



## Marketing of Mango: Perceived Constraints During Normality and due to Lockdown in West Bengal

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### ABSTRACT

The study was undertaken to assess the perceived constraints in marketing of mango during normality and due to lockdown in West Bengal. In all, 90 respondents were randomly considered for the study with equal proportionate of small, medium and large farmers. The perceived constraints faced and suggestions in improving the marketing of mangoes were analyzed through Garrett ranking techniques. The study shows that the major perceived constraints in marketing of mangoes during normality were high fluctuation in market price during season followed by inadequate marketing channel and exploitation by middlemen. But during the lockdown, the major perceived constraints were no market to sell their mangoes followed by exploitation by middlemen and small opening hours of market. The suggestive measures recommended by the mango growers to improve marketing opportunities were stable market rate according to grade of mangoes followed by proper marketing channel and elimination of middlemen. The mangoes growers had not felt need for cooperative marketing network or formation of Farmer Producer Company for its marketing.

### INTRODUCTION

India is only next to China in production of fruits and vegetables in the world and has a share of about 16 per cent of vegetables and 10 per cent of world's fruits production. India produces 65 per cent of world's mango and 11 per cent of world's banana ranking first in the production of both the crops (Shankar et al., 2017). Due to the perishable nature of horticultural product, delayed post-harvest marketing causes huge losses. Saraswat et al., (2018) studied the distribution process of the mango and have reported that it passes through more than one hand excluding from the fact when it is directly sold to the consumer by the producer which is a rare phenomenon. Various agencies like grower, pre-harvest contractors, commission agents, wholesaler, retailers, etc., are engaged in this chain. With all this existing marketing channels,

the average income from mango orchard was around 30,000/- per acre (Majumder et al., 2016). But, with the outbreak Coronavirus disease of 2019 (COVID-19), lockdown was one of the common options suggested to curb the pandemic (WHO, 2020). Complete lockdown was declared all over India from 25<sup>th</sup> March for 21 days to curb the pandemic (Dev, 2020) which further enhanced with some sort of relaxation in agriculture sector. Horticultural crops were adversely affected during the lockdown even though there was no restriction on sale of vegetables and fruits in the market, excluding the ban on operations of rural haats and restriction in transportation. Further, the impact of COVID-19 in prices of horticultural commodities was irregular. Though in some states in India there were reports on increase in the prices of horticultural commodities, majority of the states have reported a decline in prices of horticultural commodities in India with a falling of 7.6 per cent in

prices of horticulture products (NABARD, 2020). Keeping these in mind, a study was undertaken to assess the perceived constraints in marketing of mangoes during normality and due to lockdown in West Bengal.

## METHODOLOGY

The study was purposively conducted in Malda district due its highest land area under mango orchard and highest producing district in the state. Commercial mango cultivation in Malda started at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century and beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century (Saadat, 2017). Leasing of mango orchard was a common practice in the region, but the farmers considered for the study didn't prefer leasing out their mango orchard and carry out all the management and marketing by themselves. In all, 90 respondents were randomly selected categorically into small (up to 1 ha.), medium (1-2 ha.) and large farmers (more than 2 ha) with 30 respondents from each category from six blocks of Malda district. The perceived constraints and suggestions in marketing issues were analyzed through Garrett ranking techniques (Garrett, 1981). The respondents were asked to rank the given factors. The orders of merit assigned by the respondents were converted into ranks by using the following formula.

Percent Position of each rank =  $100 (R_{ij} - 0.5) / N_j$

R = Rank given for i<sup>th</sup> factor by j<sup>th</sup> individual; N = Number of factors ranked by j<sup>th</sup> individual.

The percentage position of each rank obtained was converted into scores as per the table given by Henry Garrett. The scores of individual respondents were added together for each factor and divided by the total number of the respondents. The mean scores for all the factors were arranged in order of merit and inference drawn.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Constraints in marketing of mangoes

The study shows that perceived constraints in marketing of mangoes during normal year (i.e., no lockdown issues) were high fluctuation in market price during season with highest mean score (72.79) followed by inadequate marketing channels and exploitation

by middlemen. Small and medium mango growers have perceived exploitation by middlemen as 3<sup>rd</sup> major constraint but the large farmers perceived distant market for mangoes and high cost of transportation as 3<sup>rd</sup> major constraint (Table 1). Earlier studies among mango growers have shown that lack of storage facilities, high cost of transportation and price fluctuation were some problems associated with marketing (Vijay et al., 2019; Datarkar et al., 2014) whereas, price fluctuation and distant market were major constraints faced by vegetable grower (Chandran & Podikunju, 2021; Singh & Hansra, 2021). Non-availability of storage, high transport cost and price fluctuation were the three major problems in Nadia district (Sarkar et al., 2018) and the existence of middlemen and lack of proper market were major marketing constraints as perceived by orange growers (Roy et al., 2018).

The perceived constraints in marketing of mangoes due to COVID-19 and lockdown issues were no market to sell their mangoes with highest mean score (71.21) followed by exploitation by middlemen and small opening hours of market. Further, it can also be stated that all the types of mango growers had ranked no market to sell their mangoes as 1<sup>st</sup> ranked perceived constraint but only small and large farmers had perceived small opening hours of market (2<sup>nd</sup>) and exploitation by middlemen (3<sup>rd</sup>) as major constraints whereas medium farmers have perceived exploitation by middlemen (2<sup>nd</sup>) and inadequate marketing channels (3<sup>rd</sup>) as major constraints in marketing of mangoes due to lockdown issues.

### Suggestions to improve marketing of mangoes

The suggestive measures recommended by mango growers to improve marketing opportunities were stable market rate according to grade of mangoes with highest ranked mean score (67.54) followed by proper marketing channel and elimination of middlemen. All the mango growers irrespective of its types had given similar ranks to improve the marketing opportunities of mangoes. One of the interesting facts that came from the study was that the mangoes growers had not felt for cooperative marketing network or formation of Farmer Producer Company for mangoes and therefore ranked as last suggestion of improving the marketing opportunities of the region. As per the study of Sarkar et al., (2018) the farmers had suggested that provision for appropriate storage facilities, reduction

**Table 1.** Constraints in marketing of mangoes

Perceived constraints	Small	Medium	Large	Total	
	Mean	Mean	Mean	Mean	Rank
<i>During normality</i>					
High fluctuation in market price	70.90	73.17	74.30	72.79	I
Inadequate marketing channels	62.60	62.07	59.60	61.42	II
Lack of export promotional strategies	42.40	45.50	42.40	43.43	VI
High cost of packing material	46.50	45.00	46.50	46.00	V
Exploitation by middlemen	54.60	51.27	47.27	51.04	III
Lack of cooperative marketing networks	29.10	32.83	30.43	30.79	VII
Distant market for mango and high cost of transportation	46.90	43.17	52.50	47.52	IV
<i>During COVID-19 and lockdown</i>					
No market for sell	72.63	69.23	71.77	71.21	I
Low selling price	47.17	48.57	46.57	47.43	V
Exploitation by middlemen	49.47	54.87	50.23	51.52	II
Small opening hours	50.10	48.57	51.30	49.99	III
Inadequate marketing channel	49.13	49.13	47.90	48.72	IV
High fluctuation in the market price	33.5	31.63	34.23	33.12	VI

**Table 2.** Suggestions to improve marketing of mangoes

Suggestions	Small		Medium		Large		Total	
	Mean	Rank	Mean	Rank	Mean	Rank	Mean	Rank
Stable market rate according to grade of mangoes	65.70	I	67.17	I	69.77	I	67.54	I
Proper marketing channels	61.57	II	62.07	II	60.97	II	61.53	II
Processing industry	44.87	VI	47.60	IV	41.97	VII	44.81	V
Cold storage facility	46.30	V	45.00	V	46.50	IV	45.93	IV
Elimination of middlemen	54.87	III	50.47	III	48.07	III	51.13	III
Cooperative marketing network or Farmer Producer Company	30.57	VII	38.87	VII	43.50	V	37.64	VII
Export promotion strategy	49.13	IV	41.83	VI	42.23	VI	44.40	VI

in cost of fertilizer and pesticide and supply of good quality mango saplings were the major areas for improvement of mangoes in Nadia district. Kharga et al., (2021) in their study have concluded if right environment is created and farmers are provided adequate infrastructure support many farmers can enhance their income and quality of life. Ferrier et al., (2012) reported that Indian mangoes are likely to be confined to a quality niche for United States of American consumers, including South Asians living in the United States who have taste preferences for the Indian varieties. This shows that Indian mangoes are having good demand in foreign countries and therefore the strategy for export promotion needs to be undertaken to promote marketing strategy. Das et al., (2014); Das et al., (2015) also expressed similar concerns.

### CONCLUSION

The existing marketing system of mangoes in Malda district has not proved to be adequate and efficient. Farmers were not able to sell their surplus produce remuneratively and there are widespread distress sales. Further, the sudden lockdown has created a huge problem in selling of mangoes even no market for mangoes. The mango growers have faced huge loss due to non availability of market in the year 2020 and similarly poor market and low rate of mangoes in the year 2021. The large farmers have faced comparatively more problems in marketing than medium and small farmers. To save the mangoes of the region there is a need of good marketing channels and cold storage facilities for delayed marketing. The policy makers need to improve the marketing channels and the basic infrastructure such as cold storage to improve marketing opportunities. Strategy also needs to be taken to develop for export promotion. Further, formation of Farmer Producer Company is still an unfelt need among the farmers. Extension organisations and agencies working in this region should create awareness about Farmer Producer Company and provide assistance for its formation.

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