



Navigating the challenges of vegetable farming in Bishnupur district of Manipur

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ABSTRACT

Vegetable farming in Bishnupur District, Manipur, faces a unique set of challenges driven by the region's geographic, climatic, and socio-economic conditions. This study explores the multifaceted obstacles encountered by local farmers including input related, labour related, financial, technical, market related and general constraints. Five villages were selected randomly from the Nambol block and from each village 20 respondents were selected thus making a sample size of 100. Data was collected using a structured interview schedule and analysed using Mean frequency and percentage. The results showed that high cost of pesticides was the major problem faced by 46.00 per cent of the respondents. The study concludes with recommendations for policy interventions, including investments in irrigation infrastructure, targeted agricultural extension programs, and support for technology adoption. By addressing these issues, it is possible to enhance the productivity and sustainability of vegetable farming in the region, ultimately contributing to improved food security and economic stability for local farmers.

Keywords: *Challenges, Constraints, Interventions, Manipur, Sustainability and Vegetable farming.*

Nearly two-thirds of the population in India contributes to 20-25 per cent of the country's GDP (Choudary *et al.*, 2022). The Green revolution was ushered in India during the nineteen sixties and it has been the corner stone of India's agricultural achievement, transforming the country from the stage of food deficiency to self-sufficiency. Nonetheless, there was still uncertainty about nutrition security, which made a necessary shift in the production of nutrient- supplemental crops. The emphasis currently is on horticulture crops rather than food grains (Reason). Vegetable farming, along with other horticultural products, has been a major contributor to sustainable agriculture over the past any data? years. This is the result of agricultural extension, which has raised farmer income and standard of living by encouraging the production of vegetables and diversifying the agricultural base. 200.45 million tons of vegetables are produced out of 341.63 million tons of horticulture produce (APEDA, 2023).

Vegetables contain nutrients, which are chemical components found in food that support human nutrition (Chakroborty *et al.*, 2022). The majority of people in India are vegetarians, vegetables

are important for ensuring food and nutritional security (Amit *et al.*, 2023). In the rainfed hills, arid, dry land, and coastal agro-ecosystem, vegetable cultivation is thought to replace subsistence farming as it provides nutritional and income security (Noopur *et al.*, 2021). Because vegetables are a source of nutrients including vitamins, minerals, and fiber (Noopur *et al.*, 2023), farmers have embraced the production of vegetables as a result of shifting dietary preferences and growing understanding of the notion of nutritional security and a balanced diet (Agropedia, 2009). Economic factors are crucial for the sustainability of vegetable farms because the ultimate goal of vegetable growers is to maximize profit from scarce resources (Singh and Hansra, 2017). These days, vegetable farming has also been transformed into very commercial sector. However, there is still a difference between potential and existing production. Therefore, in order to overcome these limitations, efforts must be done together by extension workers, policy officials, and researchers to identify the potential problems which can affect the profitability and production of the vegetable crops. The current study was taken up with the objective to identify the problems faced by the

vegetable growers in Bishnupur district of Manipur.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

The objective of the study was to identify the potential constraints faced by the vegetable growers in Manipur state. The study followed *ex-Post-Facto* research design. Nambol block was randomly selected. From the selected block, five villages namely Leimaram mayai leikai, Heinoubok, Kabowakching, Leimapokpam and Lourembam were selected, and from each village, 20 respondents were selected following simple random sampling making a total of 100 respondents. The constraints faced by the vegetable growers were differentiated into six categories *viz.*, input related, labour related, financial, technical, market related and general constraints. Data was collected using a structured interview schedule and responses from the farmers were collected in the form of yes or no. The collected data was analysed using frequency and percentage and the constraints were ranked accordingly.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Study of constraints perceived by the vegetable growers is essential for several reasons which can include identifying the bottlenecks, optimizing the resources, improving decision making, enhancing sustainability, increasing profitability etc. The data on constraints faced by the vegetable growers in the study area was collected, analysed and presented in the Table 1.

A. Input related problems

Among the total vegetable growers, nearly half (46.00%) of the respondents perceived high cost of pesticides as a major input related problem followed by lack of availability of implements and sprayers and high cost of seeds were observed with 24.00 per cent and 20.00 per cent respectively. The findings found support from those of Abang *et al.* (2013).

B. Labour related problems

Among the total vegetable growers, it was observed that, the vital labour related problem expressed by two-fifths (40.00%) of the respondents was high wage rates of labour followed by unavailability of labour (32.00%) and both unavailability and high wage rates of labour (28.00%). The results were in line with those of Azad *et al.* (2014).

C. Financial problems

The results from the Table. 01 revealed that, the first financial problem expressed by more than two-fifths of the vegetable farmers (42.00%) was long process of getting loan from banks followed by unavailability of loans from banks (24.00%) and high interest on money lending from villagers (20.00%). The findings got support from those of Basnet *et al.* (2022).

D. Technical problems

Among the total vegetable growers, it was observed that, the major technical problem expressed by more than one-third (34.00%) of the farmers was lack of repairing/service centres for implements and sprayers followed by lack of custom hiring centres (30.00%) and both lack of repairing and custom hiring centres (24.00%). The findings were in line with Kisku and Singh (2022).

E. Market related problems

It could be observed from the Table 01 that, the major market related problem expressed by two-fifths (40.00%) of the farmers was no market shed followed by presence of middlemen (36.00%) and price fluctuations (14.00%). The results found support from those of Pokhrel and Thapa (2007).

F. General problems

Among the total vegetable growers, it was observed that the general problem expressed by 40.00 per cent of the respondents was bad road connections for transport of agricultural products followed by lack of cold storage facility (34.00%). The findings found support from Spiker *et al.* (2023).

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the challenges faced by vegetable growers, particularly small and marginal farmers, are significant and multifaceted. Issues such as limited access to markets, low productivity, vulnerability to natural hazards, and exploitation by intermediaries threaten their livelihoods and agricultural sustainability. Considering all these problems study was conducted to prioritize the major problems in Bishnupur district of Manipur. Addressing these problems requires concerted efforts from both

Table 1. Distribution of vegetable growers based on their problems

S. No.	Particulars	Frequency	Percentage	Rank
A. Input related problems				
1	Cost of pesticides is high	46	46	I
2	Lack of availability of implements and sprayers	24	24	II
3	Cost of seeds is high	20	20	III
B. Labour related problems				
1	High wage rates of labour	40	40	I
2	Unavailability of labour	32	32	II
3	Both unavailability and high wage rates of labour	28	28	III
C. Financial problems				
1	Long process of getting loan from banks	42	42	I
2	Unavailability of loans from banks	24	24	II
3	High interest on money lending from villagers	20	20	III
D. Technical problems				
1	Lack of repairing/service centres for implements and sprayers	34	34	I
2	Lack of custom hiring centres	30	30	II
3	Both lack of repairing centres and custom hiring centre	24	24	III
E. Marketing related problems				
1	No market shed	40	40	I
2	Presence of middlemen	36	36	II
3	Price fluctuations	14	14	III
F. General problems				
1	Bad road connections for transport of agriculture produce	40	40	I
2	Lack of cold storage facility	34	34	II

Multiple responses collected

state and central governments. To alleviate these challenges, governments should consider the following actions which are improving market linkages, enhancing Agricultural Extension Services, facilitating access to credit, promoting research and development, infrastructure development, policy support, capacity building and training and promoting farmer cooperatives. By implementing these measures, governments can contribute significantly to enhancing the resilience and livelihoods of vegetable growers, fostering sustainable agricultural development, and ensuring food security for the nation. Such actions not only address the immediate challenges faced by farmers but also pave the way for long-term agricultural prosperity and rural development.

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