

# Economic Analysis of Marketing of Potato in Mehsana District of Gujarat

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**Abstract** – The purpose of the study was to identify marketing channels, marketing cost price spreads, marketing margins and marketing efficiency of fresh potato marketing channels in Mehsana district of Gujarat. The Mehsana district of Gujarat was purposely selected for the study as it is a predominant potato growing district. Two *tehsils* viz., Vijapur and Satlasana having maximum area under potato cultivation were selected for the study. From these two *tehsils*, a cluster of three villages from each *tehsil* where potato is largely cultivated were selected for the study purpose. The selection of sample was made using convenience sampling technique. The sample focused on 100 potato farmers, 30 wholesalers, 35 semi-wholesalers and 40 retailers. Two major marketing channels were identified in the study viz., Channel I: Farmer – Wholesaler – Semi Wholesaler – Retailer- Consumer and channel II: Farmer – Wholesaler (through commission agent) – Semi Wholesaler – Retailer – Consumer. The marketing cost in channel I (Rs. 489.42/qtl.) was higher than in channel II (Rs. 358.36/qtl) because of one additional intermediary i.e. commission agent. Margin of the wholesaler and semi wholesaler was less on account of high volume of business as compared to the retailer who handles low volume of the business. The price spread in channel II was lower than channel I which resulted into higher producer share in consumer rupee. Marketing efficiency of channel II was higher (1.15) than channel I (1.11) due to the systematic marketing (auction) prevailing in the market.

**Keywords** – Marketing Channels, Marketing Cost, Margins, Price Spread, Market Efficiency.

## I. INTRODUCTION

The vegetables have vital role in vegetarian diet. It is a wholesome food which contains all major and minor nutrients approximately in the same proportion in which they are required in balanced human food. Potato crop has the ability of producing highest quantity of food (even on dry matter basis) as well as nutrients per unit land and per unit time. Potato is rich in carbohydrates, quality proteins, dietary fibre, vitamins and minerals; hence considered a balanced and nutritive food. Quality of potato proteins is comparable to eggs and milk therefore superior to those present in cereals, pulses or vegetables [1].

The top five potato growing states of India are Uttar Pradesh followed by West Bengal, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh and Gujarat. Since Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal contribute around 54.9% of total production, any minor deviation in these two states affects the total Indian production. The potato productivity of Indian states has become stable with exception seen in West Bengal during 2013-14. In Productivity Gujarat ranked first (30.8 MT/ha) followed by Punjab (25.1 MT/ha) and Uttar Pradesh (24.5 MT/ha) [2].

Gujarat ranks seventh in area, while fifth in total production and first in productivity of potato in the country.

Mehsana district is the pre dominant potato growing district with area (6200 ha), production (1.61 lakh MT) and productivity of 26.00 MT/ha. The crop is grown as winter crop in plains (sown in the month of September – October) and harvested during February- March. The major arrivals of potato in the markets are during the month of March as a winter crop harvest. Potatoes are mainly sold in the regulated markets by the farmers.

Potato is one of the commonest of all vegetables. It is a crop which is harvested in one slot but its demand throughout the year is static. Being perishable in nature, its marketing becomes more complex. It is a known fact that the middlemen are the actual beneficiaries, while the farmers who actually produce the crop are the worst sufferers in economic terms. Therefore, the present study was taken up to identify marketing channels, to estimate the marketing cost, marketing margins, price spread, producer's share in consumer rupee and marketing efficiency of the channels for fresh potato marketing under different supply chains.

## II. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The selection of sample was made using two-stage stratified random sampling technique. The Mehsana district of Gujarat was purposely selected for the study as it is a predominant potato growing district in the state. Two *tehsils* viz., Vijapur and Satlasana having maximum area under potato cultivation were selected for the study. From these two *tehsils*, a cluster of three villages from each *tehsil* where potato is largely cultivated were selected for the study purpose. From Vijapur *tehsils*, Ladol, Hathipura and Kharod villages while from Satlasana *tehsil*, Samarpur, Mumanvas and Gothda villages were selected for the study.

Researcher has selected market functionaries (Farmers, wholesalers, semi-wholesalers and retailers) for the study by using convenient sampling method. A total of 100 farmers, 20 wholesalers, 25 semi wholesalers and 40 retailers were considered for the study purpose. The detailed information on marketing cost, marketing margin and price spread for the year 2015-16 was obtained with help of structured schedule by survey method.

The primary data is based on the memory of the respondent. The farmers, wholesalers, semi-wholesalers and retailers were personally interviewed. The secondary data regarding district level were collected from the district level Horticultural Officers located at respective district *Panchayat* under study. The secondary data regarding village level information were collected from *Taluka Vistran Adhikari* located in each *taluka Panchayat*. Simple tabular analysis was performed for the analysis of data so collected to draw valid inferences as per objectives. The Statistical tools and techniques used is given as under:

### Total Marketing Cost

It is the total cost incurred on marketing either in cash or in kind by the producer and on various intermediaries involved in the movement of potatoes till it reaches the ultimate consumer. It was calculated as follows [3].

$$C = C_f + C_{m1} + C_{m2} + \dots + C_{mi} + \dots + C_{mn}$$

Where,

C = Total cost of marketing of the commodity.

C<sub>f</sub> = Cost incurred by the producer on marketing.

C<sub>mi</sub> = Cost incurred by i<sup>th</sup> middlemen, i = 1 to n

### Total Marketing margin

It is the difference between the total payments (Cost + Purchase Price) and receipts (Sale Price) of the middlemen. It was calculated as follows [4].

$$\text{Marketing margin of } i^{\text{th}} \text{ middleman} = P_{ri} - (P_{pi} + C_{mi})$$

Where,

P<sub>ri</sub> = Sale price of i<sup>th</sup> middleman.

P<sub>pi</sub> = Purchase price of i<sup>th</sup> middleman.

C<sub>mi</sub> = Cost incurred on marketing of potato by the i<sup>th</sup> middleman

### Price Spread

Price spread is the difference between the price paid by the consumer and that received by the producer of commodity.

$$PS = RP - PNP$$

PS = Price Spread (Rs. per kg).

RP = Retailers Selling price (Rs. per kg).

PNP = Producers Net Price (Rs. per kg).

### Producer's Share in Consumer's Price:

(Singh and Toppo, 2010)

$$P_s = (P_f / P_r) \times 100$$

Where,

P<sub>s</sub> = Producer's share in consumer's price.

P<sub>f</sub> = Price received by the producer/ farmer.

P<sub>r</sub> = Retail price of potato.

### Marketing efficiency

Marketing efficiency is the ratio of the total value of goods marketed to the total marketing cost. The higher the ratio, higher is the efficiency. The marketing efficiency was worked out using Acharya's modified marketing efficiency [5] which is as follows:

Acharya's modified marketing efficiency (MME)

$$MME = FP / (MC + MM)$$

where,

FP = Net price received by the farmer.

MC = Marketing cost.

MM = Marketing margin.

## III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Marketing Channels

The marketing channels are linked with the chains of market functionaries involved at various levels of marketing for smooth distribution of the products [6].

The major marketing channels for fresh potato marketing identified in the present study were:

Channel I: Farmer – Wholesaler – Semi Wholesaler – Retailer – Consumer.

Channel II: Farmer – Wholesaler (Through Commission Agent) – Semi Wholesaler – Retailer – Consumer.

Amongst these two channels, Channel II was found to be more popular dealing major sale of the total quantity sold (59785 qtl.). About 90.29% quantity was sold through this channel whereas 9.71% of produce (6430 qtl.) was sold through channel I.

### Marketing Costs

Marketing costs are the actual expenses incurred for bringing potato from farm gate to the consumers. Marketing cost includes the grading, packaging, storage, transportation charges, cost of octroi, commission charges and weighing charges [7]. The costs incurred by different market functionaries in performing marketing tasks in different channels are presented in Table I.

### Marketing Channel I

In this channel, the total marketing cost incurred by the farmers was Rs. 104.85 per qtl. which accounted for 35.50% of the total marketing costs. The major cost component for the farmers was packing material (8.18%) followed by transportation (5.88%), weight loss (4.43%) and miscellaneous expenses (3.93%). The other important components were cost towards spoilage (2.81%) followed by picking (2.66%), grading (2.42%), bag filling (1.64%), loading (1.46%), bag stitching (1.25%) and weighing charges (0.83%). The miscellaneous expenses include the expenses towards tea, snacks, personal travelling etc.

The cost of marketing incurred by the wholesalers was worked out as Rs. 59.06 per qtl. which accounted for 19.99% of the total marketing costs. It included weight loss (4.54%) followed by transportation (3.32%), spoilage (3.11%) and miscellaneous expenses (2.57%). The other important components include market fee (1.98%), unloading (1.83%), loading (1.76%), and weighing charges (0.88%).

The total marketing cost incurred by semi wholesalers in this channel was Rs. 62.73 per qtl. which accounted for 21.24% of the total marketing costs. The major components of cost were towards weight loss (4.84%), followed by transportation (4.53%), spoilage (3.55%), miscellaneous expenses (3.35%) and market fee (2.29%). The other components of cost were unloading (1.86%) and weighing charges (0.81%).

The total cost incurred by retailers in marketing of potato was worked out as Rs. 68.75 per qtl. which accounted for 23.27% of the total marketing costs. The major share towards this was contributed by weight loss (5.81%) followed by transportation (5.25%), miscellaneous expenses (3.92%) and spoilage (3.89%). The other components of cost were packing material (1.78%), loading (1.64%) and weighing charges (0.98%).

### Marketing Channel II

In this channel, the total marketing cost incurred by farmers was Rs. 108.13 per qtl. which accounted for 30.17% of the total marketing costs. Here again the major components towards marketing expenses were towards packing material (6.65%) followed by transportation (5.01%) and weight loss (3.62%). The other components included miscellaneous expenses (3.08%), spoilage (2.36%), picking (2.10%) and grading (2.00%), loading

(1.31%) bag filling (1.24%), unloading (1.22%), bag stitching (0.95%), and weighing charges (0.65%). In this channel the farmer also incurred additional expenses towards unloading as it was not born by the commission agent

The total marketing cost incurred by wholesalers was Rs. 119.35 per qtl. which accounted for 33.30% of the total marketing costs. The major share towards expenses was contributed to commission charges (16.63%) followed by weight loss (3.78%), transportation (2.68%), spoilage (2.58%) and miscellaneous expenses (2.21%). The rest of components of cost were market fee (1.66%), loading (1.60%), unloading (1.41%) and weighing charges (0.75%).

In this channel the total marketing cost incurred by semi wholesalers was worked out as Rs 61.78 per qtl. which was

17.24% of the total marketing costs. The weight loss (3.94%) was the major component of cost followed by transportation (3.53%), spoilage (2.98%) and miscellaneous expenses (2.68%). The other cost components were market fee (1.97%), unloading (1.51%) and weighing charges (0.63%).

The marketing cost incurred by retailers was Rs. 69.10 per qtl. which accounted for 19.28% of the total marketing costs. Out of this the major component was weight loss (4.95%) followed by transportation (4.21%), spoilage (3.39%) and miscellaneous expenses (3.18%). The other cost components were packing material (1.58%), loading (1.29%) and weighing charges (0.69%).

Table I. Total marketing cost for fresh potatoes under different marketing channels (Rs/Qtl.) in Mehsana

Sr. No	Particulars	Total Marketing Cost for fresh potato under different marketing channels in Mehsana district(Rs/Qtl)			
		Channel I	%	Channel II	%
<b>I</b>	<b>Farmer's level</b>				
	Picking	7.85	2.66	7.52	2.10
	Grading	7.15	2.42	7.17	2.00
	Bag Filling	4.85	1.64	4.45	1.24
	Bag Stitching	3.69	1.25	3.39	0.95
	Packing Material	24.15	8.18	23.82	6.65
	Loading	4.31	1.46	4.68	1.31
	Unloading	0.00	0.00	4.38	1.22
	Transportation	17.38	5.88	17.94	5.01
	Weighing Charges	2.46	0.83	2.33	0.65
	Weight Loss	13.08	4.43	12.98	3.62
	Spoilage	8.31	2.81	8.44	2.36
	Miscellaneous	11.62	3.93	11.03	3.08
	Sub total	104.85	35.50	108.13	30.17
<b>II</b>	<b>Wholesalers' Level</b>				
	Loading	5.20	1.76	5.73	1.60
	Unloading	5.40	1.83	5.07	1.41
	Transportation	9.82	3.32	9.59	2.68
	Commission charges	0.00	0.00	59.61	16.63
	Market Fees	5.84	1.98	5.96	1.66
	Weighing Charges	2.60	0.88	2.67	0.75
	Weight Loss	13.40	4.54	13.53	3.78
	Spoilage	9.20	3.11	9.26	2.58
	Miscellaneous	7.60	2.57	7.93	2.21
	Sub total	59.06	19.99	119.35	33.30
<b>III</b>	<b>Semi wholesaler's level</b>				
	Unloading	5.50	1.86	5.40	1.51
	Transportation	13.37	4.53	12.65	3.53
	Market Fees	6.76	2.29	7.06	1.97
	Weighing Charges	2.40	0.81	2.27	0.63
	Weight Loss	14.30	4.84	14.13	3.94
	Spoilage	10.50	3.55	10.67	2.98
	Miscellaneous	9.90	3.35	9.60	2.68
	Sub total	62.73	21.24	61.78	17.24
<b>IV</b>	<b>Retailer's level</b>				
	Packing material	5.25	1.78	5.68	1.58
	Loading	4.83	1.64	4.61	1.29
	Transportation	15.50	5.25	15.07	4.21
	Weighing charges	2.92	0.98	2.46	0.69
	Weight loss	17.17	5.81	17.75	4.95
	Spoilage	11.50	3.89	12.14	3.39
	Miscellaneous	11.58	3.92	11.39	3.18
	Sub total	68.75	23.27	69.10	19.28
	<b>Total marketing cost</b>	<b>295.39</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>358.36</b>	<b>100.00</b>

### Marketing Margin, Price Spread and Marketing Efficiency

Funke [8] revealed difference between spreads and margins. Price spread is the difference between the retail price and the farm value of a product. Thus, the spread represents the payment of all costs involved after the product has left the farm plus the profit margins. Marketing margins on the other hand, represent the difference between

the sales of a given product and the costs of the product sold. In this case the margin is typically the profit made under a given market condition.

The supply chain I has been discussed in Table- II. It was revealed that the farmer's sale price is Rs 973.07 per qtl. which was 58.90% of the consumers' purchase price. The expenses born by the farmers were Rs. 104.85 per qtl., which were 6.35 % of the consumers' purchase price.

Table II. Average price spread in marketing of fresh potato in Mehsana

Sr.No.	Particulars	Amount (Rs/Qtl)			
		Channel I	%	Channel II	%
<b>I</b>	<b>Farmer's level</b>				
	Price Received	973.07	58.90	993.60	59.97
	Expense Incurred	104.85	6.35	108.13	6.53
	Net Price Received	868.22	52.55	885.47	53.44
<b>II</b>	<b>Wholesalers' level</b>				
	Purchase Price	973.07	58.90	993.60	59.97
	Expense Incurred	59.06	3.57	119.35	7.20
	Sale Price	1126.67	68.20	1176.67	71.02
	Net Margin	94.54	5.72	63.72	3.85
<b>III</b>	<b>Semi wholesaler's level</b>				
	Purchase Price	1126.67	68.20	1176.67	71.02
	Expenses Incurred	62.73	3.80	61.78	3.73
	Sale Price	1325.50	80.23	1360.50	82.12
	Net Margin	136.10	8.24	122.05	7.37
<b>IV</b>	<b>Retailer's level</b>				
	Purchase Price	1325.50	80.23	1360.50	82.12
	Expenses Incurred	68.75	4.16	69.10	4.17
	Sale Price	1652.03	100.00	1656.79	100.00
	Net Margin	257.78	15.60	227.19	13.71
<b>V</b>	<b>Total marketing cost</b>	295.39	17.88	358.36	21.63
<b>VI</b>	<b>Total marketing margin</b>	489.42	29.63	412.96	24.93
<b>VII</b>	<b>Price spread</b>	784.81	47.51	771.32	46.56
<b>VIII</b>	<b>Producer's share in consumer's rupee.</b>		52.49		53.44
<b>IX</b>	<b>Index of marketing efficiency</b>				
	<b>Acharya's method</b>		1.11		1.15

The net price received by the farmer was Rs.868.22 per qtl. which was 52.55 % of the consumers' price. The expenses born by the wholesaler, semi wholesaler and retailer were Rs. 59.06, Rs. 62.73, and Rs. 68.75 per qtl. respectively which were around 3.58%, 3.80% and 4.16% of the consumer price (Rs. 1652.03 per qtl.). The margin of the wholesaler was 5.72% whereas this figure was 8.24% and 15.60% in case of semi wholesaler and retailer respectively.

The margin of the wholesaler and semi wholesaler was less on account of high volume of the business as compared to the retailer who handles low volume of business. The total price spread was observed 47.51% of consumer's price when produce was sold through wholesaler, semi wholesalers and retailers. The consumer paid higher prices for potatoes but 47.51% advantage of higher prices (Rs. 1652.03 per qtl.) had gone in to the pocket of intermediaries while rest of the 52.55% advantage went to the farmers of Mehsana district.

In channel II, the farmers' sale price of potato was Rs. 993.60 per qtl. which was 59.97% percent of the consumers' purchase price (Rs. 1656.79 per qtl.). The expenses born by the farmers were Rs.108.13 per qtl. which were 6.53% of the consumers' purchase price. The net price

received by the farmer was Rs. 885.47 per qtl. being 53.44% of the consumers' price. The expenses born by the wholesaler, semi wholesaler and retailer were Rs. 119.35, Rs. 61.78 and Rs. 69.10 per qtl. respectively which were 7.20% , 3.73% and 4.17% of the consumer price (Rs. 1656.79 per qtl.) respectively, The margin of the wholesaler, semi wholesaler and retailers were 3.85%, 7.37% and 13.71% respectively.

In channel I and II, the margin of the wholesaler and semi wholesaler was less on account of high volume of business as compared to the retailer who handles low volume of the business. In channel II, the expenses born by the wholesaler were higher as compared to channel I due to the involvement of commission agent.

In channel I and II, the total price spread was observed to be 47.51% and 46.56% respectively of consumer's price when produce was sold through different marketing channels. The consumer paid higher prices for potatoes in channel II but 46.56% advantage of higher prices (Rs. 1656.79 per qtl.) had gone to the pocket of intermediaries while rest of the 53.44 % advantage went to the farmers.

The price spread was low in channel II as compared to channel I which resulted into higher producer's share in

consumer rupee although there was the additional intermediary i.e commission agent.

The marketing efficiency of potato was worked out under different marketing channels by Acharya's modified method. The marketing efficiency of channel II was 1.15 which was higher as compare to channel I (1.11). Relatively higher producer share in consumer rupee and marketing efficiency of channel II was attributed to open auction system prevailing in the district which has benefited the farmer in getting higher price of their produce.

#### IV. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

1. It was observed that in marketing of fresh potato the farmers have to incur high expenses towards packing material. It is suggested that there is a need to develop a cheaper and durable packing material for potato.
2. The cost towards transportation of potato in marketing is very high. This is the most important cost component in marketing of potato. Therefore, the Government should provide subsidy towards this cost to reduce the burden of transportation cost to the farmers.
3. Post-harvest management and small scale processing units in rural areas need priority. The present study has indicated high loss in weight and spoilage during marketing. To avoid these losses systematic scientific studies are required. Therefore this important aspect of post harvest management needs focused measures.

#### V. CONCLUSION

The study was conducted to identify marketing channel for fresh potato in Mehsana district of Gujarat and to study the marketing cost, margin, price spread and marketing efficiency of different channels. Two major marketing channels were identified wherein in channel II the marketing efficiency was high with higher producer's share in consumer rupee. This is because of well managed auction system in channel II which fetches better prices for farmers. The implications of the study have been drawn in order to make the marketing system of potato more efficient.

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