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Constraints faced by grape growers in the Nashik District of Maharashtra

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Abstract

In India, agriculture is the most important economic sector (Sucheta, 2019). It ensures food and income stability. Different types of soil and climate in India, which spans numerous agro-ecological areas, allow for the cultivation of a wide range of horticultural crops. Maharashtra is the country's largest grape-producing state. The Maharashtra government has proposed establishing an agriculture export zone that would include Nashik, Sangli, Pune, Solapur, Satara, and Ahmednagar districts for exporting table grapes and value-added products like wine in a coordinated manner. The research was carried out in the Nashik district. Seventy-two villages were purposively chosen. A total of 200 farmers were chosen for the study wherein 100 out of those were taking services from private consultancies and rest 100 were not taking any consultancy services. The information was gathered through personal interviews. The respondent farmers were facing lot many problems regarding grape cultivation and marketing etc. The major constraints faced by the farmers were non-effectivity advices provided by consultancy in specific weather conditions, technical language in the advisories, inaccurate weather forecasts, rare visits of government officials, marketing and unreliable traders, non-fixed rates of inputs, irregularity in delivery of information from government agencies, climate change and so on. Other minor issues were arbitrary nature of exporters, lack of proper contingency planning and regarding insurance compensation etc.

Keywords: Constraints, exports, grape growers

Introduction

The grape (*Vitis vinifera*) is thought to have originated in Armenia, between the Black and Caspian seas in Russia, and has since expanded to temperate and tropical countries to the west and east. Grape is one of the most delicious fruits and a powerful food. It contains a variety of essential nutrients for a healthy lifestyle. It also has significant medicinal properties and has been utilised in natural medicine for ages. The Moghul invaders introduced the grape to India about 1300 AD. Presently India is an important exporter of the grape. Maharashtra is the most productive state in the country, accounting for more than 82.56 percent of total production and the greatest productivity. It is followed by Karnataka (11.70 percent). The Nashik district of Maharashtra state is considered as the 'Grape capital of India'. In Nashik district, 56000 ha. area was under grape cultivation and production was 1237000MT. About 60-70 per cent of total production of seedless grapes is produced in Nashik district. Out of 15 Talukas from Nashik district, 90.00 per cent of grape production is from Nashik, Niphad and Dindori Talukas. As grape is a commercial crop and it is very prone to the climate change, due care of the crop is important. Any harm to the crop can result in economically higher losses to the farmers. The purpose of study was to elicit the constraints faced by the grape grower farmers in the Nashik district. Accordingly, by keeping in view the above aspects the present study has been conducted with an objective of knowing the constraints faced by the grape growers in the Nashik district of Maharashtra.

Methodology

The present study was conducted in Nashik district of Maharashtra state, as it is one of the most important grape producing regions in Maharashtra state. The district's soil and climatic conditions are highly suitable for grape cultivation. Two Tahsils namely Niphad and Dindori selected purposively for this study on the basis of maximum area under cultivation of grape crop. From each selected tehsil, 36 villages were selected on the basis of highest number of farmers who were taking consultancy services regarding grape crop. The list of farmers who were taking consultancy was obtained from the consultant. Total 200 respondents were selected for the study, 100 out of it were taking consultancy while rest 100 were not taking any

kind of consultancy service. The data was collected through personal interview method. The ex-post facto research design was used for the present study.

Result and discussion

The respondents face various constraints while utilizing

services rendered to them and also while doing grape farming. It was necessary to know and elicit the constraints being faced by the respondents. So as to examine the constraints faced by the respondents, open ended questions were asked to them and their responses were obtained. The constraints faced by the respondents are given in the Table below.

Table 1: Constraints faced by the grape grower farmers

Sr. No.	Constraints	Frequency	Percentage
I.	Constraint related to Service:		
1	Some advisories provided by Grapemaster are not that much effective in specific weather situations.	18	09.00
2	Grapemaster use more technical language in the advisories	26	13.00
3	Government officials are very rarely making field visits	124	62.00
4	Inaccurate weather forecasts are leading to unnecessary precautionary measures which ultimately results in increased cost	132	66.00
5	Input dealer does not deliver correct information	136	68.00
II.	General Constraints of respondents:		
1	Marketing problem and unreliable traders	130	65.00
2	Rates of inputs (Fertilizers, Insecticides, Pesticides, Fungicides) are very high for which needs government's control	186	93.00
3	Unassured market	134	67.00
4	Inability to cope up climate change	164	82.00
5	No proper price policy regarding grape crop based on cost of production	120	60.00
6	Irregularity in delivery of information from government agencies	120	60.00
7	Increased cost of cultivation	174	87.00
8	Unavailability and high charges of labour	120	60.00
9	Unavailability of authentic products in market	164	82.00
10	Grape crop is becoming less profitable day by day	166	83.00
11	Overuse of plant growth regulators causing increased expenses.	124	62.00
12	Traders take advantage of wrong weather forecasts and viral news for purchasing the produce at low prices	132	66.00
13	Insurance compensations are not giving compensations based on expenses incurred by the farmers	136	68.00
14	Lack of proper contingency planning by State Agriculture Department	152	76.00
15	Traders and exporters usually work arbitrarily	130	65.00

The data presented in the Table revealed that, majority (68.00%) of the respondents faced the constraint regarding input dealers who were not delivering correct information to them. Sixty-six (66.00%) per cent respondents faced constraint regarding inaccurate weather forecast which was leading to unnecessary precautionary measures. Another important constraint faced by the respondents was, the government officials were very rarely making field visits to them. Only 13.00 per cent of respondents felt the constraint about more technical language used by the Grape master consultancy in the advisories being provided to the client farmers. The least number (09.00%) of the respondents felt constraint about the effectivity of the advisories provided by the Grape master in the specific weather situations.

The respondents faced more number of general constraints than the constraints related to the services provided to them. Most of (93.00%) the respondents faced the constraint about rates of inputs which were very high and not having any government control over them. Most (87.00%) of the respondents faced the constraint about increased cost of cultivation. On the other hand, 83.00 per cent of them faced constraint regarding non-sustainability and less profitability of grape crop, 82.00 per cent respondents were facing problem regarding unavailability of the authentic products in the market and inability of them to cope up with the climate change, 76.00 per cent of them felt constraint regarding lack of proper contingency planning by the state agriculture department. The constraint regarding expenses based insurance compensations was faced by 68.00 per cent respondents. Sixty-six (66.00%) of the respondents came

across the constraint that the traders were taking advantage of wrong weather forecasts and viral news for purchasing the produce at low prices. Constraint related to the arbitrary nature of work of the traders and exporters and marketing problems due to unreliable traders was faced by the 65.00 per cent of the respondents. Sixty-two (62.00%) of them faced constraint related to the increased expenses due to overuse of the plant growth regulators, 60.00 of the respondents faced the constraints related to unavailability of the cost of production based proper price policy regarding grape crop, irregularity in the delivery of information from government agencies along with unavailability of labour and high charges of labour etc.

Conclusion

The Grape is an important commercial fruit crop of India, which contributes to the maximum share of export of fresh fruits from India to Europe and other parts of the world. Grapes have a significant role in providing considerable employment opportunities for millions of people living in rural areas. As a result, it deserves planned and ongoing attention from exporters, government and others. This would go a long way toward increasing the share of Indian grape in both domestic and international markets. Despite the fact that grape growing receives a lot of assistance from Research and Extension, it has a lot of challenges and practical constraints. Appropriate management strategies and actions on a broad front are necessary and success largely depends on extension strategies / approaches and resource mobilization. Because grapes have greater export potential and a well-established

market, yet there is no guarantee of receiving payment on time due to the involvement of pre-harvest contractors in the export sector, the government should make provisions to provide bank guarantees for late payments. One another solution to this can be authorizing buyers and exporters. The risk related to the grape crop can be avoided with the accurate weather forecasts. Unavailability of labour to during peak period of intercultural operation this is most important constraint. These constraints can be overcome by the focused efforts and if eliminated in near future can bring a change in grape farming.

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