



Present status and future prospects of turmeric production in Tamil Nadu

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Abstract

Turmeric is one of the most popular spices and had been used in India since ages. That is what it is said that this spice is in India and also called 'Indian saffron'. It is used in many Hindu Social rites even now and Indians tend to be attached to it emotionally. It is also used as a medicine. This is because of this bonding only that India is the largest producer, consumer and exporter of this spice. The overall production of turmeric stands at roughly 800000 tonnes in which India hold a share of approximately 75-80%. Also India consumes around 80% of its own production. Tamil Nadu accounts for 17 per cent of the country's output. The price is likely to range between Rs. 2,000 and Rs. 2,200 a quintal (G. K. Nair 2006).

This study aims to know about the objective of Erode turmeric market, the production level and its export condition. Through this study the researchers gained information about the new techniques introduced in turmeric cultivation and its development.

Keywords: turmeric, curcumin, market

Introduction

Turmeric is one of the oldest spices and had been used in India since ages. That is why it is said that this spice belongs to India and also called 'Indian saffron'. It is used in many Hindu rituals even now and Indians tend to be attached to it emotionally. It is also used as a medicine. This is because of this bonding only that India is the largest producer, consumer and exporter of this spice. The world production of turmeric stands at around 800000 tonnes in which India hold a share of approximately 75-80%. Also India consumes around 80% of its own production.

Tamil Nadu accounts for 17 per cent of the country's output. The price is likely to range between Rs. 2,000 and Rs. 2,200 a quintal (G. K. Nair 2006).

Indian Turmeric Market

Turmeric holds a reputation of being auspicious in India. It has been used in India since a long time and is also used in many Hindu rituals and ceremonies. India's production of turmeric is the largest in the world. Andhra Pradesh stands to be the leading turmeric producing state in India. It exceeds the domestic demand and that gets India into an exporting condition. The Indian turmeric is considered to be of the best quality in the world. Our country contributes to the largest share in the world's total exports figuring around 40000 tons to the countries like United Arab Emirates, United States, Japan, United Kingdom, Sri Lanka.

UAE accounts for the largest share in total Indian exports followed by United States. Turmeric is available in two seasons in India i.e. from February to May and from August to October. There are various varieties of turmeric that are produced in India namely: -

- Alleppey Finger (Kerala)
- Erode Turmeric (Tamil Nadu)
- Salem Turmeric (Tamil Nadu)
- Rajapore Turmeric (Maharashtra)
- Sangli Turmeric (Maharashtra)

- Nizamabad Bulb (Andhra Pradesh)

From the above-mentioned varieties of turmeric, Alleppey, Rajapore and Erode varieties are exported from India.

Present Status of Turmeric Market

Turmeric trade is the lifeline of several persons and it has raised the standard of hundreds of farmers in Erode district. Erode turmeric market is the second biggest markets in the country. Now the turmeric market is conducted in four places by the Regulated Marketing Committee, Erode Cooperative marketing Society, Gobichettipalayam Cooperative Marketing Society and private traders. The arrival in the private market is very high as they are granting advance money for the crop to the farmers and also providing space for stocking the produce. Free fumigation is also under taken.

Tamil Nadu plays an important role in production of range of spices and accounts for a major share in export of turmeric, cardamom, chillies, garlic, curry leaves, tamarind and herbal spices.

Turmeric grown in Erode region is preferred for grinding but due to cross contamination of different varieties and improper post-harvest practices followed, the acceptance level of Erode turmeric has declined sharply. Currently, most of the turmeric produce in the Erode belt is used for domestic consumption and the unit value realization by the farmers is comparatively lower.

On the other hand, the quality of Salem turmeric is comparatively better and has acceptance in the international market for grinding and blending purposes.

Primary objective of setting up an agri-export zone would be export turmeric and processed products. Other objectives, included moving up of the value chain by promoting processed and value added form of turmeric exports, to introduce high yielding and disease resistance variety of turmeric having high curcumin content, to provide adequate and better facilities for proper storing and packing, to

introduce scientific cleaning and processing facilities and set up quality control laboratory for upgrading the quality, and to establish backward linkage between farmers, exporters and processing units for promoting exports and better value realization.

Prospects of Turmeric Production

The area under turmeric is 33 lakh hectares and 375.77 lakh tones. The major producing centres in Tamil Nadu are Coimbatore, Dharmapuri, Salem, Erode, Namakkal and Villupuram. The requirements of infrastructure under AEZ, he said, were facilities for seed development and research and soil research and that could be done through Tamil Nadu Agricultural University. Then there should have to be a processing unit that could process 64 tonnes of turmeric daily. Estimated cost for processing and packaging machinery would be Rs. 20 lakhs. The cost of equipments for common quality testing equipment would around Rs. 30 lakhs, he said. Add to this there has to be a scientific/cold storage with a capacity of 5,000 tonne. Already, 25 lakh sq feet storage facilities are available with the local traders, mandies and regulated market committee in Erode, he said.

The Spices Board has identified Salem and Erode regions of Tamil Nadu as potential areas for setting up an agri-export zone for turmeric and, accordingly, it has given a concept paper on the subject to the State Government.

Tamil Nadu is the second largest producer of turmeric in the country. Notwithstanding this, it has not been able to make a big impact on the export front, Mr.S.Kannan, dissemination, besides assistance for market survey, investigation and research grants in the field of Agricultural marketing.

The Spices Board would provide one-third of the cost subject to the maximum of Rs. 75 lakh per beneficiary to cover the cost of setting up of processing and packaging facilities, ISO/HACCP/Organic certifications and quality testing equipment. It would also provide assistance for undertaking sales promotion tours abroad and participation in international fairs. Apart from assistance up to Rs. 50,000 towards the cost of courier charges reimbursements, the board would extend marketing support for promoting branded spices and spices products, he said.

The country exported in 2001-02, 21,625.29 tonnes of dry turmeric (Rs.42.10 crore) and 13, 734.71 tonnes of turmeric powder (Rs. 42.52 crore) taking the total to Rs. 84.63 crore. Turmeric is an annual spice crop. It is also called as "Indian saffron". It is valued for the combination of flavour and yellow colouring powder while it was formerly employed also as a yellow dyestuff for textiles. It is an essential ingredient of many curry recipes and it is in this application usage is greatest on a global basis. In Tamil Nadu, the important varieties cultivated and Erode local, BSR-1 and 2, PTS-10, Roma, Suguna, Sudarsana and Salem local. Among these varieties, 70-75% is occupied by the local varieties. Fresh turmeric arrival in Erode Regulated market starts from middle of January to June and stored product is available throughout the year. During January to April turmeric from Mysore region comes to Erode market regularly. In Tamil Nadu there is much demand for Mysore region turmeric among and traders, so the arrivals from that region are increasing over years. The general trend in Erode market is the arrival of Mysore region crops during the month of January to April followed by Anthiyur, Bhavani, Gobi, Sathyamangalam, Thondamuthur, Kodumudi and Modakurichi regions respectively. Most of the traders

opined that the March-April months are peak arrival period. So at that time the price will be less by 8 to 10 per cent than the normal price. Recent market survey results confirmed that there was a reduction in the area under turmeric in main turmeric belt (Kodumudi region) of Erode district due to shift to sugarcane cultivation. This reduction in area was compensated by increased area under turmeric in Salem district. The adequate ground water level and expectation of remunerative price for turmeric in the forthcoming months might be the reasons for upward swing in area in this region. In Erode regulated market there is no cost for storage of turmeric up to 15 days. Thereafter only ten paise per quintal/day is charged. Farmers can also store in State/Central Ware Housing Corporation and the storage cost is around Rs. 6 per quintal/month. The Ware Housing Corporation may be chosen over private godowns because of the facilities of availing loans and insurance cover. Hence it is advised that farmers may hold the stocks up to July and release the stocks afterwards up to 15th December, 2006 to get maximum price.

Conclusion

1. Turmeric is considered as "Golden Spice of India". It finds a prominent place in the Indian culture as medicine, customs, food varieties etc. It has got result oriented medicinal value and used as anti-oxidant. Turmeric is enriched with more than 100 components that can be easily isolated. Turmeric cultivation and marketing is a source of income and gives an employment opportunities to a large number of people. The study suggested to improve more number of co-operative societies so that the growers can market their produce through these societies and realize reasonable returns.

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