



Status and Constraints in Indian Fruits and Vegetable Export

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Introduction

The diverse climate in India ensures production of all varieties of fresh fruits and vegetables. Still the demand for fruits and vegetables has been constantly increasing. The increasing trend of agricultural trade of at global level benefits the developing countries the promotion of rural development, agricultural exports and economic growth (Barbier, 2000). India being an agricultural country has a large potential for foreign trade. The geographical location with good logistic and suitable climate placed India in a favorable position for growing a variety of fruits and vegetables around the year (Sexana *et al.*, 1990). India is producing around 85 million tons of fruits and 170 million tons of vegetables every year. The present situation demands considering Agriculture as the major economic and commercial activity to enhance growth and national economy. The huge production base of fruits and vegetables provides excellent export opportunities for India. Despite this advantage, India's share in the global market is insignificant and accounts for only 1.7 per cent of the global trade in vegetables and 0.5 per cent in fruits.

The horticulture sector is strongly believed to be the future for agriculture through fruits and vegetables export. The major concern during policy making is much oriented towards economic and political risks as the farmers of the country are heavily dependent on local markets and industries. All India Technology of Horticultural Crops had identified the problems in fruits and vegetables which discouraged the farmers from undertaking large-scale cultivation of fruits (Navadkar, 2004). The fresh fruit export from India is very small owing to a number of constraints and any solution would lead to realization of vision to the enhancement of exports in the near future (Chandra and Kar 2006). Owing to these creeping problems in the sector a study the constraints faced by the producers and exporters of major fruits and vegetables in India are identified. The producers and exporters of fruits and vegetables are facing several problems and are categorized as production and trade related here.

Constraints in fruits and vegetables export

There exists a close sense of belonging between farmers producing fruits and vegetables for export and the exporters. It is inevitable to know the problem of producer which is a complementary to the export sector. Hence the problems of producer in the course of production of fruits and vegetables are made and the constraints are listed according to its merits.

Problems encountered by farmers

The constraints faced by the sample farmers are furnished in Table 1. The most important constraint identified by the fruits and vegetables growers is the inability to meet the quality requirements for export. This is one of the frequent problems in fruits and vegetables export; so to say the importing countries propose particular quality specification for each commodity. This has resulted in farmers could not cater distant market for want of increased net price. The second major constraint ranked by the sample farmers is poor storage and transport facilities as most of the fruits and vegetables are perishable. Dependency on pesticide usage, lack of institutional supports and lack on information on organic cultivation are the other important problems encountered by the farmers.

It is noteworthy to infer that the production problems are spelled little by the farmers compared to facilitative constraints. On the whole the importance of quality produce to meet the requirements of importing countries. It also reveals the high demand for organic products especially mangoes in Germany, France, Netherland and U.K. The pesticide consumption of 39.73 thousand tons during 2005-06 in India has reached 52.98 thousand tons in 2011-12 (Indira Devi et al. 2017). Hence efforts are needed to reduce the usage of pesticides to make fruits and vegetables accepted by the European markets.

Table 1. Constraints of Fruits and Vegetables Farmers

Sl. No	Problems	Rank
1	Inability to meet quality requirements for export	I
2	Poor storage and transport facilities	II
3	Dependency on pesticide usage	III
4	Lack of Institutional supports	IV
5	Lack of information on organic cultivation of fruits and vegetables	V

Problems encountered by exporters

The problems faced by the exporters of fruits and vegetables are presented in Table 2. It could be seen from Table 2 that the poor infrastructure facilities are the most important problem faced by the exporters. It was reported that timely infrastructural facilities namely reefer vans, pack houses, quality packing materials, cool chain, Controlled Atmosphere (CA) containers are not adequately available for export. Lack of standardization on post-harvest handling is the second most important problem expressed. This shows the need for standardization of protocol and training on post-harvest handling and Controlled Atmosphere (CA) and Modified Atmosphere (MA) storage facilities. The third important problem is the documentation procedure for export. The other problems include collision among commission agents and auctioneers and unavailability of market information and strategies.

Table 2. Constraints of Fruits and Vegetables Exporters (n=40)

Sl. No	Problems	Rank
1	Poor infra-structure facilities	I
2	Lack of standardization on post-harvest handling	II
3	Tedious documentation procedures for export	III
4	Collision among commission agents and auctioneers	IV
5	Unavailability of market information and strategies	V

Conclusion

It could be concluded that the export share of major fruits and vegetables to the total production is found to be low except onion. The important constraints faced by fruits and vegetables growers are the inability to meet the quality requirements for export and poor storage and transport facilities. The poor infrastructure facilities and lack of standardization on post-harvest handling are the major problems faced by the exporters. This is in line with the findings of Usha *et al.* (2014). Hence, it is suggested suggest that there is a need for linking production and export activities in order to achieve the best results in terms of productivity, quality and value addition.

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