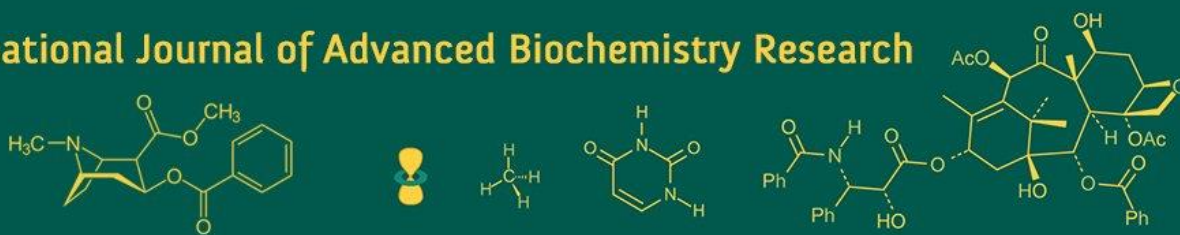


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Constraints and suggestions of groundnut growers about forward linkage activities

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Abstract

In popular parlance, groundnut is referred to as the "nut of the poor." In the majority of nations, it is typically eaten after being roasted or boiled, and it is also processed into a variety of other formulations. When groundnuts are stored for an extended period of time, they often sustain significant damage, and post-harvest losses in groundnuts vary from twenty to thirty-five percent of the total crop in India. Therefore, it is necessary to expand the yield and the area under groundnut, as well as to ensure that the processing, value addition, and marketing of groundnuts are carried out in a manner that maximizes profits and offers an opportunity for farmers to engage in entrepreneurial endeavors. In light of this, the current study investigates the difficulties that groundnut farmers have in the context of forward linking operations and endeavors to provide informative recommendations for addressing these limitations. When asked about the challenges that farmers have in relation to Forward linkage activities in groundnut, the findings of the survey revealed that the majority of respondents (76.25 percent) remarked that it is difficult to get finance facilities in order to build small and micro companies. This was followed by the fact that 74.38% of respondents expressed that the process was complicated. Due to the fact that they are unaware of the quality requirements that are required for the creation of value-added goods. Growers of groundnuts offered a number of proposals, one of which was to support the provision of equipment at reduced prices for the purpose of processing and preparing goods with value addition. The enhancement of the profitability and sustainability of groundnut production is dependent upon the implementation of forward linking activities. These activities include a variety of characteristics, including market access, the adoption of technical advancements, and the addition of value.

Keywords: Groundnut growers, forward linkage activities, constraints, farmers' suggestions

Introduction

In popular parlance, groundnut is referred to as the "nut of the poor." The botanical name of the groundnut, *Arachis hypogea* L., is derived from two Greek words: arachis, which means a legume, and hypogaeal, which means below ground. The term "below ground" refers to the production of pods in the soil. The groundnut also goes by the names peanut or earthnut. It is a member of the Leguminosae family and is indigenous to South America. It is a crop that is extensively produced and is considered to be one of the most popular oilseeds in the world. Throughout the course of history, it has evolved into a staple meal in several regions of the globe, serving as an important source of edible oil, protein, and a variety of nutrients. As a result of its many applications, economic relevance, and nutritional worth, groundnut plays an essential part in agriculture and the production of food, which is to the advantage of both farmers and consumers.

The cultivation of groundnuts is a fundamental component of agricultural economies, making a substantial contribution to the production of food on a worldwide scale and providing a means of subsistence for a large number of farmers. It is of the utmost importance for the development of sustainable agriculture to have a comprehensive grasp of the limitations that producers have while participating in forward linkage activities. This is because groundnut growing brings both possibilities and problems. Groundnut farmers' economic prospects may be significantly improved with the implementation of forward linkage activities. These

activities include market access, the adoption of technology advancements, and the addition of value.

The objective of this study is to investigate the myriad of challenges that groundnut farmers experience in the context of forward linking efforts and to provide solutions that might be implemented based on their points of view. Within the peanut farming industry, these forward connections are essential components that have the ability to bridge the gap between production and consumption. They provide opportunities for greater revenue, better productivity, and enhanced resilience.

Growers of groundnuts are confronted with a wide variety of challenges that vary depending on the setting in which they operate. These challenges include restricted market access, poor technical infrastructure, financial restrictions, and knowledge gaps. Because the dynamics of these restrictions often alter from one place to another, it is necessary to have a sophisticated awareness of the issues that farmers face in a variety of environmental settings.

This research lays a large emphasis on getting comments and insights directly from groundnut producers, in addition to identifying obstacles that may be present. The viewpoints of farmers are quite useful when it comes to developing strategies that are both focused and successful in order to solve the issues that are currently being faced. It is the goal of this study to contribute to the creation of solutions that are both practical and culturally appropriate, with the intention of informing policy choices and interventions. This will be accomplished by including the voices of these farmers.

This investigation of the limitations and recommendations of groundnut producers with relation to forward linking activities is an essential step toward the development of an environment that is conducive to the empowerment of farmers to overcome obstacles and make the most of possibilities. In the conclusion, the insights that were acquired from this research attempt may be used to

influence policies and actions that not only address the present challenges that groundnut producers are facing, but also pave the way for a more resilient and sustainable future for the groundnut farming industry.

With this background study addressed the following objective:

1. To identify the constraints faced by the farmers and their suggestions for effective forward linkage activities

Methodology

The research was carried out in the Chitradurga district of Karnataka state during the years 2022 and 2023. The taluks of Challakere, Molakalmuru, Hiriyur, and Chitradurga were chosen for the purpose of conducting the study. These taluks were chosen because they had the highest area of groundnut production and were engaged in a variety of forward linkage activities, including processing, value addition, and marketing through various channels.

The participants in the study were supposed to be those who had been engaged in the cultivation of groundnuts for the past five seasons. Four taluks of the district that had the highest area under groundnut production were chosen for the study. From each taluk, four villages were chosen, and ten respondents were chosen at random from each village. One hundred sixty people participated in the research, making up the sample size.

Devices for the Accumulation of Data: We have used both primary and secondary sources of information. The structured questionnaire was used to collect primary data, while secondary data was gathered from a variety of sources, including books, journals, articles, newspapers, magazines, and websites. Statistical methods such as frequency and percentages were used in order to do further analysis on the data that was obtained.

Results and Discussion

Table 1: Constraints expressed by groundnut growers about Forward Linkage activities

Sl. No.	Statements	Frequency	Percentage	Rank
1.	Lack of information about preparation of value added products	119	74.37	II
2.	Complex procedures to avail credit from the financial institutions to establish enterprise	122	76.25	I
3.	Lack of awareness about forward linkage activities	118	73.75	III
4.	Scarcity of skilled labourer for processing and value addition activities	105	65.63	VI
5.	Less demand for unbranded products	111	69.37	IV
6.	Delay payments	86	53.75	VII
7.	Lack of proper storage facilities	107	66.87	V

The data that is shown in Table 1 illustrates the information that groundnut producers confront in terms of the limitations that they experience in relation to forward linking operations. Due to the fact that the majority of groundnut growers were small to medium level land holders with limited resources, it is evident from the results that the majority of respondents (76.25%) expressed that there was a "complex procedures to avail credit from the financial institutions to establish enterprise." This was perceived as the most severe problem. The farmers were not aware of the complicated processes that were required by the banking institutions in order to use the loan, and so did not follow these procedures. There was a "lack of information about the preparation of value-added products," as stated by 74.37% of respondents. For this reason, it is possible that there is a

dearth of knowledge and training programs about the creation of groundnut products that include value-added ingredients. Therefore, in order for farmers to be able to develop agricultural businesses in rural regions, they need adequate capacity building orientation programs. As a constraint, 73.75 percent of the respondents cited "lack of awareness about forward linkage activities." The reason for this may be that the multi-stage activities involved in FLAs, the appropriate information was not available to the farmers. The same trend was observed with the availability of information for groundnut growers on FLAs. 69.37 percent of the respondents cited "less demand for unbranded products" because the majority of consumers prefer branded products due to the fact that they are more familiar with them.

Table 2: Suggestions given by groundnut growers to improve forward linkage activities

Sl. No.	Statements	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Availability of raw materials for value-added products	115	71.87
2.	Timely credit facilities	124	77.50
3.	Need machineries at subsidised rates	132	82.55
4.	Organise capacity building programs to improve forward linkage activities	116	72.50
5.	Appropriate storage facilities	101	63.13
6.	Strengthening of FPOs	113	70.63

Table 2 displayed the information that was shown concerning the recommendations that were offered by the groundnut farmers about groundnut FLAs. 82.55 percent of respondents said that there is a need for machineries at subsidized prices. This is due to the fact that the need for selling the food that farmers produce after primary processing is finished is increasing in today's world, which means that farmers will get significant returns. In addition, secondary agriculture is becoming an increasingly significant part of the agricultural sector. On the market, there was a greater demand for groundnut goods that had been processed and had value added to them. In light of this, it is possible that they have indicated a desire to acquire machinery at a reduced cost in order to engage in processing activities and the creation of value-added goods on their own. 77.50 percent of those who participated in the survey indicated that "Timely credit facilities" should be made available. The most likely explanation for this might be that new processing units are being established in rural regions, notably in sectors that are dependent on groundnuts and oil seeds. In order for groundnut producers to get the necessary financial resources from banking institutions, it is necessary for them to establish such small processing plants. As a result, people have the opportunity to engage in entrepreneurial endeavours in the groundnut industry in their immediate neighbourhood, so enhancing the economic circumstances.

Conclusion

By providing light on the many problems that limit groundnut producers' capacity to fully harness the potential advantages of forward linkage activities, the research has offered significant insights into the restrictions that groundnut growers experience in respect to forward linkage operations. The complicated environment in which groundnut farmers work is highlighted by the presence of the stated restrictions, which include restricted market access, technical deficiencies, financial hurdles, and knowledge shortages, among other things. The recommendations that were made by the farmers highlight the need of enhancing market connections, providing easy access to finance facilities, enhancing extension services, and implementing targeted capacity-building efforts. The results of this study may be used by policymakers, agricultural extension services, and stakeholders in the agricultural sector in order to develop interventions that are contextually appropriate. It is possible to create a more encouraging environment for groundnut producers if policies are aligned with the restrictions that have been identified and if ideas from farmers are taken into consideration. As a result, this may improve their ability to withstand adverse conditions, boost their output, and better their general standard of living within the domain of groundnut agriculture.

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