

A Study based on Agricultural Marketing Strategies

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ABSTRACT

Agriculture is the core part of Indian traditional practice. India is a country of diverse culture and Nature; varieties of crops and fruits are grown in different parts of the country. The gift of Nature and the efficiency and business attitudes blend with agriculture open a new preface. 'Agro-based product businesses. Agro based product business can viable and truly possible where Nature supports. In case of India, the God gifted nature, diversified land form, water resources all are eventually support the agriculture and majority of population spend their livelihood by farming. Agro based business indicates the commercialization of agriculture in a systematic meaningful way. The farmers sell some commercial crops to some business house and the business house process the agricultural raw material as per the industry need. Rural people are highly associated with cultivation for their livelihood, but they are not getting high economic benefits from farming. This paper will highlight the need of proper agricultural marketing. This research paper will focus on the marketing strategies of agro-based products. This paper will highlight the significance of efficient marketing strategies in agro based products to capture the market and gaining profit from market.

(Key words: Agriculture, marketing strategies, digital, agricultural product)

1. INTRODUCTION

Agriculture is in the heart of Indian culture and tradition. From ancient times Indian worshipped the power of Nature as God for flourished greenery & varieties of foodgrain secured storage. As growing population, the scarcity has observed into the situation. The demand and price automatically started to rise, to match with the situation. The agriculture needs proper channelization as it is perishable in nature, so commercialization in agriculture become important steps for survival for farmers.

About a century ago, farmer used to produce crops mostly for self-consumption or for exchange with others (cash or kind) mostly in the same village or nearby places. They were primarily self-reliant. But now production environment has changed considerably from self-reliance to commercialization. Technological advancement in the form of high yielding varieties, use of fertilizers, insecticides, pesticides, farm mechanization has led to a substantial increase in farm production and consequently the larger marketable and marketed surplus. The improved production is accompanied by the increasing urbanization, income, changing life style & food habits of the consumers and increasing linkages with the overseas market. Agricultural marketing brings producers and consumers together through a series of activities and thus becomes an essential element of the economy. The scope of agricultural marketing is not only limited with the final agricultural produce. It also focuses supply of agricultural inputs for processing agro based product.

Agricultural marketing plays an important role not only in stimulating production and consumption, but also in accelerating the pace of economic development. It is the most important multiplier of agricultural development. In the process of shifting from traditional to modern agriculture, marketing emerges as the biggest challenge because of production surpluses generated by the shift. The importance of agricultural marketing is revealed from the following;

- An improved and efficient system of agricultural marketing helps in the growth of agro-based industries and stimulates the overall development process of the economy. Many industries like cotton, sugar, edible oils, food processing and jute depend on agriculture for the supply of raw materials.
- An efficient marketing system ensures higher levels of income for the farmers reducing the number of middlemen or by restricting the cost of marketing services and the malpractices, in the marketing of farm products
- An efficient marketing system helps the farmers in planning their production in accordance with the needs of the economy. This work is carried out through transmitting price signals.
- Marketing activities add value to the product thereby increasing the nation's gross national product and net national product

Agricultural marketing strategies are distinguished to others marketing strategies, there is a need to highlight Unique Selling Points(USPs):

- Local Produce: Emphasize the freshness and quality of locally grown produce. Highlight the farm-to-table journey.
- Community Engagement: Showcase the market as a community gathering and event hub.
- Farm Experience: If the market is situated on a farm, promote the farm experience, such as pick-your-own activities or farm tours.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

A considerable amount of research has been done on the working and performance of agricultural marketing in India, by the academicians and researchers. The literature obtained in the form of reports and research studies, is briefly reviewed in this part.

- Godara (2006) in his study described that the positive trend of economic liberalization and associated opening up of Indian economy have significantly reduced the structural rigidities in the system, this trend should be premise of India's future agricultural reform. Agricultural business has come under strong and direct influence of international market. Indian farmers have to produce quality goods to meet the international standards.
- Kashyap and Raut (2006) in their paper suggested that, marketers need to design creative solutions like e-marketing to overcome challenges typical of the rural environment such as physical distribution, channel management promotion and communication. The "anytime-anywhere" advantage of e-marketing leads to efficient price discovery, offers economy of transaction for trading and more transparent and competitive setting.
- Brithal et al. (2007) in their study suggested that by building efficient and effective supply chain using state of the art techniques it is possible to serve the population with value added food, while simultaneously ensuring remunerative prices to farmers.
- Tripathi and Prasad (2009) in their paper reported that Indian agriculture has progressed not only in out-put and yield terms but the structural changes have also contributed
 - Pathak (2009) in his research paper stated that the contribution of agriculture in growth of a nation is constituted by the growth of the products within the sector itself
- Agricultural marketing is a process which starts with a decision to produce a saleable farm commodity, involves all the aspects of market structure or system, both financial and institutional, based on technical and economic considerations, and includes pre- and post-harvest operations, assembling, grading, storage, transportation and distribution (National Commission on Agriculture, 1976).

- Traditional marketing practices have long been integral to rural marketing strategies, contributing to the cultural and social fabric of communities (Gupta & Singh, 2018)
- According to recent studies (Smith et al., 2022; Kumar & Patel, 2021), rural markets pose distinct challenges and opportunities that necessitate a nuanced approach to marketing.

3. **OBJECTIVES OF THE RESEARCH**

- To highlight the importance of agricultural marketing
- To investigate the problems related to agricultural marketing & the challenges faced by the farmers
- To know the efficient agricultural marketing strategies.

4. **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

This research mainly focuses on secondary data after comprehensive review of academic articles, books, reports, and other relevant sources.

5. **STRATEGIES FOR AGRICULTURAL MARKETING**

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The most important marketing strategies of agricultural marketing are as follows:

- a) Market intelligence and information systems-Implementing robust market intelligence systems helps farmers access real-time information on market trends, prices, and consumer preferences
- b) Direct marketing- Encourage direct marketing initiatives to help farmers bypass intermediaries
- c) Value addition-invest in processing and branding to enhance the market appeal of agricultural products.
- d) Content marketing strategies
 - i. Blogs/Vlogs: Create engaging content about farming practices, behind-the-scenes looks at vendors, and recipes using market produce.
 - ii. Social media: Utilize platforms like Instagram, Facebook, and Pinterest to share visually appealing content, market updates, and customer testimonials.

e) Digital marketing strategies :

- i. Website: Maintain an informative, user-friendly website with details about vendors, products, events, and a blog section.
- ii. E-commerce: If applicable, create an online platform for customers to pre-order products for pickup, expanding the market's reach.
- iii. Google My Business: Ensure the market's Google My Business listing is accurate and regularly updated with opening hours, location, and customer reviews.

6. CHALLENGES FOR AGRICULTURAL MARKETING:

There are some crucial problems affecting agricultural marketing are follows:

- Economic inefficiency – there are so many components which can lead to economic inefficiency in agricultural market. We can consider trade manipulation and price fluctuation two more key factors responsible for creating uncertain market force. There is the problem of increasing marketable surplus and marketed surplus to economically viable quantities. These causes individually and jointly operate in a vicious circle causing a total inefficiency in agricultural marketing. Due to the moneylenders perusing the farmers compel to sell their produce much below the market prices & that too immediately after the harvest.
- Information Asymmetry:- Lack of availability of market information is another important parameter that requires special attention. In our country no attention is focused on retailing without which market formation is incomplete. Market information is an important marketing input necessary for orderly marketing of agricultural commodities. Marketing costs can be reduced through the operation of a more efficient system. It is clear that operational of functional inefficiency in Indian agricultural marketing is the fundamental defect of this system.
- Product's perishability: The product's perishability is a major factor that influences marketing costs. The degree of perishability has a direct impact on marketing expenses. Marketing expenses rise in direct proportion to perishability.
- Agricultural Product Bulkiness: The majority of agricultural products are bulky in comparison to their worth. Transport becomes more expensive as a result.
- Small size of holding and scattered production- Farm products are produced throughout the length and breadth of the country and most of the producers are of small size. This makes the estimation of supply difficult and also creates problem in marketing.

Features of agricultural products are listed below:

Related to production system	Related to farm products	Related tp consumption
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Small scale •Seasonality •irregularity in production 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Perishable •Bulky nature of products •Quality variation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Daily basis consumption •Processing before consumption •Inelastic demand

7. OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE GROWTH OF AGRICULTURAL MARKET

- ❖ Growing demand of Organic Product-Organic products are beneficial to both producers and consumers as it brings increased ecological biodiversity over time, reduction of pollution, conservation of the environment such as soil, energy, and many more. It also helps reduce the costs of farm inputs with extensive health benefits to consumers and organic farming ensures the supply of food for future generations. A growing trend toward organic farming and sustainable agriculture has a vast potential to make India a global leader in organic farming and tap into the growing demand for organic products worldwide.
- ❖ India has a diverse range of agro-climatic zones, which makes it possible to cultivate a variety of crops, giving ample opportunities for an increase in the income of farmers through diversification.
- ❖ Agro-Tourism and Experiential Marketing: An additional income for farmers through agro-forestry and agro-tourism, a booming sector, if capitalized, will promote sustainable land use practices. The incorporation of agrotourism as a marketing strategy has not only provided urban consumers with a unique experience but has also contributed to the economic growth of rural areas. By showcasing the agrarian lifestyle and allowing consumers to connect with the source of their food. Agro-tourism holds potential not only for product promotion but also for diversifying the rural economy through tourism-related activities
- ❖ Biotechnology applications in agriculture have vast scope in production of seed, bio-control agents, industrial harnessing of microbes for bakery products.

8. DISCUSSION

The discussion aims to indicate into the innovative marketing strategies adopted for agricultural products in India, shedding light on their implications, effectiveness, and potential for sustainable rural development.

Digital Platforms and E-Marketing-

Digital marketing for agriculture refers to the efforts that drive both organic and paid traffic to meet the marketing goals of the agriculture business. o succeed in the agriculture business in today's digital era, we need to leverage digital marketing methodologies. The easiest way to begin is to reach out to customers interested in agro

products and services. With the right digital marketing strategies for agriculture, it can be possible to increase the website traffic, generate quality leads and drive sales in the long run.

Use PPC to reach the audience instantly

As day by day, people become mobile friendly and familiar with digital transaction with PPC campaigns, advertisers can place ads on search engines, social platforms, and other websites – and pay when someone clicks on them. It is an amazing way to reach targeted audiences quickly through Google Bing, Facebook, Instagram, and more. With the right paid media strategy, it can be instantly enabled more users to find specific agribusiness on search engines and increase conversions.

Mobile based marketing-Smartphone access and mobile marketing have played a significant role in helping farmers. Using mobile platforms like Telegram and WhatsApp, agribusiness owners can share valuable information, spread awareness, find buyers, and do more.

Video marketing helps to capture users' attention in a short span. You can use platforms such as YouTube, Dailymotion, Video, etc., to educate your customers on various agribusiness offerings

Farm-to-table initiatives have furnished as a powerful strategy to bridge the gap between farmers in India and end consumers. By eliminating intermediaries, these initiatives emphasize the purity and potentiality of agricultural products. Consumer is the king of any industry; agriculture is not an exception. The success of such initiatives glorifies the crowning consumer's preference for transparency in the supply chain and an expected rate of return to support local farmers.

9. RELEVANCE OF RESEARCH WORK

The relevance of agricultural marketing is economic development and growth. An effective agricultural marketing system optimizes resource utilization and output management. Reducing losses caused by inefficient processing, storage, and transportation, and an efficient marketing system can also help to enhance the marketable surplus. The farmers can plan their cultivation in accordance with the needs of the economy with the support of an efficient marketing strategies.

10. RECOMMENDATION FOR DIGITAL AGRICULTURAL MARKETING MODELS

Some of the models emerging under different sectors to facilitate dissemination of information on agricultural and related aspects in the country are presented below –

- **Digital Mandi** – A digital application created by IIT Kanpur and BSNL, which aims to provide present market rate of agricultural commodities to farmers. This help farmers in making market related decision like selection of market and appropriate time to sell their commodities to maximum return.
- **m-Krishi** – TCS mobile agro-consultancy technology uses mobile and sensor technology to let farmers send their queries and receive information on climate and local Mandi prices. Farmers are also delivered with expert's advice and other relevant information to them in their local language. This app also supports text, voice and pictures.
- **m-Kisan** – m-Kisan is a mobile based agro advisory for farmers with actionable information. The information is delivered through mobile channels like voice, text messages, on-demand videos and farmer's helpline. This app gives appropriate advice to farmers on the relevant crop, livestock issues and provide platform for exchange of knowledge.

- **AgriMarket** – AgriMarket mobile app provides information about market news (arrivals and prices) of agricultural commodities in the vicinity of 50 kilometres around the farmer's location with the help of mobile GPS. There is an alternative choice to get price of any market and any crop just in case person does not want to use GPS location.
- **e-NAM** – National Agriculture Market (eNAM) is a pan-India electronic trading portal which networks the existing APMC Mandis to create a unified national market for agricultural commodities. Small Farmers Agribusiness Consortium (SFAC) is the nodal agency for implementing eNAM under the supervision of the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, Government of India. It is a comprehensive model envisaged to take care of various physical and facilitating functions of the market like storage, grading, packing, finance, insurance, promotion, etc. in addition to the scientific, transparent and competitive price discovery of prices.
- **Farmers Portal** – Farmers Portal website is venture to make one stop shop for meeting all information needs on production, sales and storage of farmers relating to agriculture, animal husbandry and fisheries sectors. Using the Portal, a farmer will be in a position to access related sources of information on their area of interest
- **AGMARKNET** – Ministry of Agriculture launched the Information and Technology (ICT) based central sector scheme named as Agricultural Marketing Information Network (AGMARKNET) by connecting vital regulated markets located throughout the country and state agriculture marketing boards and directorates.

11. CONCLUSION:

This study is based on agricultural marketing strategies. Agricultural marketing is important not just for increasing productivity and consumption, but also for accelerating economic growth. Its dynamic functions play a critical role in encouraging economic growth. On the other hand, the farmers who devoted their life and comfort, it is truly speaking that, "A farmer is a magician who produces money from mud." Surely, they deserve proper distinguished position as a soul of soil of our country. Basically, due to seasonality of agriculture and economical pressure force them to sell their crops in a very marginal rate. The proper agricultural marketing strategies can help the farmers to worth their dawn to dusk hardship fruits. The irregularity of income and reaching out to the potential customers can eliminate by the efficient agricultural marketing strategies.

This research paper has pointed out different insightful agricultural marketing strategies for boost up Indian economic development.

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