

Prof. Madhuri Rakhunde: Agricultural Products in Maharashtra

ISBN 978-81-925945-5-2

New Horizon

Edited Book of Research Papers

January 2018

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Dr. Ranganath Mishra
Sigma Enterprizes
92/61, Shastri Nagar, Meerut, UP 250004

Printer

Gill Publication
Meerut City, UP 250002

Communication

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Rs. 500/-

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Agricultural Products in Maharashtra

- **Prof. Madhuri Rakhunde**

Indira Mahavidyalaya,
Kalamb Dist. Yavatmal (M.S.)

There are two important aspects to the marketing of agricultural products. The first has to do with the physical process that brings products from producers to consumers, the fundamental stages of this process are the collection, packaging, transport, processing, storage and lastly the retail sale of agricultural products. This first aspect shall be dealt with in detail in the part sheet on post harvest management. The second aspect, which is addressed here, involves the market pricing mechanism.

Emphasis will therefore be placed on the market mechanism that contribute to the pricing of agricultural products and on the way the producers can obtain acceptable prices for their crops.

Understanding the pricing mechanism according to the law of demand & supply :-

When as is often the case in Africa a multitude of small farmers are faced with a limited number of buyers, it is hard for them to influence prices and they often just accept the price that is offered to them. Nevertheless, the situation has greatly evolved in African countries.

In Africa, for several decades, it was the state that set the price of agricultural products, especially cereal & export products. With the withdrawal of State funding and privatisation, farmers have become increasingly exposed to the market and need guidance in their marketing activities.

Agricultural Marketing in Maharashtra :-

For a long period of time Indian agriculture was mostly in the nature of "Subsistence farming" The farmer sold only a small part of his produce to pay all rents, debts and meet his other requirements. Such sale was usually done immediately after harvesting of crops since there were no strong facilities. A considerable part of total produce was sold by the farmers to the village traders & moneylenders often of prices considerably lower than the market prices. Therefore the government took some steps to improve the system of agricultural marketing.

The important steps are :-

- [i] Organisation of regulated markets.
- [ii] Grading and standardisation
- [iii] Use of standard weights
- [iv] Godown and storage facilities.
- [v] Dissemination of market information.