

ABSTRACT

A study was carried to ascertain the economics of small scale onion cultivation in Batticaloa district with regard to socio-economic characteristics of the farmer, technology used, marketing channels and profitability. Five villages in the major onion producing areas were purposively selected for the study. Data was collected using a pre-tested questionnaire from 50 randomly selected farmers in the area.

It was observed that almost all the farmers cultivate 3 onion crops per year. Most of the farmers were full-time cultivators with an average farm size of 0.47 acs. (52%) . They spent more money purchasing seed materials and had difficulties in obtaining it on time.

Management practices such as fertilizer application, irrigation, weed and pest & disease control were carried out by most of the farmers to a great extent. 72% of farmers use different kinds of mixture of fertilizer at a time as top- dressing (applied 4 to 5 times / crop season).

The average yield obtained by the sampled farmers was 4,218.66 Kg per acre and highest yield was obtained in the village of Kaluwanchikudy (4,506.77 Kg / Ac). Most of them had obtained loans from Banks and APV and nearly 50% of farmers were not satisfied with the loan provided and only 41.83% of them had resettled the loan. Most of the farmers also got loan in 'kind' from NGO's.

Only few farmers store their produce due to poor storage facilities. Onion producers sold their products to merchants, and middlemen from the village and from other areas.

Middlemen problem also exists in the marketing channel for onions. The average cost of production was Rs. 38,040.98 per acre and highest cost of production was observed in the village of Kaluwanchikudy. The average profit was Rs.62,422 per acre and highest profit was observed in the village of Kaluwanchikudy. The average productivity was 19.07 Kg / Manday labour used and highest productivity was observed in the village of Kaluthavalai. The average total cost of production was Rs.9.02 per Kg of onion produced and lowest cost of production was observed at Kaluwanchikudy (Rs. 7.73 per Kg of onions).

Although farmers face input supply and middlemen problems a majority of farmers had obtained profit in cultivating onions. Hence, Onion cultivation on a small scale is profitable in the district.

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**ECONOMICS OF SMALL SCALE ONION CULTIVATION
IN
BATTICALOA DISTRICT**

BY

ARIYATHURAI ARUNANTHY

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SUPERVISORS

Mr. A.N. Ahamed,
Senior Lecturer,
Dept of Agric. Econos.

Mr. P.Sivarajah,
Lecturer,
Dept of Agric. Econos.

HEAD/AGRICULTURAL ECONOMICS
Dr.(Miss) J. Nadarajah,
Head/ Agric. Economics,
Faculty of Agriculture,
Eastern University, Sri Lanka,
Chenkalady.

Date:.....

Date: 30/8/95

Date: 30/8/95

DEPARTMENT OF
AGRICULTURAL ECONOMICS
FACULTY OF AGRICULTURE
EASTERN UNIVERSITY SRI LANKA
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