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RESEARCH ARTICLE

CONSTRAINTS IN PRODUCTION AND MARKETING OF ORGANIC VEGETABLE
GROWERS IN BELAGAVI DISTRICT OF KARNATAKA

*Mahadevappa Muttalageri

Department of Agri-Business Management, Institute of Development Studies, University of Mysuru,
Mysuru, Karnataka, India

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ABSTRACT

Constraints in production and marketing of organic vegetable growers in Belagavi district of Karnataka. The primary data were collected from 120 organic vegetable growers through structured questionnaire method for the study. Cent per cent of the respondents had expressed problem of lack of literature or package of practices on organic vegetable production followed by low yield comparatively conventionally growing (96.66%). Majority of the organic vegetable growers noticed that lack of support from the government agencies and other relevant departments in the form of subsidy and financial assistance (92.50%). All the respondents expressed the problem of lack of minimum support price for organically grown vegetables, followed by non availability of market exclusively for organic produce (96.66%). Majority of them noticed that absence of premium price for organic vegetables in local market (78.33%) followed by inability to identify marketing networks for organic vegetables (60.83%). All organic vegetable growers suggested that the intensive research on organic farming and networking of research information, followed by supply of organic inputs at subsidized rate (97.50%). Majority of the vegetable growers were suggested that multiplication of indigenous seeds material (85.83%) for further production. Similarly, 68.00% of the respondents suggested that co-ordination with animal husbandry department to increase the local cattle population for compost production. The entire organic vegetable growers had suggested that government has to fix minimum support price for organically produce vegetables followed by encourage setting up exclusive organic vegetable marketing centres (94.16%). Majority of the growers had suggested that developing organic vegetable supply chain system (90.00%).

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INTRODUCTION

Organic farming is a method of crop and livestock production that involves much more than choosing not to use pesticides, fertilizers, genetically modified organisms, antibiotics and growth hormones. Organic production is a holistic system designed to optimize the productivity and fitness of diverse communities within the agro-ecosystem, including soil organisms, plants, livestock and people. The principal goal of organic production is to develop enterprises that are sustainable and harmonious with the environment. Organic farming promotes the use of crop rotations and cover crops, and encourages balanced host/predator relationships. Organic residues and nutrients produced on the farm are recycled back to the soil. Cover crops and composted manure are used to maintain soil organic matter and fertility. Preventative insect and disease control methods are practiced, including crop

rotation, improved genetics and resistant varieties. Integrated pest and weed management, and soil conservation systems are valuable tools on an organic farm. A country like India can enjoy a number of benefits from the adoption of organic production. Economic and social benefits like generation of rural employment, increased earning capacity of household, poverty alleviation, social uplifting, ensuring the health of young generations, women empowerment, sustainable development, prevention of disasters caused by the pesticides, improving the environmental conditions, conservation of the natural resources, improved soil fertility, prevention of soil erosion, preservation of natural and agro-biodiversity are the major benefits. The threat posed by the conventional vegetable production to the human health and the damage done to the ecology are being viewed seriously. Marketing considerations are important for organic producers. Opportunity to receive premium for organic products have heightened producer's interest in the organic production and marketing. Organic products are specialty items and have high growth rate. So special marketing techniques and efforts are needed in its case.

*Corresponding author: Mahadevappa Muttalageri,
Department of Agri-Business Management, Institute of Development
Studies, University of Mysuru, Mysuru, Karnataka, India

Producers must research potential market for size, consistency and competition. They must match their production to their market. Organic marketing is quite different from that of regular marketing. Organic markets are still a niche segment in which specific buyers are targeted. Careful selection and development of target markets, distribution channels, certification, awareness creation etc., are important in the case of organic Marketing. Such marketing requires different skills than regular marketing and may call for additional costs in the initial stages.

Review of Literature

Thimmareddy (2001) reported that, the majority of the farmers (70.00%) of North Karnataka expressed the problem of no separate market for organically grown produce followed by 40.00 per cent of the respondents expressed the problem of decline in returns in the initial period (3-4 years) of organic farming. Similarly the labour problem was expressed by 30.00 per cent of the respondent whereas 20.00 per cent of the respondents expressed the problems of non – availability of organic pesticides and lack of published literature on organic farming and a less per cent (10.00%) of respondents expressed the problem of non – availability of good quality compost, no support and encouragement from sugarcane factory management to produce sugarcane by organic methods, no remunerative price for organic produce and discouragement by people in continued adoption of organic cultivation. Sunil Kumar (2004) in a study conducted on tomato growers of Belgaum district in Karnataka reported that majority of respondents (75.83%) faced the problems of technical knowledge, whereas 65.00 per cent of the respondents expressed the problem of fluctuation in the market price followed by high transportation cost (62.53%), labour shortage and high wages (55.83%) and lack of irrigation facilities and power shortage (46.66%).

Kamble *et al.* (1987) reported that 20.02% of farmers of Ahamadnagar district of Maharashtra suggested for arranging training on organic method demonstration on the aspects treating seeds with bio-fertilizers. The need for supply of certified seeds on educating on organic cultivation result demonstration (18.20%) timely supply of bio – fertilizers with wide publicity (16.36%) and organizing training classes (7.27%) were the other suggestions highlighted by organic growers.

Gowri Shankar Rao (2000) in a study on sustainability of rice farmers in North Coastal Zone of Andhra Pradesh observed that farmers opined that, composting and use of FYM helps in soil productivity (97.50%), crop rotation with pulses one can sustain the rice cropping system (94.16%). They suggested for arranging the field visits to the farmers adopting sustainable organic farming practice (77.50%), providing the subsidies to meet the cost of inputs for sustainable agriculture development (75.80%) and development of organic package of practices to maintain sustainability in yield levels (74.00%). Similarly the need for bio – control measures in maintaining agriculture productivity (35.00%) and formation of rice growers association with sustainable practitioners as members (27.50%) were also highlighted for strengthening organic cultivation.

Objectives of the study

To study the constraints in production and marketing of organic vegetable growers and obtain their suggestion

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The present study was conducted in Belagavi district of Karnataka. Primary data were collected from 120 organic vegetable growers / farmers through structured questionnaire method at Belagavi district of Karnataka. The collected data was tabulated and analyzed by using frequency and percentage. The constraints being faced by organic vegetable growers for increased production of vegetables were identified by asking the organic vegetable growers to indicate the problems in the areas of production and marketing aspects and obtain their suggestions. Accordingly the responses were recorded and quantified using frequency and percentage of distribution.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Table 1 revealed that all the respondents had expressed problem of lack of literature or package of practices on organic vegetable production followed by low yield comparatively conventionally growing (96.66%). Majority of the organic vegetable growers noticed that Lack of support from the government agencies and other relevant departments in the farm of subsidy and financial assistance (92.50%). Lack of research support in providing scientific rationality of practices (85.33%) and more incidences of pests and diseases (69.16%) expressed by the respondents respectively. Similarly the respondents were expressed Non availability of sufficient quantity of organic inputs (60.00%) and limited and irregular power supply (53.33). More than 40% of the farmers noticed that lengthy organic certification procedure and high cost, limited and irregular power supply and lack of literature on local language. Few of the respondents expressed the problem of non availability of labour (35.83%), insufficient of water for irrigation (26.66%) and drastic reduction in cattle population (14.16%). Table 2 revealed that 100% of respondents expressed the problem of lack of minimum support price for organically grown vegetables, followed by non availability of market exclusively for organic produce (91.66%). Majority of the farmers noticed that absence of premium price for organic vegetable in local market (78.33%) followed by inability to identify marketing networks for organic vegetables (60.83%). Similarly lack of infrastrucre facilities like cold storage, processing unit and packing material (55.00%) and high commission charges (39.16%) and non availability of organic vegetable price information were expressed by the respondents. Finally high cost of transportation (21.66%) and delayed payment (10.33%) were expressed about marketing problems by the organic vegetable growers. Table 3 revealed that cent percent of the respondents suggested the intensive research on organic farming and networking of research information followed by supply of organic inputs at subsidized rate (97.50%). Majority of the growers were suggested that identification and multiplication of indigenous seeds material (85.83%) followed by Co-ordination with animal husbandry department to increase the local cattle population (67.50%) for preparing compost.

Table 1. Constraints of organic vegetable growers related to production aspects

(N=120)			
Sl. No.	Constraints related to production aspects	Number	Percentage
1	Lack of literature or package of practices on organic vegetable production	120	100.00
2	Low yield comparatively conventionally growing	116	96.66
3	Lack of support from the government agencies and other relevant departments in the form of subsidy and financial assistance	111	92.50
4	Lack of research support in providing scientific rationality of practices	103	85.33
5	More incidence of pests and diseases	83	69.16
6	Non availability of sufficient quantity of organic inputs	72	60.00
7	Limited and Irregular power supply	64	53.33
8	Lengthy organic certification procedure and high cost	58	48.33
9	Lack of literature on Local language	49	40.83
10	Non availability of labour	43	35.83
11	Insufficient water for irrigation	32	26.66
12	Drastic reduction in cattle population	17	14.16

Table 2. Constraints of organic vegetable growers related to marketing aspects

(N=120)			
Sl. No.	Constraints related to marketing aspects	Number	Percentage
1	Lack of minimum support price for organically grown vegetables	120	100
2	Non availability of market exclusively for organic produce	110	91.66
3	Absence of premium price for organic vegetables in local market	94	78.33
4	Inability to identify marketing networks for organic vegetables	73	60.83
5	Lack of infrastructure facilities like cold storage, packaging material and processing unit for organic vegetables	66	55.00
6	High commission charges	47	39.16
7	Non availability of organic vegetable price information	39	32.50
8	High cost of transportation	26	21.66
9	Delayed cash payment	13	10.33

Table 3. Suggestions obtained from the organic vegetable growers related to production aspects

(N=120)			
Sl. No	Suggestions related organic vegetable production	Number	Percentage
1	Intensive research on organic farming and networking of research information	120	100
2	Supply of organic inputs at subsidized rates	117	97.50
3	Identification and multiplication of indigenous seed material	103	85.83
4	Co-ordination with animal husbandry department to increase the local cattle population	81	67.50
5	Reintroduction of mixed farming system with sheep, goat and poultry.	75	62.50
6	Establishment of organic hubs to serve as information centres and collection centres	64	53.33
7	Improved credit facilities for organic farming through banks	57	47.50
8	Simplifying certification procedures, reduced cost of certification and encouraging group certification.	51	42.50
9	Implementing more government policies that support organic farming.	43	35.83
10	Introduction of organic farming curriculum at school and college level.	33	27.50
11	Introducing separate courses on organic farming in concerned universities	24	20.00

Table 4. Suggestions obtained from the organic vegetable growers related to Organic vegetable marketing aspects

(N=120)			
Sl. No.	Suggestions related organic vegetable production	Number	Percentage
1	Government has to fix minimum support price for organically produced vegetables	120	100.00
2	Encourage to set up exclusive organic vegetable marketing centres	113	94.16
3	Developing organic vegetable supply chain system	108	90.00
4	Rythu Bazar (KisanMandis) should be involved in organic vegetable marketing.	83	69.16
5	Arranging organic vegetable producers and buyers meet regularly	69	57.50
6	Arranging better transportation facilities for organically grown vegetables by using refrigerated vehicles.	65	54.16
7	Organization of organic vegetable mela / Exhibition by the government, NGOs and Organic farmers club	58	48.33
8	Wide publicity should be made through mass media like television, radio, news paper and posters to create awareness among public on organic vegetable production and marketing.	51	42.50
9	Incentives in prices over and above the MSP rates for organically produced vegetables.	45	37.50
10	Formation of clusters/collection centres for Forward and Backward linkages of organic vegetables	33	27.50
11	Creation of better infrastructure facilities like cold storage, processing and packaging etc	22	18.33
12	Facilitating contract farming for organic vegetable production and marketing with super market and multinational companies	19	15.83
13	Increasing consumer awareness on the values of organically grown vegetables	13	10.83

Similarly, reintroduction of mixed farming system with sheep, goat and poultry (62.50%) and establishment of organic hubs to serve as information centres (53.33%) were suggested by the respondents. More than 40.00% of the growers suggested that improved credit facilities for organic farming through banks

and simplifying certification procedures, reduced cost of certification and encouraging group certification. Finally, implementing more government policies that support organic farming (35.83%), introduction of organic farming curriculum at school and college level (27.50%) and Introducing separate

courses on organic farming in concerned universities (20.00%) were suggested by the organic vegetable growers for promoting the organic vegetable production and marketing.

The table 4 revealed that suggestions were obtained from the organic vegetable growers for improving the marketing for organically grown vegetables. The entire organic vegetable growers had suggested that government has to fix minimum support price for organically produced vegetables followed by encourage setting up exclusively for organic vegetable marketing centres (94.16%). Majority of the growers had suggested that developing organic vegetable supply chain system (90.00%). Similarly, organic vegetable growers expressed that Rythu Bazars (Kisan Mandis) should be involved in organic vegetable marketing (69.16%). More than 50% of the respondents had suggested that arranging organic vegetable producers and buyers meet regularly and arranging better transportation facilities for organically grown vegetables by using refrigerated vehicles. Organic vegetable growers had noticed that organization of organic vegetable mela / exhibition by the government, NGOs and organic farmers club (48.33%) and wide publicity should be made through mass media like television, radio, news paper and posters to create awareness among public on organic vegetable production and marketing (42.50%).

Similarly many of the respondents had suggested that incentives in prices over and above the MSP (Minimum Support Price) rates for organically produced vegetables (37.50%) and formation of clusters/collection centres for Forward and Backward linkages of organic vegetables (27.50%). Finally, Creation of better infrastructure facilities like cold storage, processing and packaging etc (18.33%), facilitating contract farming for organic vegetable production and marketing with super market and multinational companies (15.83%) and increasing consumer awareness on the values of organically grown vegetables (10.83%) had suggested by the organic vegetable growers for strengthening the organic vegetable marketing.

Conclusion

Organic vegetable farming can be a viable alternative production method for farmers, but there are many challenges. One key to success is being open to alternative organic approaches to solving production and marketing problems. Determine the cause of the problem, and assess strategies to avoid or reduce the long term problem rather than a short term fix for it. Government should take a lead role in conduct of training and demonstration programs for creating more awareness about organic farming and their benefits. The state agricultural department and state agricultural universities should also actively involved in these programs and should also promote through their extension services to resolve the constraints of organic vegetable production and marketing. So that it will not only boost the confidence of the farmers and but also increase the demand for organic vegetables.

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