

CONSTRAINTS PERCEIVED BY THE DATE PALM GROWERS OF KACHCHH DISTRICT IN ADOPTION OF DATE PALM CULTIVATION TECHNOLOGY

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ABSTRACT

The present study was conducted in Kachchh district of Gujarat state as the district ranks first so far the area and production under date palm is concerned. Two talukas viz. Mundra and Anjar were selected purposively as they occupy more than 70 per cent area of date palm in the district. Five villages having highest area under date palm cultivation were selected purposively from each taluka. Using proportionate random sampling technique, 15 per cent date palm growers were selected from each village making a sample of 120 respondents. Major technical constraints faced by date palm growers were high price of good quality off shoots (66.66 %) and lack of knowledge about improved variety(63.33 %) while, main extension constraint was lack of timely and appropriate extension services (61.66 %). The major marketing constraints were; non remunerative price (84.16 %) and high cost of transportation(83.33 %).

Keywords: date palm cultivation technology, date palm growers, constraints

INTRODUCTION

Date palm is the oldest plant amongst the cultivated fruit trees. In India, the commercial cultivation of date palm is rare. In Gujarat, Kachchh district enjoys monopoly in the commercial cultivation of this crop. Date palm in the district is cultivated in 12200 hectares with the production of 82800 million tonnes. But, the average yield per plant per year in the district is low as compared to other date palm growing countries.

Some constraints exist in the date palm orchards leading to low production of date palm. Taking in account this issue, a study was conducted to document the constraints faced by date palm growers in adoption of improved date palm cultivation technology.

OBJECTIVE

To know the constraints perceived by the date palm growers of kachchh district in adoption of date palm cultivation technology

METHODOLOGY

The present study was conducted in Kachchh district of Gujarat state as the district ranks first so far the area and production of date palm is concerned. Two talukas viz. Mundra and Anjar were selected purposively as they occupy more than 70 per cent area of date palm in the district. Five villages having highest area under date palm cultivation were selected purposively from each taluka. Using proportionate random sampling technique, 15 per cent date palm growers were selected from each village making a sample of 120 respondents.

A close ended questionnaire containing all possible common difficulties which can hinder the adoption of scientific date palm cultivation technology by the farmers was prepared to document the constraints. The constraints were operationally defined as the difficulties experienced by the date palm growers in adoption of scientific date palm cultivation technology.

A list of the probable constraints which can hinder the

adoption was prepared based on past studies. The respondents were asked to mention the constraints experienced by them in adoption of date palm cultivation technology in the form of 'yes' or 'no'. Based on the opinion of the respondents, the frequency against each constraint was calculated.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Constraints faced by the Date Palm Growers in Adoption of Scientific Date Palm Cultivation Technology

(1) Technical constraints

The respondents were requested to express the constraints faced by them in adoption of scientific date palm cultivation technology. Frequency and percentage for each constraint were calculated. The results regarding the same are summarized in Table 1.

Table 1 Technical constraints faced by the Date Palm Growers in Adoption of Scientific Date Palm Cultivation Technology n= 120

Sr. No.	Technical Constraints	Number	Percent
1	High price of good quality offshoots	80	66.66
2	Lack of knowledge about improved variety	76	63.33
3	Unavailability of offshoots of improved variety	75	62.50
4	Unavailability of tissue cultured plants	53	44.16
5	High price of tissue cultured plants	50	41.66
6	Unavailability of sufficient labour in time	42	35.00
7	Low fertility status of the soil	31	25.83
8	Insufficient water for irrigation	30	25.00

It could be observed from Table 1 that majority (66.66 %) of respondents expressed constraints related to high price of good quality offshoot followed by lack of knowledge about improved variety (63.33 %), unavailability of offshoots of improved variety (62.50 %). These all constraints are related to improved variety / offshoots which play a very vital role for both quality as well as quantity date palm production.

Other technical constraints were unavailability of tissue culture plants (44.16 %), high price of tissue cultural plants (41.66 %) , unavailability of sufficient labour in

time (35.00 %), low fertility status of soil (25.83 %) and insufficient water for irrigation (25.00 %).

The probable reason for having constraints related to tissues culture plants is due to fact that the research work on tissue culture plants on date palm is under progress in India and hence only imported tissue culture plants were available for propagation, which is costly.

(2) Financial constraints

Table 2 Financial constraints faced by the Date Palm Growers in Adoption of Scientific Date Palm Cultivation Technology n= 120

Sr. No.	Financial constraints	Number	Per cent
1	Irregular electricity supply	105	87.50
2	High charges of electricity	106	88.30
3	High cost of plant protection equipments	17	14.16
4	High cost of insecticides / pesticides	23	19.16

Major financial constraints expressed by date palm growers were; high rate of electricity (88.30 %) followed by irregular electricity supply (87.50 %), high cost of insecticide/ pesticide (19.16 %) and high cost of plant protection equipments (14.16 %)

Date palm requires too much water for plant growth and water is insufficient in these area, hence, irregular electricity supply and high rate of electricity might have been mentioned as major financial constraints perceived by date palm growers.

(3) Extension constraints

Table 3 Extension constraints faced by the Date Palm Growers in Adoption of Scientific Date Palm Cultivation Technology n= 120

No.	Constraints	Number	Per cent
1	Lack of timely and appropriate extension services	74	61.66
2	Inadequate mass media sources	30	25.00
3	Soil testing laboratory is far away from destination	25	20.83

Major extension constraints expressed by date palm growers were; lack of timely and appropriate extension

services (61.66 %) followed by inadequate mass media sources (25.00 %) and soil testing laboratory is far away from destination (20.83 %).

(4) Marketing constraints

Table 4 Marketing constraints faced by the Date Palm Growers in Adoption of Scientific Date Palm Cultivation Technology n= 120

Sr. No.	Constraints	Number	Per cent
1	Non remunerative price	101	84.16
2	High cost of transportation	100	83.33
3	Poor marketing facility	96	80.00
4	Higher charges of middle man	90	75.00
5	Poor transport facilities	60	57.50

Major marketing constraints perceived by date palm growers were; non remunerative price (84.16 %) followed by high cost of transportation (83.33 %) , poor marketing facilities (80.00 %), high charges of middle man (75.00 %) and poor transport facilities (57.50 %).

CONCLUSION

The study has clearly brought out that the major technical constraints perceived by date palm growers were; high price of good quality off shoots and lack of knowledge about improved variety. The major financial constraints were irregular supply of electricity and high charges of electricity. The extension and marketing constraints were related with lack of extension services and poor marketing facilities. In order to improve quality date palm production, these constraints may be overcome by the concerned state departments.

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