

# **Opportunities in Apple Production and Processing in Kashmir**

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## **ABSTRACT**

*Apple cultivation is the most profitable economic activity in the Kashmir, which is famous for its best quality apple. It is an agriculture base, labour intensive and commercially and economically important activity. if it is done in a scientific manner income per acre will be much higher then any other fruit production. In Kashmir production of apple can play a vital role in improving standard of living, to increase personal income and for creating employment opportunities As we are not able to meet the total Demand there is enough scope for improvement in production more than fifty percentage of the population is engaged in the production of this fruit and involve in production. But due to less investment, training, Knowledge about the latest technology production of apple is not up to the mark even, the improvement in direct marketing, post-harvest management and sufficient cold storage facilities and processing of fruit have some need to develop an apple crop. It has been observed that the growers face problems in selling, transportation and storage facilities which result in low income. It has been suggested that if proper cold storage system processing facilities are provided sufficiently, employment, income and standard of living could be improved just like other developed states in India and similarly we will able to meet the apple demand in near future.*

*Keywords: Processing industry, Personal income, Employment Opportunities, the standard of living.*

## **INTRODUCTION**

The various types of fruits grow in India and are exported to different countries in the world. In India Apple has gained its popularity as one of the most famous cash crops amongst farmers in the mountainous region.

Apple production is one of the important sources of economy in Kashmir. Apple cultivation in Kashmir is fast expanding because apple has a comparative advantage over the other crops that can be grown in hilly regions with minimum investment. Kashmir is leading in terms of apple production calming about 67.7% of total apple production in the nation and the per hectare production are 10.0 metric tons which is better than the national average. The production of apple in the state has increased from 1093335 metric tons in 2004-05 to 1851723 metric tons in 2018. Main contributors in apple production are basically from Baramulla, Kulgam, Pulwama district.

## **OBJECTIVES**

- \* To study the production and productivity of apple in Kashmir.
- \* To study the Opportunities for apple production and processing industry.

## **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

Primary data: Questionnaire and Interview

Secondary data: Books Internet

## **IMPORTANCE OF FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRY**

The processing of food commodities generally implies the transformation of the perishable raw product to a value-added product that has a better shelf life. The food processing industry is of huge significance because it connects two pillars of the economy - agriculture and industry. So it plays an important role in uplifting the standard of Primary sector as well as the secondary sector. Thus, it can be said that the development of the food processing industry is important, because of the increase in disposable incomes of the poor and lower-middle-class and middle class. Since we have accepted Globalization, Liberalization and Privatization

in 1992, the lifestyle, preferences for processed foods also encourage the demand for food items of several process food items. If the processing industry develops properly it will help to reduce wastage, improves the value of that product, encourage diversification and overall development. It will assure best returns to the growers, increase employment opportunities and will able to increase export earnings.

India is known for fruit production but it is lacking in food procession so we should improve our processing industry and take major to start and develop processing industry. The need for food processing industry in Kashmir because Kashmir is known for the best Quality a fruit basket in the world and has a great potential of good production.

But if we see the current situation we are not able to meet our domestic demand also. India stands second in production of fruits after China.

According to research Lack of skilled labour supply, lack of cold storage facilities, improper post-harvest management and inadequate technology are the main reason for low production.

India contribute only one per cent in the global market of the fruit processing industry. India can be the number one in fruit production but in India due to improper post-harvesting, packing and grading wastage of fresh fruit is very high around 30-35% of fruit wastage is estimated every year If Government with the help of private investor prepare a proper plan of cold storage facility, logistics infrastructure, training centres for growers and labours, Start research and innovation centres for apple production and procession etc will decrease loss and increase production and profit

## **THE PROBLEM OF APPLE PRODUCERS IN KASHMIR**

The study was conducted in north Kashmir(Soritara district Baramulla) and the following problems related to cultivation, selling, marketing, transport, government facilities and other level are analyzed as :

1. Irregular supply of electricity, road connectivity and improper transportation facilities and the huge influence of middle man and commission agent are the main route cause of the problem
2. The main stepping stone is leading to the unpredictable supply of apple is lack of Cold and conditional atmosphere storage in the valley and it does not possess cold storage for apple preservation by the government as a result during the harvest season due to huge supply at the same time price collapse and farmer face severe loss.
3. Diseases like an outbreak of premature leaf fall, apple scab disease and infestation of red spider declined the quantity and quality of the fruit.
4. Price fluctuation prevents huge investment in the crop. There is no support from the government.
5. Due to non-scientific packing and grading, it has been observed that quality deterioration is fast.
6. The market is not properly regulated in Kashmir so the farmers and growers have to depend on the mercy of middleman and commission agent, various malpractices such as payment by instalment, quoting of lower prices than the actual, deduction of more charges.
7. Sopore Mandi is the second-largest mandi in Asia. In the harvest season (July to Feb) 2 lakhs of boxes are supplied every day. 4000-5000 workers work in the mandi but they are facing severe problem of infrastructure and storage.
8. Very fewer Youngsters are seen in this business so people are using the traditional methods of harvesting innovation and new technology is not used so the quality and quantity are not improving.
9. The small and marginal landholdings with little or no irrigation facilities and there are no existence of organized and planned irrigation infrastructure for the orchards when majority orchards are un-irrigated.
10. Market accessibility is weak and communication facility was improper.

## SUGGESTIONS TO GOVERNMENT AND FARMERS

Kashmir is rich in natural resources, climatic conditions are very supportive of Horticulture. The horticulture industry has tremendous potential for creating employment opportunities, increasing personal income and can be very useful in increasing export of our country.

Considering all the above factors if government and farmers take appropriate steps at various levels of production, marketing and processing then soon India can become number one in fruit production and can improve our share in-process food. suggestions are as follow:

- The government should take measures to start local man dies to need to be established for the direct sale by apple growers with minimum expenditure.
- The government should provide crop insurance in the case of natural calamities like droughts, hail storm or other natured disasters. The government or cooperative cold storage should be created in the state, to avoid market risk and balance between demand and supply of apple fruit.
- Government should start a Research centre in Kashmir for Primary sector.
- Processing industry should be established to reduce the loss of fruit and create employment.
- Farmers should come together for co-operative marketing and selling.
- The government should take initiative for stabilizing the rate of fruits.
- Establishment of the local man dies at tehsil level to increase direct sale by apple growers.
- Financing procedure should be made easy and convenient for growers to improve investment.
- Cold storage facilities should be created by the government and private sector to avoid market risk.

## CONCLUSIONS

Kashmir is rich in natural resources. Only thing is required to be very professional and practical in production and marketing. As fruit is perishable and the demand for process food is increasing we should concentrate on the food processing industry. "An apple a day keeps the doctor away" is the old saying which India's and a foreigner are implementing in their life. It means demand for apple will keep on increasing in near future and we can take benefit of this increasing demand it is possible if we take proper care of crop through pests and manage diseases production will improve with production we need to concentrate on post-harvest management, marketing and finance. If adequate processing industry develops it will reduce loss and create employment and investment in the crop.

Hence if proper attention is given upon the suggestion provided in the study there will be a positive change in the situation of Kashmir which will help to improve to personal income and the living standard of the whole state.

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