
Marketing of Green Leafy Vegetables

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ABSTRACT

Greens are an important part of our diet. Its nutrients, minerals and fibre make it a compulsory inclusion in Indian food menu. The greens are currently marketed fresh and corner street vendors and bicycle vendors are the major retailers of greens. There is no large scale marketing and no processing involved. However 'Keerai Kadai' shows that the potential for marketing greens in packages and powdered forms are many. Government's role in supply chain management is also improving and there are lots of opportunities in marketing of greens for farmers.

INTRODUCTION

Greens play an important role in our diet. It provides a lot of vitamins, minerals and of course fibre. For a simple example. Let us do some calculation on Vitamin A supply by the greens. An intake of 900 micrograms (mcg) is recommended for adult men where as it is 700 mcg for adult women. One IU equals to 0.025 mcg, where, IU is International Unit mcg is micrograms. The availability of Vitamin A in 100 grams of Spinach is 9377IU. A person needs 36000 IU per day. For 36000 IU he should eat 383 g for one person

This is indeed volume some. But of course the Vitamin A requirement doesn't come from Greens alone so lesser quantities will also serve the purpose. However this gives us an idea of the requirement of greens in a household.

PERISHABILITY – A BLOCK IN MARKETING

The most perishable yet nutritious food is the green leafy vegetables. The core of marketing the greens is maintaining its freshness as the Indian market still favours fresh greens on daily basis. However, many city dwellers do not approve of the origin of greens and its production in city borders. Since many a time greens are grown on wasted lands, dirty water logged and polluted areas in the outskirts of cities. This has created an aversion to consumption of greens among many consumers who search for clean greens.

MARKETING OF GREENS

Road side corner store vendors and two wheelers vendors are the top retail marketers of greens in South India. Besides greens are marketed in super markets too. The product is taken fresh from the field and placed in the shops without any processing but for sprinkling water to maintain the fresh look.

Leafy vegetables have a greater potential if the freshness is maintained. Packing is also one



area where green leaves have not been included in the Indian markets. Foreign countries market leafy vegetables vacuum packed and portioned to meet the needs of the end consumers.

Dried forms and powdered forms of leafy vegetables that can be mixed in soups and other curries/dishes are having potential. Dried Rosemary, Thyme are popular in abroad likewise dried methi leaves has caught up the market.



Refrigerated leafy vegetables like salads packed for individuals will find market in big cities. Freeze drying is another technology which has great potential in leafy vegetables.

A GOVERNMENT INITIATIVE - TAMIL NADU SUPPLY CHAIN MANAGEMENT PROJECT (TNSCM)

Tamil Nadu Supply chain management project (TNSCM) is a path breaking initiative of the Commissionerate of Agricultural marketing and AgriBusiness (CAMAB), Govt. of Tamil Nadu. It is a project concentrating on the perishable commodities like fruits and vegetables.

The project promises to create state of art infrastructure facilities processing and mainly to create market linkages to handle fruits, vegetables and other perishable commodities in selected districts of Tamil Nadu.

Currently 10 districts in which the project is under



implementation are Ramanathapuram, Krishnagiri, Dharmapuri, Dindigul, Theni, Coimbatore, Tirunelveli, The Nigiris, Tiruchirappalli, and Thoothukudi.

Currently Amaranthus, Coriander, Curry leaves, mint moringa leaves and spinach are sourced from the clusters and sold through markets in the districts. This project is indeed a great initiative because marketing of agricultural products especially perishables is great crisis among farmers.

SUCCESS STORY OF KEERAI KADAI

G Sriram Prasad, an engineer turned farmer, founded an online store and physical store in Coimbatore. More than 100 different kinds of greens and herbs are available at Keerai Kadai, which translates to "greens shop," some of which are nearly forgotten by the general public.

Some of the greens found here are *Manathakkali* or Black Nightshade, *Kasini* or chicory leaves, *Bhringraj* or False Daisy, *Ponnanganni* or Sessile Joyweed, *Pirandai* or Adamant creeper, Red Amaranthus, and *Chakravarthy keerai* or *Chenopodium album*.

Prasad originally planned to only sell greens when he opened Keerai Kadai in 2017, but after hearing from customers, he decided to concentrate on underappreciated native varieties. Many of his older clients would share stories about the native greens they remembered being able to find when they were kids and how scarce they had become now.



Also included in their supplies are greens and herbs that are used for Ayurvedic medicines. The shop sources its greens by a team which has identified on contract basis. They even provide training to them especially on natural farming so that the consumers can be confident of getting less risk greens. This has helped the shop to build the customer base in an around the area.

Perishables especially greens do require a lot of effort and this needs to be done on a daily basis. Greens need to be harvested twice a day.

CONCLUSION

There is a huge requirement of greens on a daily basis. There are a lot of usages like it can be used as soup, vegetable, garnish, dishes etc. It can be cooked or taken as raw. The greens can be bagged fresh or refrigerated, dried or frozen. Opportunities in greens are many for the farmers. Greens in ready to eat forms, washed and cut greens, powdered forms, dried leaves are all options for the farmers who are ready to diversify and value add their produce.

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