.51	IV
2.	Fluctuation of price	66.66	33.33	-	2.66	I
3.	Lack of investment in transportation	54.16	33.33	12.50	2.41	IX
4.	Lack of marketing information facilities through cooperative societies	46.66	40.00	13.33	2.33	VII
5.	Transportation losses	48.33	45.00	6.66	2.41	IV
6.	Poor management of local mandies	50.00	40.00	10.00	2.40	VI
7.	No fixation of minimum support prices	45.83	41.66	12.50	2.33	VIII
8.	Low price due to quality deteriorated during storage	62.50	37.50	-	2.62	II
9.	Lack of marketing information	60.00	40.00	-	2.60	III

productivity and processing has not been able to keep pace with the current trends. The potato growers should not only produce potatoes in bulk but also compete in quality, grading and varieties of potato grown. The yield per hectare is also very low as compared to that of the developed countries because potato growers are facing constraints. Important constraints responsible for varying magnitude in cultivation was lack of availability of sufficient good quality seed followed by high cost of input and devices and poor fertility of land. During post harvest handling 'lack of processing unit', 'lack of producer processer's link' and 'high charges of cold storage' were the challenges potato growers underwent with. Major constraints faced in marketing were 'fluctuations of prices', 'low price due to inferior quality in storage' and lack of information regarding marketing platform. The suggestions that to overcome the problem of production are; cost of fertilizer should be reduced, the good quality of seed should be supplied by government agencies at their door step and training should be provided to potato growers regarding scientific potato production technology and post harvest handling and processing. FPOs can also

be formed for marketing and processing. To overcome the constrains of marketing the price of potato should be ensured, more number of cold storage should be established and proper marketing facilities should be provided by government. Many steps are being taking by KVKs but still there is gap hence more such efforts are needed.

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