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Constraints faced and to seek the suggestions of cashewnut growers for overcoming the constraints in efficient management of cashewnut cultivation

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Abstract

Cashewnut is an important horticultural plantation crop. It has gained status of commercial crop from that of a forest component due to technological advancements with respect to propagation, production and management. The present study involve a sample size of 240 cashewnut growers from south Konkan of Maharashtra state The selection of districts and tahsils was done on the basis highest area under cashewnut cultivation. Constraints were identified and quantified based on frequency and percentage.

The major constraint faced by cashewnut growers, damage due to change in climate and unseasonal rainfall, fluctuation in market price, difficulty in getting updates of different market' and no knowledge about cashew apple processing. More than two third of the respondents faced the constraint high cost of pesticides and fungicides, damage due to wildfire and loss due to pest and diseases. Majority of the respondents suggested government interventions are necessary in cashewnut price fixation, while one more necessary suggestion respondents suggested that regular and timely visit to the farm be ensured by the agricultural extension professionals. This was followed by training is needed for the cashewnut growers regarding plant protection measures and post harvest technologies. More than three-fourth of the respondents suggested that 'government need to take some necessary action for control of wild animals', and formation of cashewnut growers co-operative society be promoted.

Keywords: Constraints, suggestions, cashewnut, frequency and percentage

Introduction

Cashewnut is an important horticultural plantation crop. It has gained status of commercial crop from that of a forest component due to technological advancements with respect to propagation, production and management. This has been possible as a result of increasing demand for raw cashew nuts and enhanced interest for its commercialization. India is having 8.55 lakh ha area under cashewnut with an annual production of 6.20 lakh MT. The per ha productivity was 80 0 kg/ha According to data published by the National Horticulture Board (NHB), Maharashtra stands first in annual cashew nut production during 2021-22 at 0.20 million tonnes (MT), growing from 0.19 million tonnes cashew nut produced in 2020-21. The cashewnut production in Maharashtra is mainly concentrated in Konkan region particularly, in Ratnagiri and Sindhudurg districts. In Maharashtra, the area under cashewnut was 1.91 lakh ha. (Source: Directorate of Cashewnut and Cocoa Development, 2018). Farmers all over the world are working as managers of their farms. Irrespective of the economic, social, cultural, physical and technological environment, farmers manage a production system to get returns from it. Returns from the farm, may be in the form of produce or money which is very crucial for the farmers, the extent of meeting the goals of the family depends on it.

This research focuses on identifying and analysing the constraints faced by cashewnut growers in Konkan region of Maharashtra. The findings aim to provide a comprehensive understanding of the issues impacting cashewnut growers and offer insights for policymakers and agricultural stakeholders to address these challenges effectively.

Objective

To analyze the constraints faced and to seek the suggestions of cashewnut growers for overcoming the constraints in efficient management of cashewnut cultivation.

Materials and Methods

A multistage sampling technique was used for the selection of districts and tahsils. At the first stage, two leading districts in cashewnut cultivation i.e. Ratnagiri and Sindhudurg from the Konkan region were selected. In the

second stage, three tahsils were selected from each district. The selection of tahsils was done on the basis highest area under cashewnut cultivation. Accordingly, the tahsils namely Dapoli, Khed and Sangmeshwar from Ratnagiri district and Kudal, Kankawali and Sawantwadi from Sindhudurg district were selected. Thus total six tahsils were selected for present study. Four villages from each tahsil were selected. Total 24 villages constituted the sample. Total 40 respondents were selected from each tahsils, making a sample of 240 respondents for the present study. The data were collected through personally interviewing the respondents with the help of interview schedule with respect of the objectives of the study. The collected data were scored, tabulated and analyzed by using frequency, percentage.

Results and Discussion

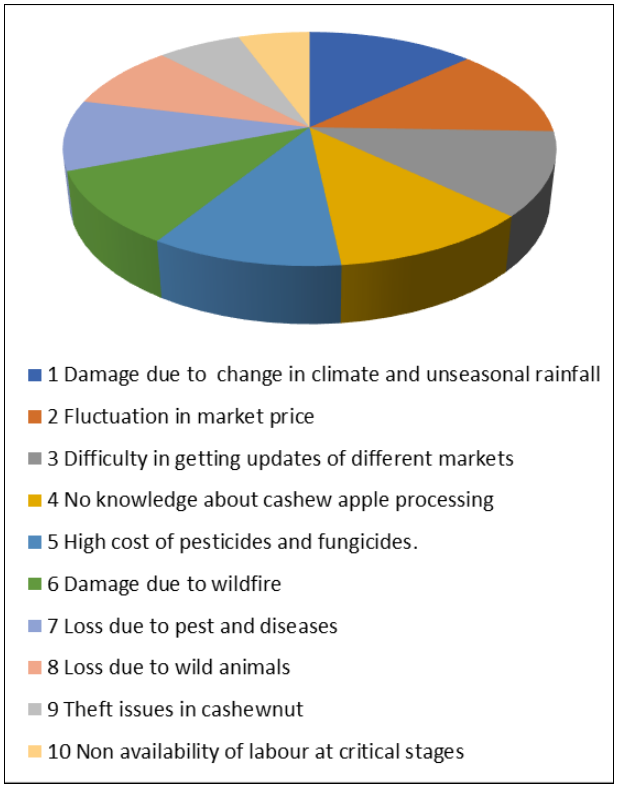
The constraints reported by the cashewnut growers in efficient management of cashewnut crop are given in Table 1.

Table 1: Distribution of the respondents according to the constraints faced by the cashewnut growers

Sl. No	Constraints	Respondents (N = 240)	
		Number	Percentage
1	Damage due to change in climate and unseasonal rainfall	210	87.50
2	Fluctuation in market price	200	83.34
3	Difficulty in getting updates of different markets	185	77.08
4	No knowledge about cashew apple processing	180	75.00
5	High cost of pesticides and fungicides.	170	70.84
6	Damage due to wildfire	164	68.34
7	Loss due to pest and diseases	156	65.00
8	Loss due to wild animals	145	60.42
9	Theft issues in cashewnut	105	43.75
10	Non availability of labour at critical stages	90	37.50

The results presented in the Table 1 shows that, the major constraint namely, 'damage due to change in climate and unseasonal rainfall' was faced by the 87.50 per cent of the cashewnut growers, followed by 'fluctuation in market price' (83.34 per cent), 'difficulty in getting updates of different market' (77.08 per cent) and 'no knowledge about cashew apple processing' (75.00 per cent). More than two third (70.84 per cent) of the respondents faced the constraint 'high cost of pesticides and fungicides', followed by 'damage due to wildfire' (68.34 per cent) and 'loss due to pest and diseases' (65.00 per cent).

The findings are in line with the findings of Sajeev and Saroj (2015) [4] and Tandel *et al* (2019) [5].



Suggestions of the respondents for overcoming the constraints

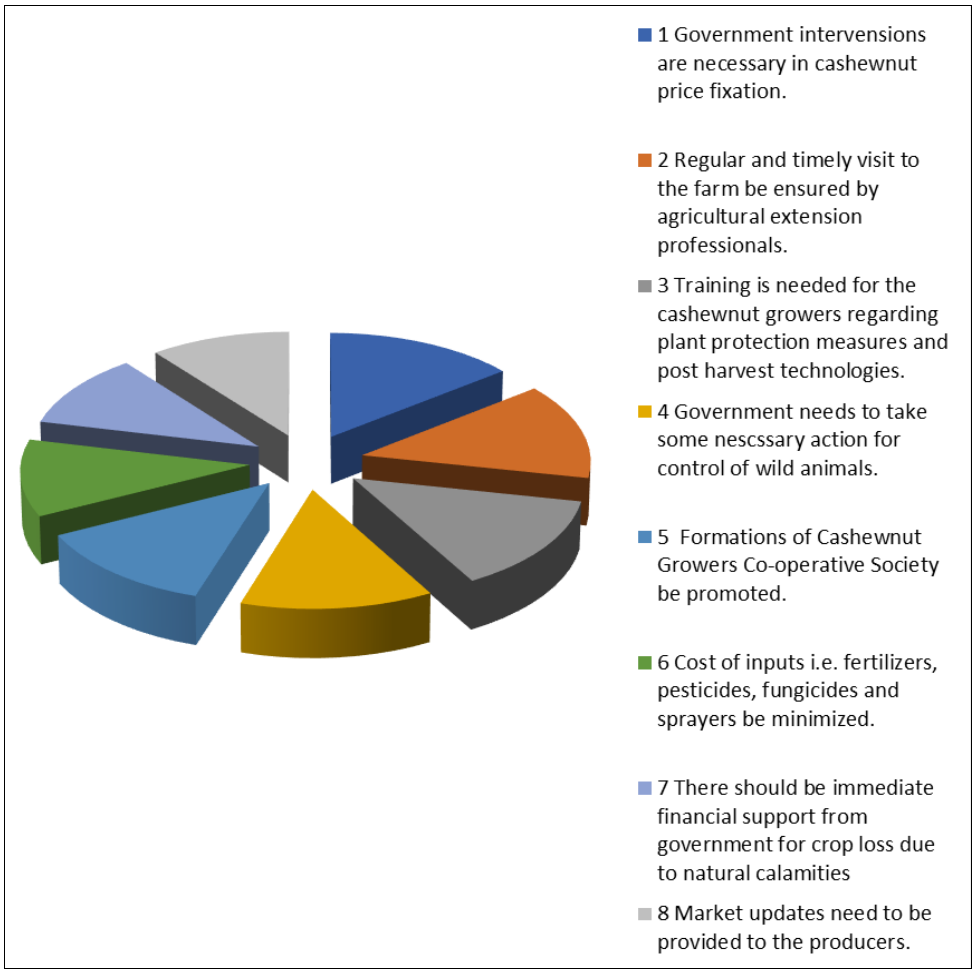
The suggestions offered by the cashewnut growers for overcoming the constraints in efficient management of cashewnut orchard are shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Distribution of the respondents according to their suggestions given for overcoming the constraints.

Sl. No.	Suggestions	Respondents (N=240)	
		Numbers	Percentage
1.	Government interventions are necessary in cashewnut price fixation.	205	85.41
2.	Regular and timely visit to the farm be ensured by agricultural extension professionals.	200	83.34
3.	Training is needed for the cashewnut growers regarding plant protection measures and post harvest technologies.	195	81.25
4.	Government needs to take some necessary action for control of wild animals.	185	77.08
5.	Formations of Cashewnut Growers Co-operative Society be promoted.	182	75.83
6.	Cost of inputs i.e. fertilizers, pesticides, fungicides and sprayers be minimized.	160	66.67
7.	There should be immediate financial support from government for crop loss due to natural calamities.	155	64.58
8.	Market updates need to be provided to the producers.	150	62.5

It is observed from Table 2that, majority (85.41 per cent) of the respondents suggested 'government interventions are necessary in cashewnut price fixation', while 83.34 per cent of the respondents suggested that 'regular and timely visit to the farm be ensured by the agricultural extension professionals'. This was followed by 81.25 per cent of the respondents who suggested that 'training is needed for the cashewnut growers regarding plant protection measures and post harvest technologies'. More than three-fourth (77.08 per cent) of the respondents suggested that 'government need to take some necessary action for control of wild animals', followed by 75.83 per cent of the respondents who suggested that 'formation of cashewnut growers co-operative society be promoted.

The findings are in line with the findings of Darandale (2009) [2], Raykar (2010) [3] and Tandel *et al*. (2019) [5].



Conclusion

A close observation of the constraints revealed that most of them are concerned with climate, pest and diseases, market and processing. Except climatic factors, other constraints could be resolved by the cashewnut growers through cooperation among them and with the support of government agencies. The suggestions offered by the cashewnut growers are self explanatory. The concerned agencies may initiate necessary steps to help cashewnut growers in solving their constraints.

Conflict of Interest

All authors declare that they have no conflict of interest.

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