

# A Study of Problems Faced by Banana Farmers in Jalgaon District

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**Abstract** – This paper examines problems faced by Banana farmers of Jalgaon District due to Government policies or natural calamities. Agriculture, which is considered the backbone of the Indian economy, has taken a back seat due to the apathy of government policies in the last two decades. The percentage of cultivable land has come down. Meanwhile, nearly 70 percent of the population depending upon agriculture for their daily livelihood directly or indirectly is currently undergoing a transformation.

**Keywords:** Small and large farmers, livelihoods, problems of farmers, income.

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## I. INTRODUCTION

Agriculture, which is considered the backbone of the Indian economy, has taken a back seat due to the apathy of government policies in the last two decades. The percentage of cultivable land has come down. Meanwhile, nearly 70 percent of the population depending upon agriculture for their daily livelihood directly or indirectly is currently undergoing a transformation. With dwindling surpluses from agricultural activities, most of the labourers have now shifted to service sector activities like real estate, working as construction workers, and others (especially the second generation from farming families) who are semiskilled have found solace in the periphery, working for courier companies and the like. Thus, semi and unskilled workers are forced to take up work in manufacturing (mostly contractual in nature) and service sectors – where wages are minimal and hardly any social security is provided by the company. Yet approximately some 20 percent of the villagers now depend solely upon agricultural income for their livelihood directly. Farmers' welfare directly depends upon the income generated from agricultural produce. This income would be high or low depending upon the nature of the price discovered in the market for the produce. The farmers often do not participate in determining the price and instead the middlemen and agents. Globalisation is a process in which the entire nation is expected to benefit, including the small farmers as stakeholders. But in India, we see a different picture. Globalisation has left the small farming community (and in the case of certain crops, the government) do it. These third parties make profit out of the loss imposed upon poor farmers by manipulating the demand-supply conditions. When this threatens the daily livelihoods of the villagers, they search for better sources of income outside agriculture. This leads to sale of land, which ultimately drives the agricultural labour-force out of employment. The other side of the story is that due to the low prices received for their produce, farmers are sometimes compelled to give very low wages to the labourers, which is far less than what they might receive in comparison to the manufacturing sector. This forces the labourers to migrate out of agriculture. This indeed is not bad for an economy, which is in the second stage of reforms and globalisation. Reforms would be meaningful in the macro context, only if they provide greater employment opportunities with better wages and working environment.

Cultivation of banana and its production assumes critical importance now-a-days due to the increase in population and rise in the level of income of the people and consequent changes in the pattern of consumption. Banana plays a unique role in developing countries like India both in economic and social sphere for improving income and nutritional status particularly of rural masses.

Several problems are associated with the cultivation and marketing of banana. These problems affect the production of banana as well as the profitability of banana cultivation. Though their effects are not uniformly the same, all these problems are of considerable concern. They are discussed in this paper.

## II. OBJECTIVES OF STUDY

1. To study the Socio Economic background of farmers.
2. To study the problems faced by the farmers in the production, in marketing & export of banana.
3. To give appropriate suggestions for policy makers.

## III. METHODS & MATERIALS

This research based on both primary & secondary data. Primary data collected from banana farmers in 5 Tahsils in Jalgaon district. Secondary data collected from various government department authorities, books, articles, M.Phil. & Ph.D. thesis submitted to various Universities.

The study was conducted in five Tahsils (Erandol, Bhadgaon, Parola, Jammer & Pachora) in Jalgaon district from where 60 banana farmers were selected as per random sample method. An interview schedule was organized with them in local language. The data were used to find out the relationship between selected characteristics of respondents and extent of knowledge, adoption and problems faced by the farmers.

#### IV. RESULTS & DISCUSSIONS

While analyzing data following results revealed –

- Age:- It revealed that 65% banana farmers belonged to older age group of above 40 years, 30% were above 30 & 05% were above 20.
- Education:- it is revealed that 68% farmers have passed their degree level education, 8% were passed H.S.C., 20% were S.S.C., remaining 4% were below S.S.C.
- Family size:- near about 54% farmers were from medium size family ie. 6-10 people in family, 16% farmers were from large size family ie. 11-15 people & 30% farmer from small family ie. Below 5 members.
- Land Size:- Maximum (70 %) banana farmers were small land holders (< 5 acres). (30% )were large land holder.
- Income:- About 64 % banana farmer had annual income more than Rs. 2,50,000/- while 26 % growers reported their annual income up to Rs 1,50,000/-,while 10% farmers had annual income above Rs.4,00,000/- .
- Experience:- The study revealed that 66% growers were with farming experience of more than twenty years, while 54 % growers were having banana cultivation experience for more than15 years.

Problems of farmers:-

Identification of factors limiting banana production:-

The cultivation and production are influenced by several factors such as agro-biological factors, economic and social factors. These factors are discussed in this section elaborately.

A) Agro-biological Factors -

The respondents are asked to rank the factors that are identified in limiting banana production. ‘Garrett ranking technique’ is used to find out the most influencing factors.

As per our survey following factors were ranked by farmers-

Problems	Rank
Climate	I
Amount of Rainfall	II
Severity of Wind	III
Soil Condition	IV
Severity of Pests	V
Severity of Diseases	VI
Natural Calamities	VII

B) Economic and Institutional Factors –

As per our survey following factors were ranked by farmers-

Problems	Rank
Higher Labour Cost	I
Scarcity of Labourers	II
Higher Cropping Cost	III
Non-availability of Credit	IV
Higher Pesticide Cost	V

B) Problems of Banana Cultivation

Sources	I	II	III	IV	V	TOTAL
Severity Diseases	24	10	14	05	07	60
Severity of Pests	08	14	11	13	14	60
Scarcity of Labour	08	12	14	12	14	60
Natural Calamities	10	08	10	18	14	60
High Cost of Production	10	16	11	12	11	60
TOTAL	60	60	60	60	60	300

Garrett ranking technique was used to rank the problems. The ranks were assigned and points were given in the following order.

- 1 – Rank = 5 points
- 2 – Rank = 4 points
- 3 – Rank = 3 points
- 4 – Rank = 2 points
- 5 – Rank = 1 point

After using Garret Ranking techniques problems ranked by farmers were as follows –

Problems	Rank
High Cost of Production	I
Natural Calamities	II
Severity Diseases	III
Severity of Pests	IV
Scarcity of Labour	V

The important marketing problems faced by the banana cultivators are; high commission charges, high transportation, cheating by middlemen, seasonal demand, fluctuations in prices, lack of grading, lack of finance, high labour cost and poor quality.

## V. CONCLUSION

It may be concluded that all characteristics have relationship to banana farmer's knowledge & their practices. So it is necessary that to increase productivity of banana per hectare we have to develop some facilities & knowledge level of farmers. It is also concluded that innovative practices & technology is more useful to increase income of farmers. The government policies relating to agriculture should be framed under Swaminathan Committee so that living hood of farmers & their family may be increased. The necessary changes of market structure should be changed.

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