

## International Journal of Agriculture Extension and Social Development

Volume 8; Issue 6; June 2025; Page No. 685-687

Received: 15-04-2025  
Accepted: 19-05-2025

Indexed Journal  
Peer Reviewed Journal

### Constraints in marketing of vegetables in Kullu district of Himachal Pradesh, India: Application of Henry Garret Ranking

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DOI: <https://www.doi.org/10.33545/26180723.2025.v8.i6i.2189>

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#### Abstract

India's varied climate and topography make it the perfect place to grow a wide range of vegetables. India has surpassed China as the world's second-largest producer of vegetables. Examining the obstacles to vegetable marketing in the Kullu district of Himachal Pradesh was the aim of the current study. Producing vegetables involves a lot of marketing. There are ten notified market areas in the state of Himachal Pradesh. Its main objective is to safeguard the farming community's interests. Ten of the state's 59 operational markets are primarily regulated. The state has established regulated markets that are advantageous to farmers. Despite having the bare minimum of amenities, these markets lack cold storage, grading sheds, mechanical grading, packing, and other facilities that are necessary for a regulated market. Therefore, five traders, five wholesalers, and five retailers were chosen at random from the Bhunter market to investigate how the market operates in order to look at the different marketing aspects of vegetables. Constraints were examined using the Garret ranking technique. It is crucial to remember that all sample farmers' responses were the main focus of these restrictions. The questions asked the respondents to rank the issues. Thus, the study focused on a number of issues related to the production and distribution of vegetables in the research region.

**Keywords:** Henry garret ranking, marketing, non-availability, problems, regulated markets

#### Introduction

In order to boost agricultural productivity and, consequently, economic growth in developing nations, a functional agricultural marketing system is essential. The advancement of agricultural production cannot be considered complete unless the produce is sold in the market. In India, where the majority of the population depends on agriculture and related industries, agriculture is the main source of income. Producing and marketing agricultural products has never been easy. While the others lose out, producers who have access to timely marketing information about arrivals and prices are able to sell their produce at the right time and location for the right price. Similarly, the primary season's plentiful supply of agricultural produce drives down prices and forces farmers to give up.

Indian farmers typically rely heavily on middlemen, particularly when it comes to marketing fruits and vegetables. Producers and buyers often receive subpar deals, and agents dominate the market without contributing much substantial value. (Namboodiri and Gandhi 2002)<sup>[2]</sup>.

Traditional markets were primarily controlled by middlemen who engaged in a variety of unethical practices that made the issues facing the market worse and did not take the interests of the primary producers into account. As

a result, the necessity of controlling marketing operations at the exchange locations was acknowledged. It has frequently been observed that the best conditions for marketing agricultural products do not exist, even after regulated markets have been established. Effective data organisation and dynamism are essential for agricultural marketing. Farmers are guaranteed profitable prices with the least amount of risk when all of these are in place. Therefore, a successful marketing plan is essential to farmers' success. In Himachal Pradesh, the vast majority of people (roughly 85%) fall into marginal and small categories. With an average productivity of 200 quintals per hectare and a total production of 141854 MT, Kullu's vegetable production area spans 6500 hectares (Economics Survey, 2018)<sup>[1]</sup>. Over the past few decades, more land has been planted to vegetables in every district of the state. Better agroclimatic conditions, more irrigation facilities, and government initiatives to educate farmers about cash crop cultivation are the main causes (Mandla, I. and Vaidya, M.K. 2020)<sup>[4]</sup>. The production of vegetables and their marketing are filled with issues. These include a lack of skilled labour, increased input costs, price volatility, and a high percentage of losses during handling and transportation (Kumar *et al.* 2019). Vegetable crop productivity falls short of its ideal level. Poor infrastructure, inadequate irrigation, small and

dispersed land holdings, farmers' limited ability to invest, a delicate ecosystem, and limited access to technology can all be blamed for low productivity. Due to the vegetables' perishable nature, producers are also unable to control supply in assembled markets. For the purpose of formulating policies and enabling farmers to make wise agricultural decisions, these parameters must be periodically validated.

### Materials and Methodology

Marketing plays an important role in vegetable production. The research was conducted in 2019-2020 at the Department of Social Sciences, College of Forestry, Dr. Yashwant Singh Parmar University of Horticulture and Forestry in Nauni, Solan, Himachal Pradesh, India. Primary data was collected from selected respondents via personal interviews using a pre-tested and well-structured schedule. To investigate the various marketing aspects of vegetables, five traders, five wholesalers, and five retailers were chosen at random from the Bhunter market to study how the market worked. Secondary data on market arrivals and prices was gathered from various government offices, revenue offices, the Department of Horticulture, and the Department of Agriculture, as well as from available literature and websites.

The Garret ranking technique was used to examine constraints (Rao *et al.*, 2015) [6]. It is important to note that these constraints were based on the responses of all sample farmers. Respondents were asked to rank the problems. In Garrett's ranking technique, these ranks were converted into percent position using the following formula:

$$\text{Percent position} = \frac{100(R_{ij} - 0.5)}{N_j}$$

Where,

$R_{ij}$  = Ranking given to the  $i$ th attribute by the  $j$ th individual  
 $N_j$  = Number of attributes ranked by the  $j$ th individual.

By referring to the Garrett's Table, the percentage positions estimated were converted into scores. The attributes with the highest mean value were considered as the most important ones and the others followed in that order.

### Results and Discussion

The problems encountered by vegetable farmers in the fields of production and marketing were investigated and classified into two subgroups: production-related problems and marketing-related problems. Tables 1 and 2 discuss the different responses of the sampled vegetable growers to various production and marketing problems.

#### Production related problems

Various problems encountered by farmers during the production process include a lack of skilled labour, an adequate supply of inputs such as chemical fertilisers, financial aid, and social issues such as inadequate training facilities and extension services. To ensure that the production process runs smoothly, it is critical to identify and understand these issues so that appropriate solutions can be provided.

Table 1 shows the various issues that vegetable growers face when producing vegetables in the valley. According to the study, the top five major challenges faced by vegetable

growers were a lack of skilled labour (51.85%), high wage rates (44.25%), non-availability of labour at peak operation times (39.19%), high chemical prices (37.1%), and insect pest and disease outbreaks (30.46%). Rawal and Ansari (2019) [7] found similar results, noting that farmers' bargaining power was weakened by their lack of access to real-time price and demand information.

#### Marketing related problems

Since marketing issues are frequently overlooked, they must also be taken into account. These include inadequate storage facilities in the event that farmers receive low prices for their produce, inadequate market information distribution to farmers, and poor transportation facilities that result in deteriorating produce quality.

Table 2 shows the marketing issues that the vegetable growers in the study area are facing. According to the table, the farmers' top marketing issues were the following: limited market reach (37.25%), lack of packaging materials (36.33%), late information (52.7%), and high prices (35.95%). Lack of vehicles, high transportation costs, and no storage facility were additional marketing issues. The analysis found that labour availability, input costs, and pest problems are the main constraints on production, while poor information flow, a lack of infrastructure, and high logistics costs limit marketing. These findings lend credence to the notion that a variety of systemic barriers impact the productivity and financial success of smallholder vegetable farmers.

The findings support the study's validity and applicability by confirming patterns observed in other regions of India (Shah & Ansari, 2020; Kumar *et al.*, 2019; Rawal & Ansari, 2022) [8, 3, 7]. To address these issues, targeted approaches are required, such as managing the labour pool during peak periods, ensuring timely access to reasonably priced inputs, improving market intelligence systems, and investing in rural storage and transportation infrastructure.

**Table 1:** Production problems faced by vegetable growers.

Particulars	Garret Score	Per cent	Rank
<b>Skilled labour</b>			
Shortage of skilled labour	5185	51.85	I
High wage rate	4425	44.25	II
Non-availability at peak operation time	3919	39.19	III
<b>Chemical fertilizers</b>			
High price of chemical	3710	37.1	IV
Problems of insects and diseases	3466	34.66	V
Desired brand not available	3152	31.52	VI
Non-availability of insecticides/fungicide	3046	30.46	VII
<b>Financial problems</b>			
Non-availability of financial institutes in village	2630	26.3	VIII
Low repayment capacity	2607	26.07	IX
High interest rate and cumbersome procedure of banks	2547	25.47	X
<b>Institutional problem</b>			
Inadequate training facilities	2484	24.84	XI
Lack of extension facilities	2470	24.7	XII
Lack of knowledge of package of practices	2180	21.8	XIII
<b>Social problems</b>			
Lack of interest in farming of family members	2169	21.69	XIV
Inadequate cultivable land	1516	15.16	XV

**Table 2:** Marketing problems faced by the vegetable growers

Particulars	Garret Score	Per cent	Rank
<b>Market Intelligence</b>			
Late information	5270	52.7	I
Inadequate information	4200	42	II
Limited to market only	3725	37.25	III
<b>Packing material</b>			
Shortage of packing material	3633	36.33	IV
High prices	3595	35.95	V
<b>Storage facility</b>			
No storage facility	3123	31.23	VI
Inadequate storage facility	3116	31.16	VII
<b>Transportation</b>			
Lack of vehicles	2947	29.47	VIII
Vehicles not available in time	2926	29.26	IX
High transport charges	2817	28.17	X
<b>Grading and Packing</b>			
Shortage of skilled labour	2396	23.96	XI
High wage rates	2391	23.91	XII
Non-availability at peak operation time	2232	22.32	XIII

### Conclusion

The main issues that growers faced in the production of vegetables were a lack of skilled labour, high wages, unavailability during peak operation hours, lack of timely financial assistance, high costs of plant protection materials, issues with insects and diseases, and low repayment capacity. In terms of marketing, the majority of farmers talked about issues like inadequate storage facilities, a lack of vehicles, high packaging material prices, and delayed market status information. Many issues facing the local vegetable farmers in terms of vegetable crop production and marketing were resolved by the study. These issues can be resolved by technology and post-harvest management, delivering essential inputs to farmers' doorsteps, providing training in contemporary production technology and post-harvest management, and strengthening the marketing infrastructure through the construction of rural go-downs and cold chambers, the expansion of markets, prompt transportation management, the development of eNam, and the strengthening of market intelligence systems.

### Acknowledgement and Conflict of Interest

The authors are grateful to the Department of Social Sciences, College of Forestry and Department of Business Management, College of Horticulture, Dr. Yashwant Singh Parmar University of Horticulture and Forestry, Nauni, Solan, Himachal Pradesh, India for their support of the study. All authors declare that they agree on all parameters and have no conflict of interest.

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