

Vegetable Marketing in Sri Lanka: A Comparative Study of Conventional Vs Modern Practices

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Abstract

Sri Lankan vegetable sector experience around 34% to 40% of post harvest losses. Studies have shown that about 75% of post harvest losses are occurred during to vegetable transport process. Therefore, government is planning to introduce best practice guide lines that mainly advice to use plastic crates for transporting vegetables and also to ban the use of poly-sacs for packing vegetables. However, only around 15% of vegetable traders follow these best practices. The objectives of the study were: to examine the conditions of the conventional and modern marketing practices for vegetables, to analyze the marketing margin, share of consumer price and post harvest losses of both practices. Primary data were collected through field survey, informal discussion and field observations.

Study reveals around 75% farmers use the most prominent conventional marketing channel through farmers, wholesalers, transporters and retailers to consumer based on Manning Market to sell their harvest. Around 17% of farmers use modern marketing channel farmers, shop owners at wholesaler and retailer level based on Economic Centers, to sell their harvest. Study reveals that the highest market margin remains in transporter level in the conventional channel for Bean (32%), Brinjal (29), and Tomato (20%). In modern marketing channel, highest market margin is obtained by shop owner at wholesaler level in economic center for Bean (25%), Brinjal (30%), and Tomato (26%). Farmers' Share of consumer price is higher in modern marketing channel for Bean (55%), Brinjal (55%), and Tomato (64%). It is also found that average post harvest losses of vegetables in conventional marketing channel are around 30%. While it is around 20% in the modern marketing channel. The consumers' perception regarding the vegetables quality is significant. Therefore, it is recommended to conduct awareness programs targeting all stakeholders of the marketing channel. It confirmed that modern marketing practices reduce post harvest losses and preserve the freshness and quality of vegetables.

Keywords: Market margin, Post harvest loss, Shear of consumer price