

DISPOSAL PATTERN OF POTATO



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Research paper

Potato (*Solanum tuberosum* L.) belonging to the family solanaceae is one of the most popular vegetables grown all over the world. It can be rightly called as the “King of Vegetables.” Potato is a winter crop with very high yield potentiality as compared to other food crops. It is an efficient food producer and has the potential to become a supplementary staple food besides cereals in the country. It has been recognized as a wholesome food and the richest source of energy in most of the countries where it forms an important part of the human diet. Potato cultivation in the state of Gujarat is largely concentrated in North and middle Gujarat comprising of Banaskantha, Mehsana, Kheda, Sabarkantha, Anand and Gandhinagar districts. Among these six districts, Banaskantha is having the first rank in terms of area and production. In Banaskantha district, potato was grown in 154000 hectares with production of 4606000 tonnes during 2005-2006. Thus, the present study was conducted with the objective of knowing the disposal pattern of potato in Banaskantha district of Gujarat state.

Methodology: The purposive sampling technique was adopted for achieving the objective of the present study. In Gujarat, potato is an important cash crop. Potato has emerged as an important vegetable crop for Banaskantha district of Gujarat state, with better productivity. Therefore, a study to know the disposal pattern of potato in Banaskantha district was undertaken. For this study, Banaskantha district, Deesa taluka, five villages and 90 farmers were selected. Relevant information was collected from the potato producers to know the disposal pattern of potato by

personal interview with the selected farmers.

Results and Discussion:

The average internal consumption, average production and average marketable surplus of potato by selected farmers is presented in table 1. The table shows that, the average marketable surplus of potato for selected farmers was 83.07 per cent (276.32 quintals). Among the different categories of farmers, average marketable surplus ranged from 139.62 quintals for small farmers to 409.42 quintals for large farmers. Among the selected farmers, the wages in kind was higher in case of large farmers (45.12 quintals) than medium farmers (21.25 quintals) and small farmers (5.18 quintals). The reason may be wages to labourers and village artisans were paid higher by the large farmers. Place wise sale within and out of Banaskantha district is given in table 2. The producers disposed off their produce out of district mainly to Ahmedabad, Siddhpur, Mehsana, Surat, Rajkot etc., markets. It was observed that about 58.66 per cent of the produce was sold within district, but 41.34 per cent of produce was disposed off out of the district by selected farmers. The quantity of potato sold within district in percentage terms was higher for small farmers (64.26 %) followed by medium farmers (59.85 %) and large farmers (54.88 %) where as the quantity of potato sold out of district in percentage terms was higher for large farmers (45.12 %) followed by medium farmers (40.15 %) and small farmers (35.74 %).

Monthly disposal pattern of sales of potato and prices received by the average farmers in out of district and within district during 2006-07 are given in table 3.

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Table 2 : Placewise sale within and out of Banaskantha district by selected farmers

Place of sale	Small farmers		Medium farmers		Large farmers		Average farmers	
	Qty. of sale in quintals	Per cent of total sale	Qty. of sale in quintals	Per cent of total sale	Qty. of sale in quintals	Per cent of total sale	Qty. of sale in quintals	Per cent of total sale
Within District	89.72	64.26	153.80	59.85	224.69	54.88	162.09	58.66
Out of District	49.90	35.74	103.17	40.15	184.73	45.12	114.23	41.34
Total	139.62	100.00	256.97	100.00	409.42	100.00	276.32	100.00

The maximum disposal of surplus potato took place in March when approximately 16.47 and 9.92 per cent of surplus was sold within and out of the district, respectively. It was followed by month of April when 11.30 and 10.71 per cent of surplus was sold within and out of district respectively. May was also an important month with respect to disposal of potato in which about 12.43 per cent of potato was sold by the selected growers. Approximately from July onwards potatoes stored in cold storage arrives in the markets. This stock was continuous up to about December. Table 3 also revealed that the price received by the farmers showed a decreasing trend as sale proceeds from January to May in all the markets. The lowest price received by the farmer was in the month of May (Rs.314.29 per quintal) through out of district sale, and Rs.307.27 per quintal was within district market because fresh potato arrived in the market by that time and it was not stored for a long time. The maximum price received by the farmers in the month of July was about Rs.446.70 per quintal in out of district and Rs.438.03 per quintal in within district markets.

Conclusion: The farmers disposed off their produce after getting requirement for home and farm. The average production of potato from selected farmers was 332.64 quintals and the average internal consumption was 56.32 quintals. The highest internal consumption in percentage terms was recorded by large farmers (19.15 %) followed by medium farmers (17.16 %) and small farmers (9.14 %). The percentage marketable surplus showed lower in case of large farmers (80.85 %) who paid to their wages in kind to labours and artisans. The percentage marketable surplus showed higher for small farmers (90.85 %). It revealed the fewer requirements of small farmers than other category farmers due to their immediate cash requirement. In the month of March, April and May, the sale of potato was higher accounting 26.40 per cent, 20.00 per cent and 12.43 per cent, respectively in outside district as well as within the district. The overall price of potato was highest in July (Rs.442.56 per quintal) and lowest in May (Rs.310.78 per quintal) in both outside and within the district during study period. About 70.12 per cent potato was sold in market before the month of June.

REFERENCE

* Mehta and Chauhan (1996) reported that the proportion of marketable surplus of vegetable crops in Kullu region was very high ranging from 95 to 97 per cent in different size groups. The marketed surplus of all vegetables showed an increasing relationship to the size of farms and it was 86 per cent in Kashmir region. The marketed surplus of potato for both the regions was between 84.53 and 91.76 per cent. * Singh et al. (1996) observed that the disposal pattern of marketable surplus of potato by the selected farmers. They found that a major portion was sold in the local markets and a small fraction was either sold in mandi or to the itinerant traders. * Dahiya (1997) studied that the marketable surplus was still quite high for potato even after meeting the farmers' needs for home consumption, in kind payment to labour, seed requirement, social obligation and transport. The marketable surplus was the highest for small farmers (96 %) followed by medium farmers (94 %) and large farmers (93 %). While small farmers made use of 1.8 per cent of their total produce for home consumption, where as large farmers kept 0.22 per cent for home consumption. * Saha and Mukhopadhyay (1998) reported that the marketable surplus was found to be 85 to 95 per cent in all farmers groups (Small, Medium and Large). It means that the farmers sell majority of their produce in market for requirement of cash. *Leua (2001) observed that on an average marketable surplus of potato was worked out to be 83.97 per cent ranging from 79.65 per cent to 88.16 per cent on the sample farm. It was the lowest being 79.65 per cent on medium farm and the highest being 91.86 per cent on small farm. Whereas, in the case of large farm it was worked out to be 85.92 per cent. It means that the lower marketable surplus was on medium farm reported to their high consumption on farm during season. *Leua (2001) revealed that 64.63 per cent of the total produce was sold in Mehsana market but 35.37 per cent of produce was disposed off to out of district.