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AN ASSESSMENT ON CASHEW NUT PRODUCTION IN CUDDLORE DISTRICT, TAMIL NADU

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Abstract

The present study has been carried out with a view to analyse the growth, stability and performance in the production of cashew nut in Cuddalore district of Tamil Nadu. The study has focused on the production of cashew nut before and after Thane Cyclone of December 2011. A comparative study of cashew nut production spread through different years of Pre-Thane and Post-Thane cyclone revealed that production in the pre-Thane cyclone was much higher than that of post-Thane. It has also been observed that, though cyclone has significantly damaged the farming, the farmers still indicate it as one of an important economic activity for livelihood. Study shows a strong perception of farmers towards cashew cultivation and shows a positive future prospect in the region. Therefore, immediate and effective measures should be taken to substitute all weakness and support farmers for more cashew nut production.

Keywords: Cashew, Cuddalore, Pre-Thane, Post-Thane, Production

Introduction and Background

Cashew, also called Anacardium Occidentale L., often referred to as 'wonder nut', is one of the most valuable processed nuts traded on the global commodity markets and is also an important cash crop. It has the potential to provide source of livelihood for the cashew growers, empower rural women in the processing sector, create employment opportunities and generate foreign exchange through exports (NABARD, 2010). It is a tropical evergreen tree and contain the produces the cashew seed and the cashew apple. Cashew Nut grows at the height of 6 meters (20 ft) to 14 meters (46 ft) high.

After the war in 1945, world production and consumption of cashew nut increased sharply and soon it became the world's most important dessert nut after almonds. World consumption of cashew nuts has been increasing steadily from 1,25,000 tons in 1955 to 10,00,000 tons in 1995, and is estimated to be around 12,60,000 tons by the year 2005 (Ohler, 1979). The production of cashew nut has also kept pace with demand in Europe and Africa and the increase in production has been achieved mainly through extension of the area under crop. The production of cashew nut in India, however, is far short of the capacity of the existing processing industries and consequently, the cashew industry in India has been stagnant for the past two decades. To increase yields, improved planting material and better crop management practices will have to be given some attention (Russel, 1979).

Table 1: Top Ten Cashew Nut production countries in the World, 2012

Sl. No.	Name of the Country	Production in MT (Metric Tons)	Yields in (Metric Tons/Hectares)
1	Vietnam	1,190,900	3.89
2	Nigeria	836,500	2.29
3	India	680,000	0.70
4	Côted' Ivoire	450,000	0.50
5	Benin	170,000	0.36
6	Philippines	132,541	4.68
7	Guinea-Bissau	130,000	0.58
8	Tanzania	122,274	0.30
9	Indonesia	117,400	0.20
10	Brazil	80,630	0.11
	World Total	**4,152,315**	**0.78**

Source: Food and Agriculture Organization, 2012

In India, the Portuguese introduced cashew in Malabar Coast in the 16th century and the Malabar Coast served as a locus of dispersal to other centers in the country and South East Asia. In the beginning, cashew was mainly considered as a crop for afforestation. As it can adapt to varied agro climatic conditions, it has become a crop of high economy and commercial value.

India has the maximum area of about 21.6 percent under cashew nut and is the third largest producer of raw nuts in the world and produce 17.3 percent of total cashew production. After Vietnam, the country is the second largest exporter, accounting for 39 percent of the world's export of cashew kernels. India has a comparative advantage in the production and processing of cashew nuts on account of its cheap and skilled labour force (NABARD, 2010). According to the Report of Food and Agricultural Organization 2012, India produced 6, 80,000 metric tons of Cashews in the country at 0.70 metric tons per hectare.

The Western coastal States, i.e., Goa, Kerala, Karnataka and Maharashtra in the west coast and Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Orissa and West Bengal in the eastern coast of India, are the main producer of cashew Nut in the country. The Southern states of India experienced two major hit of cyclone over past years, nearly in same decades – Tsunami in the year 2006 and the Thane Cyclone in December 2011. Similarity of these two strokes is that both were preceded over a period of decades and resulted in loss of man and properties, and dismiss of agricultural production of the region. Nevertheless, In Tamil Nadu, Cuddalore district is an important district for the production of cashew nut in the state. Though the Thane cyclone has widely affected the production of cashew nut in the region, it has come up with a new hope and rehabilitated and regained its path of cultivation and become an important horticulture crop in the district. Farmers largely depend on the cashew nut farming even after the devastating cyclone. It is still considered a promising farming and offers an alternative livelihood means to farmers in the region. In this context, this paper is an attempt to probe into the importance of cashew nut production for farmer in Cuddalore district, Tamil Nadu.

Objective

To examine the growth and performance of Cashew Nut in Pre and Post Thane Cyclone period in Cuddalore district, Tamil Nadu.

Methodology

Data and Sources

The present study is based on secondary data and information on the cashew nut production. It has been collected from various reports, books, journals and other official secondary data. Further, for the detailed study on the production, importance and status of

cashew nut in Cuddalore district of Tamil Nadu, report of National Bank for Agricultural and Rural Development, 2010 (NABARD) has been used.

Period of the study

Since, the study is based on secondary data, on the status of cashew nut and its production has been collected for the period before and after Thane Cyclone in Cuddalore district of Tamil Nadu. The study covers the period from 2000-01 to 2013-14. The data on cashew production and average productivity has been collected from the year 2000-01 to 2013-14.

Statistical tools used

This study is descriptive in nature. To over view and assess the detail picture on growth and performance of cashew nut production in Cuddalore district, an objective analyzes has been used. Simple mathematical tools such as percentage and averages have been used to analyze the collected data and information to reach at the meaningful conclusion. Furthermore, to test the production and the performance of cashew nut in Cuddalore district, comparative analyzes has been carried out before and after Thane Cyclone.

Delimitations of the study

The study is confined to the study of Cashew Nut production and its economic importance to the farmers in Cuddalore District.

Results and Discussion

Tamil Nadu is one of the leading states in cashew processing in India. The great demand is for cashew kernel in International market as well as domestic market. Processing involves the shelling, drying, and peeling, grading and packing of kernels. The existing production of raw cashew is not sufficient to meet the demand of domestic processing units. Therefore Tamil Nadu is importing large amount of raw cashew-nut from other countries.

On the basis of the import of raw cashew production trend has increased with little fluctuation in last decade. The production and trend of cashew nut has been examined in detail in table below.

Table 2: Area Production and Productivity

Sl. No.	Year	CASHEW NUT				
		Area		Production		APY – Average productivity in Kg per hectors
		in 000 hectors	% Changes	in 000 MT.	% Changes	
1.	2000 – 2001	86	-	59	-	750
2.	2001 – 2002	90	4.65	46	-22.03	570
3.	2002 – 2003	92	2.22	50	8.69	570
4.	2003 – 2004	95	3.24	51	2.00	600
5.	2004 – 2005	105	10.53	53	3.92	610
6.	2005 – 2006	121	15.28	56	5.66	640
7.	2006 – 2007	123	1.65	60	7.14	670
8.	2007 – 2008	123	0.00	65	8.33	700
9.	2008 – 2009	131	6.5	68	4.61	519
10.	2009 – 2010	133	1.5	60	-11.76	472

Source: Government of India, Directorate of Cashew & Cocoa Development, 2011-12.

The above table 2 indicates that the growth of cashew-nut production in India is analyzed in terms of area of cultivation, production, and average productivity in Kg per hectare. It reveals the steady growth in area of cultivation of cashew-nut during the period from the year 2001 to 2010. From the data it has been observed that there is no significant improvement in the contribution of production. The growth of real production has been recorded-22.03 percentage recorded in the year 2001-2002 to -11.76 percentage in the year 2009-2010.But in the year 2001-02 there was fall in production and again it is continuously increasing in2002-2003 area of Cashew nut production Productivity growth has been declined. In 2001 – 2002 at the same time production also declined, in 2002- 2003 production only increased but inverse relationship in the productivity is 8.69 percentages. The total area available for the cashew nut production has been increased 4.65 percent in the year 2001-2002. In the that decades the area for cashew nut production has been decreased to 1.5 percentages in the year of 2009-2010

In the year 2003–2004 recorded marginal improvement in both production and productivity of cashew nut. During the period between the year 2004-2005 to the 2008–2009 sustain growth has been observed. Overall, thought the area for cashew nut production has been increasing over a period of time, the growth in cashew-nut production and its productivity has been marked declining trend in Tamil Nadu.

Tamil Nadu is the six largest producer state of cashew nut in India. Production has an increasing trend except the years 2001-02 and 2009-10. The reasons behind are afforestation, rainfall and temperature which are also the major factors contributing cashew production. Further, it has been observed that there are cultivators who rely only on cashew for their livelihood, in terms of income and employment. It is also generating continuous employment for many women from the backward section of the society for nearly three months every year.

Among the different cashew growing districts in Tamil Nadu, Ariyalur (31.4 per cent), Cuddalore (30.2 per cent) and Pudukkottai (8.5 per cent) were the major cashew growing districts accounting for about 70 per cent of the total area. Cuddalore district ranked first in terms of cashew production with 24,302 tonnes (47.0 per cent) and had the highest cashew productivity of 810 kg / ha among cashew growing districts in the state (Loganathan and Chandrasekaran, 2013).

Cuddalore district of Tamil Nadu is spread over 3,678 Sq. km of Tamil Nadu. As per 2011 census, the district has the population of 26, 00,880, comprising of 13, 11,151 male and 12, 89,729 female population. Cuddalore district in Tamil Nadu was the most affected, with damaged roads rendering it difficult for rescue teams including those from National Disaster Response Force and Fire and Rescue Services to reach the cyclone hit fishing hamlets. Cuddalore district is highly affected into agriculture, settlements, boat damages, electrical goods damages and transportation damages were caused. The region worst affected is northern Tamil Nadu (Punithavathi *et al* 2012). Cyclone Thane had not only a severe impact on population with all the modes of communication had cut off, trees were uprooted. The cyclone has resulted in extensive damage with the loss being estimated at over Rs 2,000 crores (Damodaran, 2015).

Hit a Thane cyclone has its wider negative impact on the production of cashew nut in Cuddlaore district.

Table 3: Damages of Cashew Nut (Horticulture Crop) in Thane Cyclone 2011

Sl. No.	Crops	Total Cultivated Area (In Hectares)	Area Damaged (In Hectares)	Percentage	Remarks
1	Cashew Nut	30349	23500	77.43	Uprooting of trees and breaking of branches, stripping of leaves

Source: Indian Institute of Disaster Management, 2012

Table 3 shows the damage made by the Thane cyclone in particular to the cashew nut farming in Tamil Nadu in the year 2011. The cyclone resulted in the uprooting of cashew trees, breaking of branches, stripping of leaves and destroying the cashew nuts. According to Damodaran, 2015, the major Cashew trees (23,500 ha) in the blocks of Panruti, Annagramam, Vridhachalam, Cuddalore and Kurinjipdai were either completely uprooted or partially uprooted. In addition, the branches were also damaged with complete leaf shedding. It has been observed that 77.43 percent of total farm land cultivated under the cashew has been damaged by the cyclone in December 2011. Out of 30349 hectares, 23500 area of cultivation has been damaged.

Table 4: Production of Cashew Nut in Cuddalore District before and after Thane Cyclone

Sl. No.	Year	District	Area of production (In hectare)
1	2007-2008	Cuddalore	30,100
2	2008-2009	Cuddalore	30,340
3	2009-2010	Cuddalore	30,349
4	2010-2011	Cuddalore	31,240
5	2011-2012*	Cuddalore	32,260
6	2012-2013*	Cuddalore	30,404
7	2013-2014*	Cuddalore	31,000

Source: Directorate of district statistical &Economics office, Cuddalore, 2014

After Thane Cyclone*

This above table 4 shows a hectare of cashew nut in Cuddlore from the year 2007-08 to the year 2013-14. It has been seen that the production area of cashew in hectare has been falling after the Thane Cyclone. The production of cashew nut has drastically fallen after cyclone and

marked in an average of 31,000 per hectare. It has been observed that there was an increase in total area for the production of cashew in Cuddalore district from 30,000 in the year 2007-08 to 32,260 in the year 2011-12. In the year 2011-12 the area under the cashew cultivation has been marked highest with 32,260 hectare. But immediately after 2011 there was a significant fall in the total area.

From the table 3 it has also been examined that nearly 78 percent of the cultivation land of cashew nut have been damaged. Despite of 78 percent of land damage, it is quite interesting to know that the area was rehabilitated effectively and only 0.5 percent falls in the area of production has been observed after one year. It has been reviewed and examined using various report and interactions with the local people. Even after having been affected by such a massive stroke of cyclone, the producers of cashew nut have not given up their farming for the production in Cuddalore district. Various measures like rehabilitation, better cashew saplings and better system was implemented for a quicker recovery of the damage and to maintain cashew as an economically viable production in the region. In this regard, the numbers of initiatives has been taken for the rehabilitation of cashew production and cashew farmers. This revival in cashew production represents a further potential for the gains from the production of cashew nut in the district. It shows a keen research and need from a quicker re-establishment policy for better production. However, the implications of better and more tested measures should be implemented in this regard, so that it will gain its height and pay economic rewards to the farmers and to the district.

Conclusion and Suggestion

The cashew nut production in Cuddalore district has been gradually increasing from the year 2001 to the year 2010. But after Thane cyclone (2011), it has found a negative trend and rapid declining have also been noticed over the period. It is after the Post-Thane cyclone period. A comparative study of cashew production and its hectare pre and post Thane cyclone clearly indicates the significant difference in production and area of production in cashew in the district. Rehabilitation and quality plants saplings resulted in a quicker recovery of the damages made by cyclone and helped to maintain cashew as an economically viable production in the region. The quicker revival and re-collection of cashew farming represents a potentiality of cashew as a means of livelihood of farmers in Cuddalore district. Therefore, proper steps should be taken by

the Government for the better production and productivity, and to make it a viable production in the region.

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