_____

## PROBLEM FACING SMALL HOLDER FARMERS IN MAIZE MARKETING
### with special reference to Veppanthattai Block, Perambalur District, Tamil Nadu

**Dr. T. Unnamalai[1]  and  N. Rajalakshmi[2]**
**[1]Assistant Professor & Head, Department of Commerce, Bharathidasan University Constituent College, Perambalur, Tamil Nadu.**
**[2] Ph.D Research Scholar, Department of Commerce, Bharathidasan University Constituent College, Perambalur, Tamil Nadu.**

## ABSTRACT

*Maize is one most important crop in Tamil Nadu and has great potential to improve the living standards of the bulky of the rural population. Smallholder farmers face a number of problems in marketing their maize. This research study was carried out to find out the problems facing 50 smallholder farmers randomly selected in maize marketing. The markets that were available for the smallholder maize producer include: the Local Markets; farmer Cooperatives; Businesspersons; and Breweries. Problems that smallholder framers faced in marketing their maize were found to be low prices, unstable markets, transportation, and lack of packaging materials. The outstanding of these was transportation. It was discovered that there was correlation between farm income of the smallholder fanner and his /her susceptibility to marketing problems. The reasons that were given by respondents for preferring one market over another were: price; early buying of maize by market participants; early payments to the farmers; closeness of the market to the fanners; availability of market in areas where markets are not fully developed; and membership to a Farmer Cooperative. Government should encourage farmers to strengthen the cooperative movements in order to be able to have access to a better mode of transport through mobilization of their resources.*

**KEYWORDS:** *Smallholder Maize Farmer, Maize Marketing, Maize Production and Maize Farmers Society*

## INTRODUCTION

Marketing plays a significant role in economic development. The agricultural sector provides raw materials for agro-based industries and supplies the industrial workers with food and fibre. The sector provides employment to millions of people engaged in various activities such as packaging, transportation and processing and contributes significantly to national income. National income is the source of the much needed resource to finance development programmes. The expansion of the agricultural sector, which is of relevance to economic development, depends on the effectiveness and efficiency of the marketing system in place. Efficient marketing system provides producers with incentives to increase production which may contribute to increased rural incomes. In order therefore for government to achieve its objective of attaining increased agricultural production (particularly maize production) and consequently to realize food security

_____

and increased incomes among the rural agricultural population, there is need to look at the problems confronting small holder farmers in maize marketing.

## REVIEWS OF LITERATURE

Amani and Kapunda (1989) reported that almost 73% of traders interviewed in towns of Morogoro, Iringa and Dodoma obtained at least part of their initial capital from mutual lending and credit in kind. Credit in kind was more often given by farmers to traders, i.e. farmers handed over their produce to traders who returned later to pay the farmers. In contrast private trading in newly liberalized agricultural markets in Eastern and Southern Africa tend to be characterized by very limited credit relationships between market participants (Beynon and Jones, 1992). The slow pace of private sector development after an initially dynamic response to new opportunities results in seasonal and inter annual prices not being stabilized and segmentation between rural markets tending to remain, although urban markets may be well interrelated with each other (Beynon and Jones, 1992).

## STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Maize thus was seen to have great potential to contribute to improving the standards of living of the bulky of the rural population (Wood, 1990). The crop has maintained its supremacy as is evidenced by its contribution to total agricultural gross production (Zulu. et al.2007). It is therefore not surprising that one of the Government's Agricultural Policy components involves promotion of maize production in the country in an attempt to attain National Food Security and to improve the incomes of those engaged in its production especially the rural agricultural population, and hence helps in fostering rural development. Thus policies to influence maize production, input use and marketing constitute the major means by which to promote smallholder income growth and food security, and rural development. Agricultural products' marketing plays an important role not only in stimulating production and consumption, but in accelerating the pace of economic development. Efficient marketing system stimulates production and contributes to increased farm incomes. Increased production and farm incomes induce producers to invest in modem technologies which result in further increases in production and productivity. This sets a multiplier effect which results in economic growth that is self perpetuating. Despite the importance of agricultural products' marketing in rural development, the dominant smallholder farmers, in the context of maize, are still confronted by a number of marketing problems. This might discourage maize production and contribute to low incomes in rural areas, and consequently retard rural development and attainment of food security. This research study therefore is to determine the problems confronting smallholder farmers in marketing their maize, to find out whether differences in household characteristics affect the susceptibility of smallholder farmers to marketing problems, and to determine factors affecting market choice by smallholder farmer. The current scenario of paddy replacing maize gives a clear evidence of the fact that maize growers in the state are facing certain constraints that proved detrimental to the growth of maize crop in Perambalur District, Tamil Nadu. It is against this backdrop, that the present study was initiated to measure the extent of adoption of new maize technology over different farm size groups and impact on the crop yield. An attempt has also been made to identify the constraints viz., technological, institution and marketing which hinder the growth of maize crop in the state.

## OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

o   To find out the major maize markets available to smallholder farmers in Veppanthattai Block, Perambalur District, Tamil Nadu.
o   To find out the association between socio-economic characteristics affect the vulnerability of smallholder farmer to marketing problems.

_____

_____

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

Data for this study were obtained from primary sources using a structured questionnaire which was administered to 50 households. Therefore the data for this study were entirely obtained from smallholder farmers. The study was conducted in Veppanthattai Block, Perambalur District, Tamil Nadu District was picked for the reason that it is one of the active districts involved in maize production with the actual production done mainly by smallholder farmers. The sample consisted of small holder farmers engaged in maize production. Individual households were sampled randomly to ensure a good representation of the target population. The data collected were analyzed using the SPSS software. Oneway ANOVA 'f' tests, cross tabulations as well as frequencies were generated and used to analyze data.

### DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

| Variables | Marketers problems | | | | | Statistical inference |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| | Low prices | Unstable Markets | Transportation | Packaging Materials | Total | |
| **Age** | | | | | | |
| Below 30yrs | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 4 | $X^2$=1.784 Df=5 P>0.05 Not Significant |
| 31 to 40yrs | 2 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 7 | |
| 41 to 50yrs | 4 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 11 | |
| 51 to 60yrs | 7 | 4 | 1 | 1 | 13 | |
| 61yrs & above | 9 | 4 | 1 | 1 | 15 | |
| **Educational qualification** | | | | | | |
| Uneducated | 19 | 10 | 4 | 3 | 36 | $X^2$=13.647 Df=3 P<0.05 Significant |
| Educated | 4 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 14 | |
| **Size of cultivated land** | | | | | | |
| Below 1acre | 22 | 10 | 5 | 4 | 41 | $X^2$=19.081 Df=3 P<0.05 Significant |
| 1 to 2acres | 1 | 4 | 2 | 2 | 9 | |
| Total | 23 | 14 | 7 | 6 | 50 | |

**Research Hypothesis ($H_1$):** There is a significant association between age of the respondents and their various factors of marketing problems

The Chi-Square tested table reveals that there is no significant association between age of the respondents and their various factors of marketing problems. Hence, the calculated value is greater than table value (p>0.05). So the research hypothesis ($H_1$) is rejected.

**Research Hypothesis ($H_2$):** There is a significant association between educational qualification of the respondents and their various factors of marketing problems

The Chi-Square tested table reveals that there is a significant association between educational qualification of the respondents and their various factors of marketing problems. Hence, the calculated value is less than table value (p<0.05). So the research hypothesis ($H_2$) is accepted.

**Research Hypothesis ($H_3$):** There is a significant association between maize cultivatable land size and their various factors of marketing problems

_____

_____

The Chi-Square tested table reveals that there is a significant association between maize cultivatable land size and their various factors of marketing problems. Hence, the calculated value is less than table value ($p < 0.05$). So the research hypothesis ($H_3$) is accepted.

## SUGGESTIONS AND CONCLUSION

Education of small holder farmers in carrying out effective marketing decisions that can safeguard their interests is important. There is need for farmers to recognize the importance of storing maize and sell later in the season when the prices are high in the market. Problems that small holder framers are facing in marketing their maize were found to be low prices, unstable markets, transportation, and lack of packaging materials. The outstanding of these marketing problems is transportation. To promote increased production and its sustenance through technological development, an assurance of remunerative prices to the farmer is a pre-requisite and this assurance can be given to the farmer by developing an efficient marketing system. This may be due to the fact that small holder farmers are sparsely distributed and far away from near markets.

## REFERENCES

o   Acharya,S. (1987), Agricultural Marketing in India, Mittal Publications, New Delhi.
o   Amani and Kapunda (1989), Agricultural Market Reform in Tanzania: The Restriction of Private Traders and its Impact on Food Security, in Agricultural Marketing in Tanzania.
o   Jones and Beynon (1992), Market Liberalization and Private Sector Responses in Eastern and Southern Africa. Food Studies Group, Oxford, United Kingdom.
o   Moore J.R. (1973), Indian Food Grain Marketing, Prentice Hall of Indian Private Limited, New Delhi.

**Dr. T. Unnamalai**
**Assistant Professor & Head, Department of Commerce, Bharathidasan University Constituent College, Perambalur, Tamil Nadu.**

**N. Rajalakshmi**
**Ph.D Research Scholar, Department of Commerce, Bharathidasan University Constituent College, Perambalur, Tamil Nadu.**

_____