CONSTRAINTS FACED BY THE RESPONDENTS IN THE ADOPTION OF RECOMMENDED BANANA TECHNOLOGIES

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Abstract

Banana is an important fruit, representing about 40.00 per cent of the world trade in fruits. It is also the fourth most important commodity at global level next to rice, wheat and dairy products. It is widely grown in India and has great socio-economic significance. It is a dessert fruit for millions and is used as staple food. It is otherwise called as 'Apple of Paradise'. It is a good source of carbohydrates, vitamins and minerals. It is used in the dietic management of celiac disease in children and for sodium restriction in some patients (Chitra *et al.*, 2002). Because of its multifaceted uses, it is referred to as 'Kalpatharu' (Plant of virtues). In India, it is the second most important fruit crop both in area and production, accounting to nearly 12.9 per cent of the total area under fruit crops and over 37 per cent (16.81 million tonnes) of fruit production. It is commercially cultivated in the states of Tamil Nadu, Maharashtra, Karnataka, Assam, Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Gujarat, West Bengal and Madhya Pradesh.

Keywords : Banana growers, technologies and constraints

Introduction

Banana is an important fruit, representing about 40.00 per cent of the world trade in fruits. It is also the fourth most important commodity at global level next to rice, wheat and dairy products. It is widely grown in India and has great socio-economic significance. It is a dessert fruit for millions and is used as staple food. It is otherwise called as 'Apple of Paradise'. It is a good source of carbohydrates, vitamins and minerals. It is used in the dietic management of celiac disease in children and for sodium restriction in some patients (Chitra *et al.*, 2002). Because of its multifaceted uses, it is referred to as 'Kalpatharu' (Plant of virtues). Banana is widely grown under tropical subtropical conditions across the country in about 4, 64,000 ha annually producing 15 million tonnes under different production systems. Banana ranks third in importance among the fruits of the world. In India, banana is so predominant and popular among people as both poor and rich like it. It could be considered as 'Poor man's apple' and it is the cheapest among all other fruits in the country. Considering the year round availability of fruits, unlike the seasonal availability of other tree fruits, it has become an inevitable necessity in any household in India, for all functions. In India, it is the second most important fruit crop both in area and production, accounting to nearly 12.9 per cent of the total area under fruit crops and over 37 per cent (16.81 million tonnes) of fruit production. It is commercially cultivated in the states of Tamil Nadu, Maharashtra, Karnataka, Assam, Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Gujarat, West Bengal and Madhya Pradesh.

Methodology

The Madurai District of Tamil Nadu was purposively selected for conducting research due to the following reasons. Existence of maximum area under banana cultivation. Familiarity of the student researcher with the local language and culture of the people. Time factor and other resources available to the researcher. Madurai district have seven taluks viz., Vadipatti, Melur, Madurai (North), Madurai (South), Thirumagalam, Peraiyur and Usilampatti of which, Perayurtaluks were selected as they had maximum area under Banana cultivation.

When an innovation is introduced among the farmers for adoption, initially farmers face lot of difficulties in terms of understanding its concepts, developing a favourable attitude, getting the required inputs and ensuring a good extension service. Adoption of particular innovation will take place only when farmers feel that the technology is suitable to their farming conditions. If the known technologies did not have expected adoption, it indicates that there is existence of constraints which blocked the adoption of technologies. Moreover, any social science research will not be considered as complete, unless the constraints are taken into account. Hence, this part deals with the constraints faced by the banana growers in the adoption of recommended technologies. The respondents were asked to express their constraints individually. The data were collected, processed and discussed in Table 1.

Table 1 : Constraints faced by the respondents in the adoption of recommended banana technologies   (n=120)

Sl. No.	Constraints	Number	Per cent
1.	Heavy damage by wind	120	100.00
2.	Fixation of price by commission agents	112	99.33
3.	High cost of labour	105	97.05
4.	Fluctuation in market price	102	85.05
5.	Inadequate extension support	99	82.05
6.	Lack of knowledge about pest and disease management	95	79.16
7.	More distance of market from village	91	75.83
8.	Lack of transportation facilities	84	70.04
9.	Inadequate credit facilities	82	68.35
10.	Non-availability of quality suckers	78	65.00
11.	Non-availability of labour	72	60.83
12.	High cost inputs	62	51.66

*- Multiple response

It could be seen from Table 1, that cent per cent of the respondents expressed heavy damage by with as their first and foremost constraint followed by fixation of price by commission agents (99.33 per cent) as their second constraint, while high cost of labour (97.05 per cent) was the third constraint experience by the respondents.

Fluctuation in market price was found to be the fourth constraint expressed by 85.05 per cent of the respondents, while nearly two-third of the respondents reported inadequate extension support (82.05 per cent), lack of knowledge about pest and disease management (79.16 per cent) and more distance of market from village (75.83 per cent) as their constraints, whereas 70.04 per cent of the respondents expressed lack of transport facilities as a constraint.

The other constraints reported by more than half of the respondents were inadequate credit facilities (68.35 per cent) and non-availability of quality suckers (65.00 per cent).

The next group of constraints which were expressed by less than fifty per cent of the respondents was non-availability of labour (60.83 per cent) and high cost of inputs (51.66 per cent).

The first and foremost constraint expressed by cent per cent of the respondents was heavy damage by wind. In the preceding year of the survey, there was a severe wind resulting in heavy loss. Hence this constraint might have been reported. This finding is in line with the findings of Senthilkumar (2001).

The second important constraint expressed by 99.33 per cent of the respondents was fixation of price by commission agents. While marketing banana, the price fixation is done mostly by the commission agents. They fixed very low prices without considering the production cost this finding is in line with the findings of Kavaskar (2003).

High cost of labour was the constraint faced by 97.05 per cent of the respondents. As banana is the long duration crop, it requires more number of labourers for earning out various production operations. Nowadays, the agricultural labourers are demanding more wages irrespective of the nature of that is why many of them might have reported it as a major constraint. The finding is line with the findings of Kumar (1998).

The fourth constraint experienced by 85.05 per cent of the respondents was fluctuation in market price. This might be due to the reason that the demand for banana is seasonal and hence the price fluctuated day to day. Due to this fluctuation in price, the farmers could not get good returns. Hence, the respondents might have expressed this as a serious constraint in their cultivation. This finding is in line with the findings of Senthilkumar (2001).

Inadequate extension support was expressed as the fifth constraint by 82.05 per cent of the respondents. The respondents felt that the extension personnel of the state department of horticulture were nor taking adequate efforts to provide the latest technical information on banana cultivation practices. This findings is in line with the findings of Senthilkumar (2001).

Lack of knowledge about pest and disease management was the sixth constraint experienced by 79.16 the respondents in their cultivation. The respondents felt that was lack of intensive efforts by the Department of Horticulture to train the respondents. Hence, the respondents might have expressed this as a series constraint in their cultivation.

The constraint experienced by 75.50 per cent of the respondents was more distance of market from village. As the market centers are located far away from their villages, the farmers had to arrange for proper mode of transport for shifting their produce to the markets. Moreover, they had to afford high transport cost. Hence, they might have reported this as a constraint.

Lack of transportation facilities was found to be the eighth constraint reported by 70.04 per cent of the respondents. The farmers have to use different modes of transport like mini lorries and tempos for shifting their produce. During the peak season, they could not get the required mode of transport.

The ninth constraint expressed by 68.35 per cent of the respondents was inadequate credit facilities. Most of the respondents were having inadequate savings for the purchase of vital inputs for future use. They always depended on private money lenders. They charged high interest rates and at times they have to mortgage their properties. Besides, the co-operative society and commercial banks in the study area were not sanctioning adequate amount to purchase the inputs. This finding is in contradictory with the findings of Senthilkumar (2001).

The other constraint experienced by half of the respondents (50.00 per cent) was non-availability of quality suckers. This findings is in accordance with the findings of Kavaskar (2003).

Non-availability of labour (60.83 per cent) and high cost of inputs (51.66 per cent) were found to be the constraints reported by less than fifty per cent of the respondents. As banana crop required more fertilizer, pesticides etc., the farmers have to spend more money for purchasing the inputs. This would intern increase the production cost. Hence, this constraint may be reported.

Conclusion

Totally the respondents expressed 12 constraints in the adoption of banana technologies. They were heavy damage by wind (100.00 per cent), followed by fixation of price by commission agents (87.50 per cent), high cost of labour (73.33 per cent), fluctuation in market price (70.83 per cent), inadequate extension support (66.66 per cent), lack of knowledge about pest and disease management (65.00 per cent), most distance of market from village (62.50 per cent), lack of transportation facilities (58.33 per cent), inadequate credit facilities (56.66 per cent), non-availability of quality suckers (50.00 per cent), non-availability of labour (45.83 per cent) and high cost of inputs (41.66 per cent).

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