



Research Article

MARKETING CONSTRAINTS OF CASTOR GROWING FARMERS IN GUJARAT, INDIA

SODHI H.*¹ AND THAKAR K.²

¹V.M. Patel Institute of Management, Ganpat University, Kherva, Mehsana 384001, Gujarat, India

²Department of Agricultural Economics, C.P College of Agriculture, Sardarkrushinagar Dantiwada Agricultural University, Sardarkrushinagar, 385505, Gujarat, India, India

*Corresponding Author: Email - harpreet20dec@gmail.com

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Abstract: Castor is an important non-edible oilseed crop of arid and semi-arid regions of the world. Gujarat is the leading castor growing state in the country contributing 70% of the total castor production of the country. The study was conducted in Banaskantha district of Gujarat covering five talukas to analyse the marketing problems faced by castor growing farmers. Primary data were collected from 225 castor growing farmers. Six marketing problems focused in present study includes: price information and fluctuation, delay in cash payment, high cost of transportation, lack of transportation facility, lack of storage facility and distant markets. The farmers were confronted with the major problems viz., lack of information on price fluctuation followed by high cost of transportation and lack of transportation facilities. In Palanpur and Kankrej taluka in addition to these constraints distant market was also identified as a major constraint faced by the farmers in marketing of castor.

Keywords: *Castor, Constraints, Farmers, Marketing Problems*

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Introduction

Improvement in Castor oil is the major export oriented agricultural commodity earning high foreign exchange. In the agricultural economy of India, oilseeds are important next only to food grains in terms of area, production and value [1]. Oilseeds have been the backbone of agricultural economy of India since long. The Indian climate is suitable for cultivation of oilseed crops therefore, large varieties of oilseeds are cultivated here [2]. The major oilseeds grown in India are groundnut, soybean, rapeseed, sesame, linseed, safflower, castor, sunflower and niger. Castor (*Ricinus communis* L.) is an important non-edible oilseed crop of arid and semi-arid regions of the world. Castor seed contains 48 to 56 percent oil [3]. Mehsana, Banaskantha, Sabarkantha, Gandhinagar, Ahmedabad and Kutch are the main castor growing districts in Gujarat. Gujarat state is pioneer in the development and release of hybrids where the first castor hybrid GCH-3 was released for general cultivation in 1968 [4]. Subsequently seven more hybrids viz., GAUCH-1, GCH-2, GCH-4, GCH-5, GCH-6 GCH-7 and GDH-8 have been released for general cultivation. Among these, GCH-7 is nematode and wilt resistant high yielding hybrid [5]. Gujarat, Rajasthan, and Andhra Pradesh contribute 96% of the total castor seed production in India. Gujarat ranks first in area (5.65 lakh ha), production (8.61 lakh MT), and productivity (1152 kg/ha). The present study was conceived with a general objective of analysing marketing problems faced by the farmers cultivating hybrid castor in Banaskantha district of Gujarat.

Materials and Methods

In order to proceed with investigation as per the objectives stated, it was necessary to adopt an appropriate sampling design so as to focus on tackling the problems in marketing of castor by farmers. It was proposed at the outset to study the area under castor crop in primary stage. For this purpose, the secondary source data published by the Directorate of Economics and Statistics, Banaskantha was used. A multistage random sampling was adopted as appropriate sampling procedure for the study.

Banaskantha district ranks first in terms of area and production of castor among all the districts of Gujarat state. Hence the study was focused on Banaskantha district. In the second stage, it was proposed to select five talukas in Banaskantha district which were top ranking talukas in respect of area under castor in the district. These talukas are: Tharad, Vav, Dhanera, Kankrej and Palanpur. In the third stage, three villages from each taluka were randomly selected where the castor was predominantly cultivated during kharif season. In all 15 villages were surveyed. From each village 15 hybrid castor growing farmers were randomly selected to obtain information on different aspects of the study. Hence the sample size for the present study was 225 farmers of Banaskantha district of Gujarat. Keeping in view the objectives of the study, the questionnaire was prepared for the castor growing farmers to know their marketing related problems faced by them.

Results and Discussion

Castor is an important commercial crop grown in the study area. Large numbers of brands of castor hybrid seeds are available to the farmers. However, the castor hybrids like GAUCH-1, GCH- 2, GCH-4, GCH- 7 and GCH-8 are important hybrids which are in cultivation in the study area. These hybrids are marketed by Taluka Kharid Vechan Sanghs, APMCs and private traders having presence in almost all the castor growing talukas of the state. It was proposed to go into details of the problems faced by the farmers and survey was conducted for a sample of 45 farmers in each taluka so as to focus on various marketing problems faced by the farmers. The data collected were subject to statistical analysis and the results obtained regarding the marketing problems confronted by the castor growers are presented in the [Table-1]. Major six problems enlisted include price information and fluctuation, delay in cash payment, high cost of transportation, lack of transportation facilities, lack of storage facilities and distant market. Among these problems, in all the five talukas the farmers were confronted with the problems of lack of information on price fluctuation (90.22%) followed by high cost of transportation (37.33%) and lack of transportation facility (32.00%).

Table-1 Marketing problems faced by the farmers cultivating hybrid castor

SN	Marketing problem	Tharad	Vav	Dhanera	Kankrej	Palanpur	Over all
1	Price information and fluctuation	40 (88.89)	42 (93.33)	40 (88.89)	39 (86.67)	42 (93.33)	203 (90.22)
2	Delay in cash payment	04 (08.89)	15 (33.33)	06 (13.33)	12 (26.67)	05 (11.11)	42 (18.67)
3	High cost of transportation	15 (33.33)	35 (97.78)	08 (17.78)	20 (44.44)	06 (13.33)	84 (37.33)
4	Lack of transportation facility	09 (20.00)	32 (71.11)	11 (24.44)	12 (26.67)	08 (17.78)	72 (32.00)
5	Lack of storage facility	04 (8.89)	05 (11.11)	03 (06.67)	04 (08.89)	03 (06.67)	17 (08.44)
6	Distant market	05 (11.11)	31 (68.89)	04 (08.89)	16 (35.56)	07 (15.56)	63 (28.00)

Figures in parenthesis indicate percentage of sample respondent

Only in Vavtaluka, the farmers opined that distant market (68.89%) was also a major problem. This was due to the fact that in Vavtaluka the Agricultural Produce Marketing Committee (APMC) is yet to operate and they have to take their produce for marketing in the Tharad APMC market yard. In all the talukas, lack of storage facility was the least indicated problem, since castor growing farmers generally do not retain their produce for a longer period and, therefore, need no storage facility. Moreover, the castor seed is not a perishable product and is also free from storage pests attack. The major problems faced by the farmers of Odisha in marketing of their produce were lack of organized marketing institutions, poor access to agriculture market information, less storage space, poor availability of institutional credit, delay in cash payment and low price realisation [6]. The marketing problems related to marketing of castor were studied in Andhra Pradesh. It was revealed that major marketing problems include price manipulation by commission agents and middlemen, low remunerative price of produce, high fluctuation of prices and poor marketing practices [7]. The marketing of major oilseeds in Raigarh district of Chhattisgarh were studied. Lack of implementation of minimum support price followed by difficulties in transportation, storage problems and unawareness of the market information were identified as major bottlenecks in marketing which resulted in realising of low prices of their produce on selling [8]. The popularity of the crop in the study of commercial nature of the hybrid castor makes the market for hybrid castor seed very competitive. Large numbers of players in the market including TKVS as well as the forward trading of the commodity made the castor seed market highly complex. The present study thus revealed that the castor growing farmers of Gujarat were mainly confronted with the marketing problems of lack of information on price fluctuation, high cost of transportation, meagre transportation facilities as well as distant markets.

Conclusion

The study was conducted to find out the marketing constraints of Castor in Banaskantha district of Gujarat. 225 hybrid castor growing farmers from five talukas viz., Tharad, Vav, Dhanera, Kakrej and Palanpur of Banaskantha constituted the sample size. From each taluka based on cluster approach three villages were selected and, in each village, based on random sampling method 15 farmers were selected to elicit information through the questionnaire. The result revealed that the farmers were confronted with five major marketing constraints viz., Unawareness of price information and price fluctuation (90.22%), high cost of transport (37.33%), lack of transportation facilities (32.00%) and distant markets (28.00%).

Application of Research: The research results are useful to the policy makers to tackle the marketing problems of castor.

Abbreviations:

APMC – Agriculture Produce Marketing Committee.
ha. – Hectare
Kg. – Kilograms
MT.- Metric Ton
TKVS- Taluka Kharid Vechan Sangh

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University: Sardarkrushinagar Dantiwada Agricultural University,
Sardarkrushinagar, 385505, Gujarat, India
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Conflict of Interest: None declared

Study area / Sample Collection: Banaskantha district of Gujarat

Cultivar / Variety name: GAUCH-1, GCH-2, GCH-3, GCH-4, GCH-5, GCH-6 GCH-7 and GDH-8

Ethical approval: This article does not contain any studies with human participants or animals performed by any of the authors.
Ethical Committee Approval Number:

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