MARKETING OF KHASI MANDARIN ORANGE IN SONAPUR BLOCK OF KAMRUP DISTRICT, ASSAM

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Abstract: The present study is an attempt to study the Marketing of Khasi Mandarin in Sonapur block of Kamrup district, Assam. The specific objectives of the study were (1) To study the marketing channels, marketing margin and price spread of Khasi Mandarin; and (2) To examine the marketing problems of Khasi Mandarin. The study was comprised of 120 sample farmers with khasi mandarin cultivation which comprises primary data. Purposive sampling was adopted for the selection of sample farmers since large numbers of orange growers are cultivating khasi mandarin in the Sonapur block of Kamrup district of Assam. The marketing channel, margin and price spread were estimated by estimating the net return channelwise. The study revealed three marketing channels of khasi mandarin in the area, viz, a) Channel I Producer – Consumer, b) Channel II Producer – Wholeseller- Consumer and c) Channel III Producer – Commission Agent – Consumer. The marketing efficiency was estimated by using Shepherd formula and the results shows that the marketing efficiency was more in channel III, i.e. 4.21 per cent. The highest marketing cost was observed in Channel III, the amount being Rs. 6620 per qt. The lowest marketing cost was observed in channel I (Rs. 3192 per qt.) where producer directly sold their product to the consumer. The price spread of khasi mandarin revealed that the producer's share in consumer's rupee was highest (24.18 per cent) in channel I, because of absence of middlemen (commission agent) in the channel whereas in channel II and channel III the producer's share in consumer's rupee was 20.19 and 19.05 per cent respectively. The response of the farmers to various problems faced by the sample farmers in marketing of khasi mandarin were estimated by simple percentage and average to examine the problems faced by the farmers and 100.00 per cent farmers faced the problem of inadequate transport facilities and problem of storage.
Keywords: Marketing channel, Marketing margin, Price spread.

Introduction

Agriculture is the backbone of the rural economy of India where 70% of the population earns their living on agriculture. Orange is a seasonal horticultural fruit crop which is considered to be one of the important citrus fruit and it occupies a prominent place in the horticultural field. Mandarin Orange (citrus Meticulata) is most common among citrus fruits grown in India. Oranges are mostly grown in the states of Maharashtra, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Assam, Orissa, West Bengal, Rajasthan, Nagaland, Mizoram and Arunachal Pradesh. Orange cultivation plays vital role in the socio-economic condition of rural areas in Assam.

Oranges are available during winter and grow on evergreen trees which are about 30 feet high and 20 feet wide. Once the orange trees are matured it gives fruits for 15-20 years. Assam is also considered to be the creator center of citrus flora of India and it falls under the world citrus belt. Assam produces about 10.8% of total area of the country under orange cultivation and has attained the third position in the country. Average orange yield per hectare in Assam is 11.0 mt/ha while in all India, it is only 7.3 mt/ha.

Statement of the Problem

The study has been conducted by selecting orange growers from Sonapur Block of Kamrup district. In spite of huge production of Khasi mandarin in the block, the farmers were not getting their appropriate price because of the lack of proper marketing system and marketing channels. The prices of mandarin orange were dominated by the middleman, moreover due to the poor communication facilities; the people were ignorant about the actual market price which compelled them to sell the oranges in low prices. Moreover due to poor transportation the farmers were not willing to sell their product directly which encourages the existence of middleman, to control the whole market. The climatic condition and soil favours the orange cultivation in the area but, no systemic study about marketing of khasi mandarin has been done so far in the area. Therefore the present study was attempted to examine the marketing of khasi mandarin in Sonapur block of Kamrup district of Assam.

Objectives of the study

1.   To study the marketing channels, marketing margin and price spread of Khasi Mandarin;

2.   To examine the marketing problems of Khasi Mandarin.

Selection of samples and Methodology

The study was comprised of 120 sample farmers with khasi mandarin cultivation which comprises primary data. Purposive sampling was adopted for the selection of sample farmers since large numbers of orange growers are cultivating khasi mandarin in the Sonapur block of Kamrup district of Assam. Data were collected with the help of pre-tested schedule by the personal interview method of sampling. The marketing channel, margin and price spread were estimated by estimating the net return channel wise after identifying and marketing efficiency will be estimated by using Shepherd formula. The selected orange growers were stratified into three groups based on the area under orange cultivation by using cumulative root frequency rule. The stratification of group was as follows:

Group I   : Less than 1.0 ha – 2.0 ha

Group II   : 2.01 – 3.0 ha

Group III   : 3.01 ha and above

Result and discussions

Table 1. Effectiveness of various marketing channels of khasi mandarin according to different size groups

Channels	Group I		Group II		Group III		All farms	
	Qntl.	%	Qntl.	%	Qntl.	%	Qntl.	%
I	5	1.27	8.34	1.92	6.20	1.31	19.54	1.50
II	179	45.55	203.01	46.70	214.20	45.15	596.21	45.79
III	209	53.18	223.32	51.38	254	53.54	686.32	52.71
Total	393	100.00	434.67	100.00	474.4	100.00	1302.07	100.00

The table depicts the amount of quantity sold through different channels of khasi mandarin marketing. Channel III was the most effective channel for khasi mandarin marketing through which group I, group II and group III farmers transacted 53.18, 51.38 and 53.54 per cent of marketed surplus respectively. For all the farm groups 52.71 per cent was sold through channel III. The second important channel for group I farm, group II farm and group III farm was channel II through which 45.55, 46.70 and 45.15 per cent respectively of marketable surplus was transacted. The less important channel in terms of quantity for group I, group II, group III transacted was Channel I through which 1.27, 1.92 and 1.31 per cent was transacted respectively in this channel. Thus, the most effective marketing channel of khasi mandarin in the study area was channel III producer-commission agent – consumer.

Table 2. Marketing Cost of Intermediaries in khasi mandarin marketing system in different marketing channels (Rs. /Qt.)

Intermediaries	Marketing Cost		
	Channel I	Channel II	Channel III
Producer	3192 (100.00)	3150 (49.30)	3200 (48.34)
Commission Agent	-	-	3420 (51.66)
Wholeseller	-	3240 (50.70)	
Total Marketing Cost	3192 (100.00)	6390 (100.00)	6620 (100.00)

The figures in the parentheses indicates percentages to the total

The table depicts the marketing cost incurred by different intermediaries in the khasi mandarin marketing channel. The highest marketing cost was observed in Channel III, the amount being Rs. 6620per qt. The lowest marketing cost was observed in channelI Rs. 3192 per qt. where producer directly sold their product to the consumer. It is also evident from table that the maximum amount of marketing cost was incurred by commission agent Rs. 3240 per qt. in channel III. Hence it can be estimated from the table that the marketing cost was directly related to the length of marketing channel.

Table 3. Marketing margins of intermediaries in khasi mandarin marketing system in different marketing channels (Rs. / Qt.)

Intermediaries	Marketing Margin		
	Channel I	Channel II	Channel III
Commission Agent	-	-	13380 (100.00)
Wholeseller	-	12360 (100.00)	
Total Marketing Margin	-	12360 (100.00)	13380 (100.00)

The figures in the parentheses indicates percentages to the total

The above table reveals the marketing margins earned by different intermediaries in khasi mandarin marketing channels. The total marketing margin was highest in Channel III was Rs. 13380 per qt. The total marketing margin in channel II was found to be Rs. 12360 per qt.

Table 4. Price spread analysis in khasi mandarin system for different marketing channels

Items	Channel I	Channel II	Channel III
Consumer's price (Rs. / Qt.)	13200.00	15600.00	16800.00
Total Marketing Cost (Rs. / Qt.)	3192.00	6390.00	6620.00
Total marketing margin (Rs. / Qt.)	-	12360.00	13380.00
Producers share in consumer's rupee (%)	24.18	20.19	19.05

The above table reveals that in case of direct sale, the producer's share in consumer's rupee was highest 24.18 per cent in channel I, because of absence of middlemen (commission agent) in the channel. In the marketing of channel II and channel III the producer's share in consumer's rupee was 20.19 and 19.05 percent respectively. Thus, the results depicted that the producer's share on consumer's rupee was directly related to the number of intermediaries in the channel.

Table 5. Marketing efficiency of various channels of khasi mandarin marketing

Channels	Size groups			
	Group I	Group II	Groups III	Average
I	3.09	3.06	3.17	3.11
II	3.88	3.91	3.99	3.93
III	4.25	4.21	4.16	4.21

The marketing efficiency of various identified marketing channels of khasi mandarin was computed by using the Shepherd's formula and the results are presented in the above table. The Table shows that the marketing efficiency was more in channel III, i.e. 4.21 per cent and it was followed by channel I 3.11 per cent and channel II3.93 per cent respectively. Thus, channel III was found to be the most efficient channel in the area in khasi mandarin marketing.

Table 6. Distribution of sample farmers of different size groups on the basis of problems
faced by the farmers in khasi mandarin marketing

Sl No.	Problems	Group I			Group II			Group III			Total		
		Sample Size	Faced	Not Faced	Sample Size	Faced	Not Faced	Sample Size	Faced	Not Faced	Sample Size	Faced	Not Faced
1	Inadequate Transport Facilities	60 (100.00)	60 (100.00)	0	38 (100.00)	38 (100.00)	0	22 (100.00)	22 (100.00)	0	**120 (100.00)**	**120 (100.00)**	**0**
2	Non availability of market in locality	60 (100.00)	41 (68.33)	19 (31.66)	38 (100.00)	16 (42.10)	22 (57.89)	22 (100.00)	8 (36.36)	14 (63.63)	**120 (100.00)**	**65 (54.17)**	**55 (45.83)**
3	Absence of Market Information	60 (100.00)	25 (41.67)	35 (58.33)	38 (100.00)	17 (44.74)	21 (55.26)	22 (100.00)	7 (31.81)	15 (68.18)	**120 (100.00)**	**49 (40.83)**	**71 (59.17)**
4	Low price due to existence of middleman	60 (100.00)	29 (48.33)	31 (51.67)	38 (100.00)	18 (47.37)	20 (52.63)	22 (100.00)	22 (100.00)	0	**120 (100.00)**	**69 (57.50)**	**51 (42.50)**
5	Problem of storage	60 (100.00)	60 (100.00)	0	38 (100.00)	38 (100.00)	0	22 (100.00)	22 (100.00)	0	**120 (100.00)**	**120 (100.00)**	**0**
6	Existence of market middleman	60 (100.00)	33 (55.00)	27 (45)	38 (100.00)	14 (36.84)	24 (63.16)	22 (100.00)	15 (68.18)	7 (31.81)	**120 (100.00)**	**62 (51.67)**	**58 (48.33)**

The problems faced by the farmers in khasi mandarin marketing were broadly categorized such as inadequate transport facilities, non-availability of market in the locality, absence of market information, low price due to existence of middlemen, problem of storage and existence of market middlemen. Thus, it was clear from the table that 100.00 per cent of the total sample farmers from all the three groups faced the problem of inadequate transport facilities and problem of storage where a**s** non-availability of market locality was 54.17 per cent, absence of market information was reported by 40.83 per cent, low price due to existence of middlemen was 57.50 percent and existence of market middlemen was 51.67 per cent of the sample farmers.

Conclusion and suggestions

Thus from the above discussion it can be concluded that Channel III was the most effective channel for khasi mandarin marketing. The price spread of khasi mandarin revealed that the producer's share in consumer's rupee was highest in channel I, because of absence of middlemen (commission agent). Thus, the farmer should sell their product through the most efficient channel. Policy should be directed towards elimination of large number of middlemen in the marketing process to reduce the marketing cost, margins and to increase the producer's share in consumer's rupee. Building up of storage infrastructure and improvement of road infrastructure in the khasi mandarin growing area would reduce the transportation cost and to reduce the distress sale of the farmers.

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