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Performance of baby corn contract farming amongst the farmers

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ABSTRACT

The concept of contract farming has become one of the significant institutional mechanisms, which have helped in developing linkages between farmers and agribusiness firms through provision of quality inputs, technical support, and marketing. The baby corn is one of the value-added horticulture crops whose demand is continuously increasing at home and abroad. Thus, the present study was conducted for performance evaluation of baby corn contract farming amongst the contract farmers in Pune district. This study took place in Baramati tehsil of Pune district, Maharashtra. The research design used was ex-post facto and 130 baby corn contract farmers from ten villages were selected using a mix of purposive and random sampling. Data was collected by personal interview, analyzed using various statistical methods. It is evident from the results that the performance of baby corn contract farming was measured on five dimensions that include farming, extension, economic, market, and social. Most respondents were highly satisfied with guaranteed production, less risk of production, technical guidance, guaranteed price and assured market, employment generation, and more social participation. However, respondents were largely dissatisfied with financial assistance and low water requirement as compared to the previous crop. In total, 56.15 per cent of the respondents exhibited a medium level of performance, followed by 26.15 per cent with a high level of performance and 17.70 per cent with a low level of performance in baby corn contract farming. The study found that baby corn contract farming had positive impact, on farmers by increased production and price, increasing income and improving their socio-economic status. It's an effective proved as a good enhances livelihood security and promotes sustainable agricultural development.

Keywords: Baby corn, Contract farming, Performance, Farmers

Introduction

Agriculture is really important for the economy because it gives people food and jobs. In the few years contract farming has become a big deal as it provides cost reduction and value addition by providing the farmers with better seeds and other inputs. It helps farmers to sell their produce by improving marketing channels and technical know-how. It also helps them to learn technology, extension services and credit etc. to use it in a better way. Baby corn is a unique with a difference of value addition in terms of milky tender cob as fresh natural food cum vegetable. It is a high nutritional value, short crop duration, multiple harvesting potential, and increasing demand from domestic as well as export markets, baby corn has emerged as a high-value commercial crop. Cultivation of baby corn generates employment for the rural poor since; 3-4 crops can be raised in a year. It occupies an important place in the food processing industry of India. Canning and pickling industries of baby corn offer huge export potential. Demand for baby corn as health food is increasing in class hotels and middle-class consumers. Contract farming refers to an institutional arrangement between farmers and agribusiness firms under which agricultural commodities are produced and supplied according to predetermined agreements relating to quantity, quality, price, and time of delivery (Singh, 2002) [1]. As contract farming is emerging as an alternative institutional arrangement. The adoption of contract farming in baby corn production provides farmers with assured markets, quality inputs, technical guidance, and price assurance, thereby enhancing production efficiency, reducing market uncertainties, and improving farm profitability. Considering this background, it is necessary to study the performance of contract farming in baby corn. Therefore, to study the Performance of Baby Corn Contract Farming Among the Baby Corn Contract Farmers was undertaken.

Methodology

Based on number of contract farmers practicing baby corn contract farming, Pune district was purposively selected. List of contract farmers was obtained from district agriculture officer Pune and it was noticed that Baramati tehsil had a greater number of baby corn contract farmers based on this information Baramati tehsil was selected purposively. From the selected tehsil it was observed that total thirty village practicing the baby corn contract farming out of these ten major villages were consider and selected purposively and from each

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village 13 farmers were selected randomly comprising total 130 sample size. For proposed study ex post facto design of social research was used. Data were collected and analyzed by using statistical tools like frequency, percentage, mean and standard deviation to understand the data. The performance of contract farming is operationalized as the total outcome of inter-related factor viz. Farming dimension, Extension dimension, Economic dimension, Market dimension and Social dimension. The items pertaining to above selected indicator that could possibly represent the performance were presented to respondents and their responses were recorded as highly satisfied, satisfied and unsatisfied in a three-point continuum. The scores of 2, 1 and 0 were assigned accordingly.

Result and Discussion

Contract farming performance refers to the efficiency with reference to farming, extension, market, economic and social benefits by comparing the standards already set. The performance of contract farming outcomes as presented in tables.

The data presented in Table: 1 revealed that majority of the farmers were highly satisfied and satisfied with different dimensions of contract farming. With regards to farming dimensions great majority of the farmers (92.30 per cent) and (86.92 per cent) were highly satisfied and reported that contract farming enabled them to get assured production with minimum production risk respectively while 73.84 per

cent were satisfied for getting timely availability of quality inputs, 55.38 per cent were unsatisfied to the statement that it reduced water requirement compared to the previous crop. Baby corn is profitable than all the other crops grown in the area. This may be due to the short duration of baby corn crop and its suitability for cultivation throughout the year.

With regards to the extension dimension, farmers were highly satisfied towards extension service rendered by the company viz., regular technical guidance stated by 88.46 per cent, satisfied for creating awareness about appropriate technology as reported by 75.38 per cent, changed the attitude of farmers towards the farming by 71.53 per cent and motivation through the field officer opined by 60.00 per cent. Thus, it may say that extension functionaries of the company in the study area are very active and it contributes to the success of baby corn contract farming.

In case of economic dimension farmers were highly satisfied for the availability of transport arrangement stated by 89.94 per cent farmers, for providing assured income by 82.30 per cent, elimination of the middlemen reported by 72.30 per cent, for immediate settlement of money by 68.46 per cent and satisfied for enabling them for timely repayment of loan stated by 64.62 per cent farmers, reduced initial capital investment said by 62.31 per cent, helped in mobilization and proper utilization of resources reported by 56.15 per cent and unsatisfied for timely adequate financial support as said by 80.00 per cent respondents.

Table 1. Table: 1 Distribution of respondents according to different dimensions of baby corn contract farming. *N* = 130

Sr. No.	Dimensions	Unsatisfied	Satisfied	Highly Satisfied
A	Farming Dimension			
1	Timely availability of quality inputs	15 (11.55)	96 (73.84)	19 (14.61)
2	Minimum production risk	7 (5.39)	10 (7.69)	113 (86.92)
3	Assured production	3 (2.32)	7 (5.38)	120 (92.30)
4	Reduced water requirement compared to previous crop	72 (55.38)	30 (23.08)	28 (21.54)
B	Extension Dimension			
5	Awareness about appropriate technology	8 (6.15)	98 (75.38)	24 (18.47)
6	Changed the attitude of farmer towards farming	14 (10.78)	93 (71.53)	23 (17.69)
7	Regular technical guidance	6 (4.62)	9 (6.92)	115 (88.46)
8	Motivation by field officers	32 (24.62)	78 (60.00)	20 (15.38)
C	Economic Dimension			
9	Timely adequate financial support	104 (80.00)	17 (13.07)	9 (6.93)
10	Elimination of middlemen	14 (10.78)	22 (16.92)	94 (72.30)
11	Provided assured income	12 (9.24)	11 (8.46)	107 (82.30)
12	Immediate settlement of money	19 (14.62)	22 (16.92)	89 (68.46)
13	Made available transport arrangement	6 (4.62)	8 (6.15)	116 (89.23)
14	Helped for mobilization and proper utilization of resources	47 (36.16)	73 (56.15)	10 (7.69)

(continued on next page)

Sr. No.	Dimensions	Unsatisfied	Satisfied	Highly Satisfied
15	Made enable the timely repayment of loan	20 (15.38)	84 (64.62)	26 (20.00)
16	Reduced initial capital investment	36 (27.69)	81 (62.31)	13 (10.00)
D	Market Dimension			
17	Get assured price and ready market	3 (2.30)	9 (6.94)	118 (90.76)
18	Reduction in price risk	15 (11.55)	23 (17.69)	92 (70.76)
E	Social Dimension			
19	Employment generation at village level	7 (5.38)	9 (6.93)	114 (87.69)
20	Improved the coordination among farmers	20 (15.38)	75 (57.69)	35 (26.93)
21	Gain in social recognition/status	24 (18.47)	98 (75.38)	8 (6.15)
22	Increased social participation	5 (3.84)	6 (4.61)	119 (91.55)
23	Provided better standard of living	18 (13.85)	78 (60.00)	34 (26.15)
24	Created awareness about legal aspects	21 (16.15)	73 (56.15)	36 (27.70)
25	Created awareness to adopt eco-friendly technologies	13 (10.00)	79 (60.76)	38 (29.24)

With regards to market dimension great majority (90.76 per cent) were highly satisfied for providing assured price and ready market, 70.76 per cent reported reduction in price risk.

As above dimensions, social dimension is also more important because results of above dimension influenced the social dimension. The great majority (91.55 per cent) and 87.69 per cent farmers were highly satisfied and stated that there was increase in social participation, employment generation at village level due to contract farming. Also satisfied for gaining social recognition said by 75.38 per cent, created awareness about eco-friendly technology as expressed by 60.76 per cent, 60.00 per cent said that it provided better standard of living, improved the coordination among farmers by 57.69 per cent and created awareness about legal aspects as expressed by 56.15 per cent respondents. So, it may say that baby corn contract farming made change in their social dimension.

Similar findings were also observed by Ponnusamy *et al.* (2006) [2] and Venuprasad *et al.* (2013) [3].

Similar findings were reported by Gummagolmath *et al.* (2015) [4], who observed that contract farming provided assured markets, reduced production risk and improved farmers' income and standard of living.

The present findings are in agreement with Tandel *et al.* (2015) [5], who reported that contract farming improved farmers' income, technology adoption and market access, resulting in better overall performance.

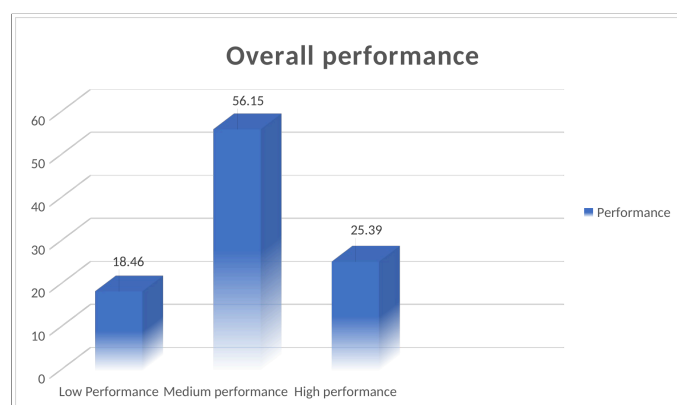
The findings are in agreement with Sharma *et al.* (2018) [6], who observed that contract farmers exhibited better socio-economic performance due to improved access to production inputs, technical guidance and assured markets.

The findings also support Mishra *et al.* (2018) [7], who concluded that contract farming reduces production risk and improves farmers' welfare through better market linkages and institutional support.

As regards the overall contract farming performance, it is evident from Table 4.15 that 100.00 more than fifty per cent respondents (56.15 per cent) had medium contract farming performance whereas 25.39 per cent respondents had high overall contract farming perfor-

mance and 18.46 per cent respondents had overall low contract farming performance. On the basis of foregoing discussion. It can be concluded that majority of respondents (81.15 per cent) had medium to high overall contract farming performance.

The findings are in conformity with Patel *et al.* (2011) [8], who reported that the majority of the respondents exhibited a medium level of economic performance, indicating that adoption of improved agricultural practices contributes to better farm performance.



Conclusion

The study found that baby corn contract farming has helped farmers to get more money with minimum risk. It enabled them to sell their produce without middlemen. It has created employment opportunities at village level. More than half per cent respondents show the medium level overall contract farming performance and more than three fourth respondents show medium to high overall contract farming performance. The study concludes that baby corn contract farming serves as an effective farming arrangement, offering farmers production, marketing, economic, and social benefits. This, in turn, enhances livelihood security and promotes sustainable agricultural development.

Table 2. Distribution of the respondents according to overall contract farming performance

Sr. No	Category	Frequency	Percentage
1	Low contract farming performance	24	18.46
2	Medium contract farming performance	73	56.15
3	High contract farming performance	33	25.39
Total		130	100

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