CONSTRAINTS IN POTATO CULTIVATION FACED BY THE POTATO GROWERS

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ABSTRACT

The study intended to know the personal profile of potato growers and constraints being faced by them. 150 potato growers were selected for this study from 5 villages of 2 selected blocks of Jalandhar district by using non-probability sampling method. Regarding the socio-personal characteristics of the potato growers, the study revealed that 54.66 per cent of the respondents were from the age group of 40-55 years. 32.66 per cent of them were matriculate and more than 50 per cent of them were having 2 to 38 acres operational landholding. Further, it was found that majority of potato growers (92.00%) followed rice-potato-fallow rotation. 68.00 per cent had medium mass media exposure. 58.66 per cent respondents had 1 to 33 acres area under potato cultivation and majority of them had 8-12 years of experience in potato growing. Majority of the respondents reported non-availability of disease resistant varieties and 68.00 per cent reported labour as the major problem. Maximum number of respondents reported that there was no support price fixed by the government for potato crop.

Key words : D

Cultivation and consumption of potato is constantly increasing. There is general appreciation of the benefits derived from abundance of potato in diet. Therefore, the potato growers should not only produce potatoes in bulk but also compete in quality, grading and varieties of potato grown. The yield per hectare is also very low as compared to that of the developed countries. The soil and climate conditions in Punjab are quite suitable for getting maximum production per unit area.

The present production of potato could be increased considerably if the available technology is effectively transferred to the farmers. Our training programmes need to focus more on transferring of new technology from the confines of laboratories and research institutes to the farmers and make them result oriented.

In view of these facts, it can be concluded that potato cultivation needs to be encouraged in the state. Its profitability needs to be enhanced further, but still profitability of potato growing is beset with many constraints faced by potato growers due to production and marketing. So, keeping all these aspects in view the present study was undertaken with the objective that the data generated by this study will provide much needed feed back to orient the research as well as extension strategies of Punjab Agricultural University, Ludhiana and Department of Agriculture Punjab.

The present study was conducted during 2004 in Jalandhar district of Punjab state because it tops in potato production in terms of production amongst the others districts of Punjab state. Out of 10 blocks of Jalandhar district, 2 blocks having maximum area under potato cultivation were selected and from each selected block, five villages, having maximum area under potato crop were chosen by using non-probability sampling i.e. convenience sampling. So in all 10 villages were selected as sample villages for this study.

A list of all potato growers with minimum of one acre area under potato cultivation was prepared. Fifteen potato growers belonging to small medium and large categories of operational land holding were
Constraints faced by the potato growers: In general, the potato growers faced problems in production, management, technical and marketing. The investigator has found the following constraints which were reported by the potato growers. The frequencies and percentage of respondents facing different constraints have been presented in Table 1.

Production related constraints: As majority of the farmers were small and medium farmers, therefore many constraints were faced by potato growers as evident from data in Table 1. In area of procurement of credit 5.33 per cent of potato grower reported the problem of non-availability of credit and 16.00 per cent said there was less amount of credit available. In the area of Selection of varieties', 35.33 per cent potato growers reported the problem of non-availability of varieties resistant to diseases', availability of seed at proper time of planting is very important, 11.33 and 33.33 per cent respondent reported difficulty in less availability and non-recommended seed availability. In the area of seed treatment, 23.33 per cent of potato grower had lack of knowledge of proper chemical and dose of chemical.

Management related constraints: It is evident from the data in Table 1 that 17.33 per cent respondents faced the problem of heavy soil texture. Whereas 44.66 and 34.66 per cent of the respondents were dissatisfied due to non-availability of fertilizer and lack in knowledge of dose, time and method of weedicide application. Maximum number of problems i.e. 84.66 per cent were in area of insect pests and disease as reported by the potato growers.

In case of ‘Harvesting’ of potato crop, 16.00 per cent respondents reported the unavailability of digger, 68.00 per cent reported the problem of labour availability. Only 8.00 per cent respondents faced the problem of lack of irrigation facilities.
Technical constraints: The data in Table 1 indicated that only 2.66 per cent respondents had the problem of non-suitability of the area and 31.33, 24.66 and 56.66 per cent of the respondents showed unfavourable govt. policies, lack of technical knowledge about potato growing and awareness about marketing trends respectively.

Marketing constraints: Majority of the respondents i.e. 68.00 per cent showed problem of no minimum support price fixed by government for their produce where as 45.33 per cent respondents faced difficulty in sale of potatoes and 11.33 per cent faced the problem of transport facility respectively.

REFERENCES