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**Marketing behaviour of brinjal growers in  
Pudukkottai District**

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**Abstract**

The present study was conducted in selected villages of Pudukkottai district of Tamil Nadu to document the marketing behaviour of brinjal growers with a sample size of 60 respondents. The respondents were selected based on proportionate random sampling method. The results of the study revealed that vast majority (95.00%) do not enquire prevailing price before reaching the markets. Majority of the brinjal growers were using gunny bags for packing the produce and sold their produce through commission agents. Around 80 percent of the respondents considered 'on the spot payment' as the main criterion for the selection of market. Majority of the respondents had reported that they were not having sufficient marketing facility. The study warrants both marketing infrastructures and institutional linkages for delivering commodity price and crop selection advisories.

**Keywords:** Brinjal growers, marketing facility, presale market price, grading and supply chain

**Introduction**

Agriculture remains the livelihood for more than 50 percent of the Indian Population. India holds 142 million hectares of arable land with 137 million farm households and has 46 of the 60 soil types in the world with 15 agro climatic zone. India is the second largest producer of fruits and vegetables in the world. India's production of fruits and vegetables currently stands at 97.38 million tons and 187.36 million tons respectively. Making up for around 12% of fruits and 10% of vegetables world production. (2018-2019 2<sup>nd</sup> estimate). Tamil Nadu state contributes for 6.5 percent of fruits production and 3.6 percent of vegetable production. The major vegetables grown in Tamil Nadu are Tapioca, Tomato, Brinjal, Chillies, Ladies finger, Cauliflower, Cabbage, Melon, Potato, Carrot, and cucurbits. Among the principal vegetable crops grown, Brinjal is one of the most common, popular crop adapted to different agro-climatic regions and can be grown throughout the year. It is a perennial but grown commercially as an annual crop. A number of cultivars are grown in India, consumer preference being dependent upon fruit colour, size and shape. In Tamil Nadu, Brinjal is grown in 14,000 Ha with a production of 1,96,000 Mts. Though contributing national food security, Indian farmers are stuck at low level of income from agriculture. In the last few years India has seen major crisis in the farming sector mainly due to market factors such large numbers of intermediaries in supply chain, poor logistics and cold storage facilities, high fluctuation in price and lack of food processing industries, etc. In the present scenario, high perishability, seasonal in nature and bulkiness make the marketing of fresh vegetables extremely complex and the farmer is also most exploited due to lack of proper marketing supply chain system and linkage between farmer to potential market (Berdegue *et al.* 2008; Cavatassi *et al.* 2009) [2, 3]. Since smallholders are the major producers of Brinjal, marketing is unorganized and scattered

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and rely in the hands of intermediaries. The producers are forced to sell their produce immediately after the harvest at low prices in the local commission mandis. Taking into account these factors, the present study was taken up to document the Marketing Behaviour of Brinjal Growers in Pudukkottai District.

### Methodology

In Pudukkottai district, Brinjal is grown in 253 Ha with a production of 1947 Mts and with a productivity of 8.9 Mts/Ha. Among the 13 blocks of Pudukkottai district, Thiruvarankulam block was purposively selected for the study. A sample of 60 Brinjal growers was selected from three revenue villages based on proportionate random sampling method. Data were collected with the help of a well-structured pretested interview schedule and analyzed with suitable statistical techniques.

### Results and Discussion

To understand the marketing behavior of Brinjal growers, the marketing components namely packing methods, transportation, point of sales, supply chain mode, grading and weighing behavior, distance of the market, payment terms, rationale for market selection, intermediaries involvement and evaluation about existing market facilities were studied.

#### 1. Packing methods

Majority of the respondents (80.00%) were found using jute gunny bags weighing 25 Kgs of produce for packing and transporting. About 13 percent of the respondents using plastic racks while plastic bags were used by the remaining 07.00 percent of the respondents. The commission agents and local merchants also supply gunny bags and plastic racks hence, majority of the farmers are using gunny bags and plastic racks.

#### 2. Grading and weighing behavior

From the table, it could also be seen that 87 percent of the Brinjal growers were found to be checking the weights and remaining 13 percent do not practice grading and weighing, since the buyers had cordial relationship with them.

#### 3. Point of sale

Majority (90.00%) preferred to sell in the nearby markets where commission agents are available. The reason might be fair prices than the local market. Only 10 percent of the Brinjal growers sold their produce in local markets. Since the nearby town is more than 20 Kms distance, small holders do not opt for far away markets instead of attractive price terms.

#### 4. Supply chain mode

Among the respondents, vast majority of the respondents (85.00%) had sold their farm produce to commission agents only. The commission agents are familiar with the farmers by providing technical and financial support. Minor proportions

of cultivators affordable with transport costs search for nearby wholesaler markets. None had sold their produce directly.

#### 5. Distance of the market

The locale of the selling place decides the place of selling. It was observed that 90.00 percent of the respondents sold their produce in the markets located within the distance of 5.00 Kms.

#### 6. Transportation

It was inferred from the Table 1 that 82.00 percent of the respondents transported their harvested produce to markets using two wheelers. There were 13.00 percent of the respondents who used load van for transporting the produce. It was observed during the survey that the farmers themselves collectively arranging common load vehicles to reach the nearby market. It was observed that scanty proportion of the respondents who cultivated Brinjal in larger extent and voluminous yield are opted for nearby town markets

#### 7. Rationale of market selection

Since the commission agents in nearby market give on the spot payment to the farmers, majority (80.00%) of the respondents opted the market selection 'on the spot payment' as the main criteria for the selection of market followed by 12.00% opted the market on location advantage.

#### 8. Intermediaries involvement

Majority of the respondents (83.00%) felt that there were intermediaries involvements in the market who decide the price in the market. Thus, it is inferred that the producers could not demand the price. Absence of institutional markets and prevailing ascendancy of private players would have allowed the intermediaries to dominant the trade.

#### 9. Evaluation about existing market facilities

Majority of the respondents (88.00%) reported that existing marketing facilities were not sufficient and the rest (12.00%) were satisfied with the existing market facilities. Absence of storage facilities, road conditions and less frequent public transportation, intermediaries involvement and wholesale markets located at distance places were the major reasons for dissatisfaction of the respondents.

#### 10. Awareness on presale market price

Vast majority (95.00%) do not enquire about the price of the produce before going to the market. Following this very meagre (05.00%) percent of the respondents enquired the prevailing price over phone with the traders. None of them using social networking sites and mobile application to know the prevailing market rates. Hence it is imperative to train the farmers to use modern gadgets to know the current market price in local and neighbouring markets. This might enhance the bargaining power of the small holders to fetch good price while selling.

**Table 1:** Distribution of Respondents According to Their Marketing Behaviour (n = 60)

Sl. No.	Marketing components	Number	% Rounded off
<b>1.</b>	<b>Packing methods</b>		
a	Gunny bags	49	80
b	Polythene bags	4	07
c	Plastic Trays	7	13
<b>2.</b>	<b>Grading and weighing</b>		
a	Yes	52	87
b	No	8	13
<b>3.</b>	<b>Point of sales</b>		
a	Local Village	6	10
b	Neighbouring market	54	90
c	Nearby town	-	-
<b>4.</b>	<b>Supply chain mode</b>		
a	Direct producer	-	-
b	Local merchants	5	8
c	Retailers	-	-
d	Commission agents	51	85
e	Wholesellers	04	07
<b>5.</b>	<b>Distance of the market</b>		
a	Up to 5 km	54	90
b	Up to 10 km	06	10
c	Up to 10 -20km	-	-
d	More than 20 km	-	-
<b>6.</b>	<b>Transportation</b>		
a	Human headload	-	-
b	Two-wheeler	49	82
c	Load vans	08	13
d	Town bus	03	5
<b>7.</b>	<b>Rationale for market selection</b>		
a	Receipt of advance	-	-
b	On the spot payment	48	80
c	Higher price	5	8
d	Nearby location	7	12
<b>8.</b>	<b>Intermediaries involvement</b>		
a	Fully	50	83
b	Partially	10	17
c	Nil	-	-
<b>9.</b>	<b>Evaluation about existing market facilities</b>		
a	Adequate	53	88
b	Inadequate	07	12
<b>10.</b>	<b>Awareness on presale market price</b>		
a	If Yes-Over landline phone/mobile	03	05
b	Over social networking sites	-	-
c	Mobile apps	-	-
	If No	57	95

## Conclusion

The marketing of perishable commodities such as vegetables are highly complex. Since the small holders are the majority cultivators of vegetables, technical and institutional support mechanism are crucial. The present study revealed that vast majority do not aware the price of the produce before going to the market. It leads to traders' dominance and reduces bargaining power of the producers. Therefore, prevailing market rates may be disseminated through social media for effective decision making on place of selling and price slab. Majority of the respondents reported that existing marketing facilities were not sufficient. Therefore, to reduce marketing cost and marketing loss appropriate and efficient logistic and marketing facilities are needed. (Gaurav, 2011) [4]. The marketing supply chain of brinjal consists of various intermediaries such as commission agents, wholesalers and retailers. Thus, the producer share in consumer price is meager and it is necessary to reduce the number of intermediaries in marketing supply chain by initiating avenues for direct selling and drafting policies on price regulations.

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