Feasibility Study to Convert Existing Unutilized Tobacco Barns for Drying Chillies

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ABSTRACT

Currently there is a need for large scale artificial drying system using hot air to overcome quality issues, cyclone threats and sometimes to dry storm affected chilli crop. Guntur and Prakasam districts in Andhra Pradesh have large number of unutilized tobacco barns due to decline in tobacco cropping area. These areas have been mostly replaced by chilli which has a post harvest problem of drying. Experiments were conducted in Dharanikota village of Amaravathi Mandal in Guntur district of Andhra Pradesh to investigate feasibility of converting existing tobacco barns to dry chillies. It has been found that 11 to 11.5 quintals of ripe chillies can be loaded in the existing tobacco barns to dry chillies depending upon the size of the barn, initial moisture content and type of chilli.Galvanized iron (G.I) wire mesh trays of size 1.05 x 0.75 x 0.075 m were found to be suitable to hold chillies on the existing tiers of the barn. The drying time required to dry chillies was found to be 48 to 50 hours in comparison to 19 days in the open yard method of drying.

Key words : Barn, Chillies, Drying.