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### Marketing behaviour of the banana growers of Cuddalore district in Tamil Nadu

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#### Abstract

Banana is the fourth most important commodity globally, following rice, wheat, and dairy products, and stands third in importance among the world's fruits. In India, it is a predominant and widely favored fruit, enjoyed by people across all economic classes. With its extensive cultivation, banana holds significant socio-economic value. It serves as both a dessert fruit for millions and a staple food in many regions. Rich in carbohydrates, vitamins (especially vitamin B), and minerals such as potassium, phosphorus, calcium, and magnesium, banana is valued for its high nutritive content and affordability. It is easily digestible, free from fat and cholesterol, and consumed in both fresh and cooked forms, whether ripe or raw. Banana powder is often used as a first food for infants. Regular consumption can help reduce the risk of heart disease and is beneficial for individuals with high blood pressure, arthritis, ulcers, gastroenteritis, and kidney disorders. Regarding the adoption of recommended technologies in banana cultivation, most farmers demonstrated a moderate level of implementation. The uptake of improved varieties was relatively high, along with adherence to practices such as proper watering per plant, correct planting depth, application of farmyard manure (FYM), filling pits with suitable materials, and systematic pit preparation.

**Keywords:** Banana cultivation, nutritional value, socio-economic importance, technology adoption, India, Vitamin B, Pit preparation

#### Introduction

Banana (*Musa paradisiaca*) is one of the most significant fruit crops grown in tropical regions such as India, China, Brazil, and the Philippines. It belongs to the Musaceae family and the Musa genus, under the order Zingiberales. The name "banana" is derived from the Arabic term banyan, meaning "finger", reflecting the shape of the fruit. Native to the tropical regions of South and Southeast Asia, bananas are mainly cultivated for their fruit, though they are also used for fibre extraction and as ornamental plants. Despite their tree-like appearance due to their tall and sturdy structure, bananas do not have a true woody stem; instead, the upright stem is a pseudostem formed by tightly packed leaf bases.

Bananas are often referred to as a "health fruit" because they are rich in essential vitamins like C, D, and E, along with beta-carotene and vitamin A, making them particularly beneficial for women over 40 seeking healthier skin. They also contain important minerals such as potassium (K), magnesium (Mg), zinc (Zn), and iron (Fe), and are a rich source of carbohydrates. Notably, bananas are especially valued for their high potassium content. Varieties with yellow and orange flesh are also excellent sources of

provitamin A and carotenoids.

Popular banana varieties for dessert use include Grand Naine, Robusta, Dwarf Cavendish, Rasthali, Vayal Vazhai, Poovan, Nendran, Red Banana, Karpooravalli, Udhayam, CO1, Matti, Sannachenkadali, and Ney Poovan. Among these, Cavendish varieties are the most favored for export. Culinary banana types (used for cooking) include Monthan, Nendran, Vayal Vazhai, Ash Monthan, and Chakkia. In hilly regions, varieties such as Virupakshi, Sirumalai, Namarai, Red Banana, Manoranjitham (Santhana Vazhai), and Ladan are commonly grown.

#### Research methodology

The present study was conducted in Cuddalore district of Tamil Nadu. The respondents were selected from 6 villages of two blocks namely, Cuddalore and Kurinjipadi of Cuddalore district. Proportionate random sampling procedure was followed for select the respondents from the following 6 villages. Thus, a total of 120 respondents were selected as a sample for the study. The data were collected with the help of well-structured and pre-tested interview schedule.

**Table 1:** Village wise distribution of selected respondents

S. No.	Name of the block	Name of the villages	Total number of Banana growers	Number of respondents selected
1	Cuddalore	Ramapuram	220	32
		Vellakarai	152	22
		Annavalli	139	20
2	Kurinjpadi	Vazhuthalampattu	124	18
		Vanniyarpalayam	100	15
		Anukampattu	92	13
		Total	827	120

## Result and Discussion

### Marketing behaviour of banana growers

Marketing behaviour is the capacity or tendency of an individual farmer to identify the market trend to sell the produce for greater returns. The results of the analysis with regard to overall marketing behaviour and item-wise marketing behaviour are presented as follows:

### Overall marketing behaviour

The distribution of respondents according to their marketing behaviour is given in the Table 2.

**Table 2:** Distribution of respondents according to their overall marketing behaviour (n=120)

S. No.	Category	Number	Per cent
1.	Low	35	29.17
2.	Medium	52	43.33
3.	High	33	27.50
Total		120	100.00

Analysis of Table 2 indicates that 43.33 per cent of the banana farmers fell into the medium category of overall marketing behaviour, while 29.17 per cent were in the low category and 27.50 per cent in the high category. This pattern shows that a majority of respondents demonstrated moderate marketing practices. The tendency towards a medium level may be influenced by their average engagement with extension agencies, moderate exposure to mass media, and fair participation in social activities. These factors likely provided them with a reasonable amount of information on markets and selling strategies, shaping their marketing behaviour. Similar trends were reported in earlier studies by Prathapsingh (2012) and Srikanth (2018).

### Item wise marketing behaviour

The item-wise marketing behaviour of respondents is presented in table 3.

**Table 3:** Distribution of respondents according to their item-wise marketing behaviour (n=120)

S. No.	Category	Number	Per cent
<b>I</b>	<b>Time of sale</b>		
1.	Soon after harvest	120	100
<b>II</b>	<b>Mode of packing</b>		
1.	Wooden box	88	73.33
2.	Plastic boxes	-	-
3.	Gunny bag	32	26.67
<b>III</b>	<b>Mode of transport</b>		
1.	City bus	10	8.34
2.	Tempo	37	30.83
3.	Lorry	73	60.83
<b>IV</b>	<b>Place of sale</b>		
1.	Locally	35	29.17
2.	Nearby town	75	62.50
3.	Distant town	10	8.33
<b>V</b>	<b>Mode of sale</b>		
1.	Local merchant	60	50.00
2.	Retailer	26	21.67
3.	Commission agent	11	9.17
4.	Contractor	6	5.00
5.	Wholesalers	7	5.83
6.	Regulated market	10	8.33

### Time of Sale

According to Table-3, all the banana farmers (100per cent) sold their produce immediately after harvest. This observation aligns with the study by Janusia (2017) <sup>[5]</sup>, who found that most farmers disposed of their produce soon after harvesting.

### Packing Methods

A significant majority (73.33per cent) of farmers used

woodena boxes for packing bananas, while 26.67per cent relied on gunny bags. The preference for wooden boxes is likely due to their superior ventilation and suitability for pre-cooling, which helps in maintaining fruit quality.

### Transportation Methods

Lorries were the most commonly used mode of transport, employed by 60.83per cent of the respondents. Additionally, 30.83per cent used tempos and 8.34per cent used city buses

to transport their produce.

### Place of Sale

A substantial portion (62.50 per cent) of the farmers sold their bananas in nearby towns, followed by 29.17 per cent who sold them in local markets. Only 8.33 per cent transported their produce to distant towns. This trend supports the findings of Prathapsingh (2012), who noted a similar preference for nearby town markets among banana growers.

### Mode of Sale

Half of the respondents (50 per cent) sold their produce to local merchants. This was followed by sales to retailers (21.67 per cent), commission agents (9.17 per cent), through regulated markets (8.33 per cent), wholesalers (5.83 per cent), and contractors (5 per cent).

### Conclusion

Less than half of the respondents (43.33 per cent) had a medium level of overall marketing behaviour, followed by low (29.17 per cent) and high (27.50 per cent) levels of overall marketing behaviour. A high (100 per cent) of the respondents selected the time of sale on the criteria of soon after harvest. Nearly half of the respondents (60.83 per cent) of them used a lorry as their mode of transport. The majority (62.50 per cent) of the banana growers sold their produce nearby town. The sale was through local merchants as mentioned by 50.00 per cent of them, followed by more than two-fifths (21.67 per cent) of the respondents sold through retailers.

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