

A Study on Marketing Issues Faced By The Farmers With Special Reference To Thanjavur

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I. INTRODUCTION

The growing market for all coconut products is waking up even in the USA and Europe, countries which have never used coconut in their cuisine. Virgin Coconut Oil, selling at a premium, is also being valued for its health benefits with claims being made that it is very beneficial for HIV Aids patients with some scientific validation too.

Coconut oil for edible purposes is now being claimed to be the second best edible oil in the world, after Olive oil. Much has been proclaimed about the temperate world's incorrect propoganda of soya bean oil being better than the tropical world's coconut oil. The demand for coconut products will steadily grow at an increasing rate as education, awareness and prosperity reaches more and more people.

India has not made tangible progress in product diversification and by-product utilization except for traditional activities of oil milling and coir products. Drastic change in this situation is the need of the hour to make coconut farming a profitable venture as is being achieved by other coconut growing countries through processing and export of diverse coconut products.

High Yielding coconut Palms

In India the demand for seedlings is primarily and hopefully met by planting nuts collected from high yielding palms. Unfortunately most often this is not so. A few hundred thousand hybrid seedlings are produced by The Coconut Development Board and the Agricultural Departments of various states, and a handful of private growers. There are numerous producer of hybrid seedlings follows very scientific method of hybridization program of coconut in their breeding gardens.

Problems and potentials: Farmers, research, and industry viewpoints Farmers' contribution to improving the value and uses of coconut through the maintenance and use of genetic diversity.

Coconut marketing in Thanjavur

The State government has constructed a coconut marketing complex at Pattukkottai in Thanjavur district at a cost of Rs. 4 Crores. The complex incorporates a drying yard, rest rooms for farmers to stay, a godown, shops for farmers to sell coconuts, a quality control wing, an administrative block, canteen and parking space and emerged as a full-fledged marketing complex. The complex constructed on 20 acres of land at Ponnvarayankadu near Pattukkottai. The coconut marketing complex is a boon for the farmers of Thanjavur area.

In Thanjavur district, coconut is cultivated on 68,000 acres by nearly 75,000 farmers. Two lakh farm laborers are also involved in coconut cultivation and production. The coconut farmers have been facing the problem of fluctuation in price for both the nut and copra, lack of facilities for converting the nut into copra and lack of storage facilities. The complex may help them in solving these problems. The complex also provides a solar drier and machine drier facilities to the farmers. The State government is procuring copra from the farmers through co-operatives. Pattukkottai Agriculture Produce Co-operative Sales Society is procuring copra from the farmers now. Identity cards have been issued to them. Now the farmers can sell their produce at the coconut marketing complex.

II. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The following research questions are quite relevant to the crucial purpose of the study and seeking to understand the marketing problems and prospects of coconut and also study the marketing strategies of coconut.

- ✓ What are the various factors affecting the coconut marketing?
- ✓ What are the factors influencing the service quality of coconut marketing?
- ✓ What are the parameters determining the coconut marketing?
- ✓ What are the problems faced by the farmers in coconut marketing?

- ✓ What are the dimensions of coconut marketing?
- ✓ What are the factors responsible for the present marketing problems involved in coconut marketing?
- ✓ What are the problems faced by the farmers in the cultivating practices of coconut?

III. NEED FOR THE STUDY

The production and marketing scenario of coconut in the country has witnessed a phenomenal development, particularly in the field of production such as development of improved high yielding dwarf varieties of crossbred coconut palm, traditional, non-traditional, commercial and industrial coconut product, it was decided to study the current status of developments that have taken place on production and marketing front of coconut and its products in the country. Therefore, a fresh survey on production and marketing of coconut and coconut product in Tamilnadu was undertaken. This thesis makes an attempt to study the present scenario of coconut industry and the problems faced by the producers and traders involved in the marketing process of coconut and to focus on the inadequacies prevailing in the marketing system of coconut and coconut product in the country.

Distribution of Respondents based on the problems involved in the coconut marketing

S.No	Problems involved in the coconut marketing	Mean	S.D
1	High fluctuations in market prices	3.70	1.170
2	More pests and more diseases	3.67	1.198
3	High cost of plant protection chemicals	3.05	1.373
4	Non-availability of adequate institutional credit facilities at right time	2.88	1.404
5	Inadequate infrastructural facilities and civic amenities	3.04	1.316
6	Ineffective Channel of distribution of 'producer—copra maker—oil miller—wholesaler—consumer'	3.19	1.262
7	Low profit margin	2.91	1.397
8	High marketing cost	2.93	1.376
9	Refusal to intervene by the state government and traditional regulatory authorities	3.01	1.267
10	Low prices paid to small producers	2.88	1.373
11	Deregulation of the coir industry	3.12	1.439
12	Vilification campaign unleashed by vested interests against the edible use of coconut oil	2.99	1.267
13	Inadequate institutional support	3.16	1.373
14	Declining viability of coconut farming	2.92	1.439

15	Eroding profitability	2.82	1.275
16	Decline in coconut hectarage due to land conversion into commercial and industrial purposes	2.85	1.331
17	Tenurial arrangement as a hindrance to increased investment in coconut culture	2.60	1.251
18	Relative un remunerativeness of Coconut farming being a predominantly monocrop	3.10	1.417
19	Price instability due to increasing competition from substitute oils	2.58	1.346
20	Lower oil recovery due to harvesting of immature nuts.	2.85	1.352
21	Poor copra making practices	2.85	1.432
22	Post harvest losses due to quality deterioration of copra In insect infestation	3.15	1.398
23	Post harvest losses due to quality deterioration of copra in transport	2.71	1.217
24	Post harvest losses due to quality deterioration of copra in storage	2.95	1.360
25	Low farm productivity	2.66	1.344

Source: Data generated from the respondents

The table shows the Distribution of respondents based on the problems encountered by the farmers in coconut marketing. It is evident from the above mentioned table that the high mean value of 3.70 with respect to high fluctuations in market prices as this problem is viewed as one of the most important problem faced by the farmers and the lowest mean value of 2.58 with respect to price instability due to increasing competition from substitute oils as this problem is viewed by the farmers as the least important. It is evident from the above mentioned table that the high mean value of 3.70 with respect to high fluctuations in market prices as this problem is viewed as one of the most important problem faced by the farmers.

Eigen value and cumulative percentage of opinion behind coconut marketing problems

Factor	Eigen Value	Percentage of Variance	Cumulative percentage
1	3.512	43.9	43.9
2	1.999	25	68.9
3	1.521	19	87.9

Source: Data generated from the respondents

Eigen value and cumulative percentage of opinion behind coconut marketing problems ,states that there are 3 factors ,which have an Eigen Value of 1 or more than 1.The last column in the table shows the cumulative percentage of 3 factors extracted together account for 87.9% of the total variance. This shows that only 3 factors reducing from 10 we have lost only 22.1% of the information content, while 87.9%

is retained by the 3 factors extracted out of the original 10 variables.

IV. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

- ✓ The present study is based on the reliability of the primary data. The sample units were selected from the population having multidimensional features of a large group. The farmers cultivating the coconut in some villages of Thanjavur district for a period less than 5 years were not selected for the study.
- ✓ Since the farmers involved in the production and cultivation of coconut, agricultural farming, coconut fiber, are assumed to be surviving and facing marketing problems. The samples are selected at random out of these selected areas of Thanjavur district. Therefore the findings are applicable to the areas from which the samples were drawn, not applicable for other areas.
- ✓ The farmers in the chosen area felt that there was an exploitation of coconut farmers by the marketing middlemen because of the credit marketing tie up of their commodity. Traders entice farmers short of cash to borrow money from them without interest. This means that the farmers were unknowingly paying for the interest. This system also creates an interdependence of prices which concentrates profit among buyers. Market knowledge and information, again to the disadvantage of the farmers, are taken from the traders themselves. These limitations are specific to the Thanjavur delta region where the study was carried out, not applicable for other areas.

V. CONCLUSION

The agricultural marketing undergoing a lot of changes in modern days. Coconut marketing is one of the most important agricultural marketing undergoing a lot of changes in modern days, particularly in delta region such as Thanjavur, where the farmers are facing a lot of problems. This article addresses the areas the farmers in Thanjavur facing the coconut marketing problems and the Government should take care of such issues immediately. The prices charged by the farmers is very low therefore the Government should focus on the prices of coconut and eliminate the role played by the middle men in fixing the prices of coconut. The Market knowledge and information, again to the disadvantage of the farmers, therefore the Government should focus on these areas and educate the farmers in coconut marketing and disseminating informations pertaining to coconut in delta region of Tamilnadu.

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