

Marketing Channels of Coorg Mandarin

HORTICULTURE crops encompass a variety of fruits, vegetables, flowers, plantation crops, medicinal and aromatic plants, roots and tuber crops. Fruits and vegetables are the prime source of vitamins and minerals without which human body cannot maintain proper health to resist the diseases. Fruit cultivation is as old as human civilization itself. The Mandarin (*Citrus reticulata*) is the most important citrus fruit cultivated in India. It is also known as mandarin orange or mandarin and the fruit resembles other oranges. The difference between oranges and mandarins are that oranges are more round in shape and difficult to peel, whereas, mandarins are flatter at the ends and are easier to peel than oranges.

A major portion of mandarin produced is marketed as a fresh fruit. It is also preserved in the form of juice, marmalade, jam, canned product, squash, syrup, candy and other products in order to fetch high market price, consumption during off season and to minimize loss during the main fruit season. The processing of mandarin in the form of canned, bottled, frozen and several other products as jam, jelly, squash, juice and other beverages are in good demand for export. Mandarin production is commercial in nature as almost the entire harvest is sold. Thus, the prospects of increased production depend upon the prospects of markets. Several measures are undertaken by the Government in the form of technological up-gradations, improved marketing organisations and market promotion leading to expansion of mandarin market in the country. In this backdrop, the present study is carried out to enlist the marketing channels of coorg mandarin and to identify the marketing problems encountered by mandarin growers.

The present study was conducted in Kodagu district of Karnataka state during 2014 - 15. All the three taluks (Madikeri, Somwarpet and Virajpet) of Kodagu district were selected for the study. Two village panchayats were selected from each taluk and two

villages from each gram panchayat were chosen randomly. From each village, ten mandarin growers were again randomly selected for the study. Thus, the total sample constituted 120 mandarin growers from 12 villages of six grama panchayats in three taluks of Kodagu district. Relevant data was collected from the respondents using a pre-tested interview schedule.

The study results revealed that there existed four marketing channels for marketing the Coorg mandarin in Kodagu district and the same are as follows:

Channel I : Grower - Village trader -Wholesaler - Retailer - Consumer

Channel II : Grower – Pre-harvest contractor – Wholesaler - Retailer - Consumer

Channel III : Grower – Processing industry – Wholesaler - Retailer – Consumer

Channel IV : Grower – Retailer - Consumer

A larger proportion (35.00 %) of the mandarin growers preferred to market their produce through channel III (Table I). The processing industry offer better price for mandarin and provide timely payment, hence more number of mandarin growers have marketed their produce through channel III. About 30.83 per cent of the respondents used channel II to market their produce. Pre-harvest contractor in channel II was found to influence the mandrain growers as the pre-harvest contractors perform the harvesting and post-harvest operations. Channel I was adopted by 21.67 per cent of the mandarin growers as this channel has the existence of village traders, who facilitates ease in marketing of the produce. Channel IV consisting of direct marketing through retailer which was the least preferred marketing channel (12.50 %), because it is difficult and tiresome to transport and market the produce by the mandarin growers directly

TABLE I

Marketing channels adopted by coorg mandarin growers

(n=120)

Marketing Channels	Coorg mandarin growers adopted		Total quantity sold (qtls)		Average quantity (qtls / grower)	Average price realized (Rs. / qtls)
Channel I	26	(21.67)	1637	(11.58)	62.96	1134.50
Channel II	37	(30.83)	4769	(33.76)	128.89	992.75
Channel III	42	(35.00)	6841	(48.49)	162.88	1346.34
Channel IV	15	(12.50)	886	(6.26)	59.06	1146.85
Total	120	(100.00)	14133	(100.00)	117.77	1172.11

Figures in parenthesis indicates percentage

to the retailers without having proper contact with the retailers.

With regard to the total quantity of Coorg mandarin sold, it was found that 48.49 per cent of the mandarin growers have marketed their produce through channel III. The price provided in channel III was higher compared to other channels, hence most of the mandarin growers have sold their produce through channel III. The second highest total quantity of coorg mandarin was marketed through channel II (33.76 %). Marketing of coorg mandarin through channel II is easier to the respondents when compared to other channels as the respondents need not worry about marketing and harvesting of the produce. The third highest quantity was marketed through channel I (11.58 %) because of the existence of village traders who facilitates ease in marketing of the produce. Channel IV (6.26 %) had the least total quantity of produce being marketed by the respondents through it. It is difficult and tiresome to transport and market the mandarin directly to retailers by the respondents without having proper contact with the retailers The channel-wise average quantity sold per grower was 62.96, 128.89, 162.88 and 59.06 qtls in channels I, II, III and IV, respectively.

The average price per quintal was highest in channel III (Rs. 1346.34/-) compared to other channels. The prices offered in processing industry

are higher because the mandarin and its processed products are sent to Bengaluru, Mysuru, etc. The second highest price was realized in channel IV (Rs. 1146.85/-) as the produce is marketed directly to retailers without the interference of middlemen. The least price realized for Coorg mandarin was through channel II (Rs. 992.75/-), wherein the pre-harvest contractors offer less price to the growers after considering the cost of harvesting and marketing.

Table II present the data on the marketing constraints of mandarin growers. Fluctuation in market price, high cost of transportation, lack of packaging

TABLE II

Marketing constraints faced by coorg mandarin growers

(n=120)

Marketing channels	Mean score	Rank
Fluctuation in market price	70.34	I
High cost of transportation	65.78	II
Lack of packaging and grading facility	57.48	III
Lack of storage facility	51.53	IV
Late payment by traders	42.28	V
Lack of government support	37.56	VI

and grading facility and lack of storage facility were the most important marketing constraints obtaining I, II, III and IV ranks, respectively. Whereas, late payment by traders and lack of government support obtained the last two ranks. More or less similar findings were reported by Bhat (2008), Chaudhary and Patil (2009) and Sain *et al.* (2013).

Though coorg mandarin is a remunerative crop, the mandarin growers are experiencing price fluctuation for their produce. The Government should fix minimum support price (MSP) for coorg mandarin to expand coorg mandarin area and save farmers from price variability and ensuring higher profitability. There is also a need to establish sufficient processing (juice) plants in coorg mandarin growing areas for providing higher and stabilized prices to the growers. Up-gradation of post-harvest infrastructure is also

necessary to meet the domestic as well as international quality standards.

*Department of
Agril. Marketing,
Co-operation and
Business Management
UAS, Bengaluru-65*

K. LIKIN BOPANNA
M. S. GANAPATHY AND
M. T. Lakshminarayan

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