



## AN EVALUATION OF PERFORMANCE OF AGRICULTURAL COMMODITY WHOLESALE MARKETS IN KERALA

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### Abstract

The study reports revealed recently by the Commissioner of Food and Safety in Kerala points towards the issues and the after effects of the inflow of toxic vegetable produces to Kerala from the nearby states, especially Tamil Nadu. In order to tackle with these issues, Government of Kerala along with the support from Tamil Nadu Government started taking up measures to prevent such toxic inflows. As a result Tamil Nadu Government has ordered agriculture officers to examine vegetable farms to keep the use of pesticides under check. At the same time, few years back Government of Kerala in view of promoting organic farmers within the State and to save them from various issues in connection with production and marketing of agricultural produces have started six Agricultural commodity wholesale markets (ACWMs). The main aim of these markets is to provide direct platform facility to the farmers to sell off their produce without the interference of intermediaries. In this circumstance, it is worthwhile to assess performance of these six wholesale markets working in the rural and the urban regions of the state. The present paper is an earnest attempt in this direction. The study concluded that, based on the performance, the wholesale markets differ significantly in respect of quantity and value of produce handled.

**Keywords:** Agricultural Commodity Wholesale Markets, Beneficiary Farmers, Direct Platform, Intermediaries, Auction Procedure Etc.

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Agricultural Commodity Wholesale Markets (ACWMs) were implemented under Kerala Agriculture Markets Project by utilizing fund from the European Union for the development of agricultural markets in the State. These six markets which were implemented includes, the urban and rural markets situated in the southern, northern and in the central parts of the State. Anayara (Thiruvananthapuram), Maradu (Ernakulam) and Vengeri (Kozhikode) are the urban markets. Nedumangadu (Thiruvananthapuram), Muvattupuzha (Ernakulam) and Sulthan Bathery (Wayanad) are the rural markets. ACWMs were popularly known as “World Markets” mainly designed to provide direct marketing facilities to farmers in disposing their agricultural produce.

### 2. THE RESEARCH PROBLEM IN BRIEF

‘Kerala’ being an agrarian state, the drastic outflow of organic farmers from the field of agriculture was the major issue recently. As a result, people of Kerala forced to depend on the neighbouring states especially Tamil Nadu for their day to day consumption requirements. But unfortunately, the study reports of Commissioner of Food and Safety in Kerala disclosed the heavy usage of toxic banned fertilizers in the vegetables and food produces incoming from the nearby States. In order to handle this extreme situation, Government of Kerala undertakes various projects so as to activate the organic farmers of Kerala. In view of handling the marketing issues faced by the farmers in selling off their perishable produces, Government of Kerala implemented six Agricultural wholesale markets in the rural and urban regions of the state. The major peculiarity of these markets is that the farmers are provided direct platform facility so that they can auction their produces directly to the traders without the interference of intermediaries. At this juncture it is highly relevant to conduct an assessment based on the performance of these six wholesale markets and to explore how far these markets are beneficial for the well being of the organic farmers within the state.

### 3. OBJECTIVE OF THE PAPER

The specific objective of the present study is to assess the performance of the six Agricultural commodity wholesale markets in Kerala for the benefit of the organic farmers and traders in Kerala.

### 4. METHODOLOGY AND DATA BASE

The present study covers all the six ACWMs in Kerala by following Census method. Both primary and secondary data were collected for this purpose. Primary data were collected with the help of interviews and discussions with the market authorities, office staff etc. and through observation. Secondary data were collected from various sources like G.O. (M.S) No92/PPM/92/AD dated 26.03.1992, minutes of the meetings held by the market authorities with the Krishi Bhavan authorities, minutes of the meetings of Market Executive Committee, monthly progress reports and auction statements. Suitable statistical and mathematical tools like mean, SD, t-test, box-plot and compound monthly growth rate have been employed for the analysis.

## 5. PERFORMANCE EVALUATION OF ACWMS

This section attempts to evaluate the performance of ACWMS against their promises. A comparison is made between the laid down promises as per bye-law and the performance of the six Agricultural Commodity Wholesale Markets in Kerala. It is understood that Agriculture Department in view of marketing difficulties faced by farmers, implemented the project 'KAMP' with certain well framed objectives at the time of its lay down. In order to evaluate the performance of ACWMS it is important to look into the objectives lay down as per the circular.

According to the circular of Directorate of Agriculture, Thiruvananthapuram, dated 3.08.2011 the objectives of the scheme are the following.

1. To strengthen the marketing activities already initiated during previous years and to promote direct marketing among farmers to avoid exploitation by middlemen.
2. To inculcate the spirit of participatory marketing among farmers.
3. To utilize the facilities available in the markets for farmers to conduct auction.
4. To provide facilities for transportation of vegetables from farmers field to market.
5. To provide cold storage/warehouses facilities to farmers for storing their perishable produces like fruits and vegetables and to set up a cold chain in Kerala.
6. To strengthen market intelligence in Kerala by making AGMARKNET more effective.

An in-depth scrutiny into the performance of ACWMS is needed for the purpose of comparison between its lay down objectives and the actual performance. For the purpose, the performance of ACWMS is measured based on the above stated six angles. These aspects are listed below.

1. Strengthening of marketing activities
2. Participatory marketing
3. Utilization of facilities available
4. Transportation of vegetables
5. Provision of cold storage/warehouse facility
6. Strengthening of market intelligence

The results of the analysis based on the above mentioned aspects are shown in the following pages.

### 1. Strengthening of Marketing Activities

Marketing activities of ACWMS majorly deals with conducting auction procedures. To find out how far ACWMS are capable in strengthening the marketing activities, the overall auction performance of the commodity markets is examined. It is found that ACWMS are capable in handling large quantities of agriculture produce in the auctions. Average quantities of agriculture produce transacted during each auction and its corresponding value are shown in Table 1.

**Table – 1, Agriculture Produce transacted during Each Auction (Quantity in MTs and Value in Rs.)**

Market	Average Quantity (MTs)	Value (Rs.)	Per unit value/1000
Anayara	6.01	1,11,086	18.48
Maradu	20.24	1,62,772	8.04
Vengeri	3.33	53,150	15.96
Nedumangadu	12.30	2,31,425	18.82
Muvattupuzha	12.52	2,00,613	16.02
Sulthan Bathery	15.18	1,79,132	11.80

*Source: Survey Data.(Compiled from Auction Statements, during the period 2012-13)*

The data relating to the period from 2012-13 were collected and analyzed for this purpose. Table 1 reveals that more quantities of agricultural produce are in Maradu market during each auction (20.24 MT). Among the rural markets, Sulthan Bathery topped in respect of quantities handled (15.18 MT). More similarity is found between Muvattupuzha and Nedumangadu markets in this respect handling quantities of produce 12.52 MT and 12.30 MT respectively. Vengeri market ranked the lowest in handling the same (3.33MT). Based on value, Nedumangadu market ranks the first (₹2,31,425). Markets from southern region (Nedumangadu and Anayara) show the highest per unit values (₹18.82 and ₹18.48) respectively. Another notable fact is that, Maradu and Bathery market which transacts more quantities of agriculture produce which reflects the lowest per unit value (₹8.04 and ₹11.80) respectively. This is diagrammatically represented in Fig. 1.

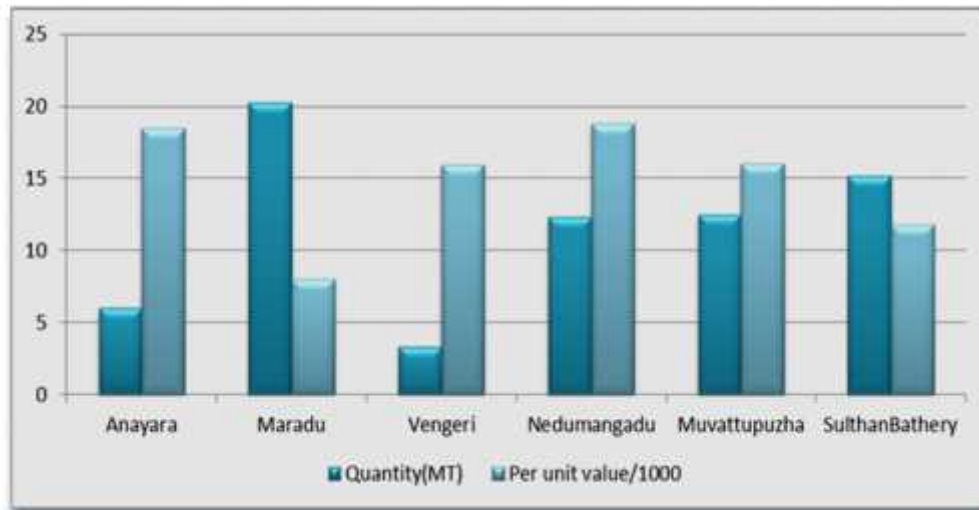


Fig. 1, Agricultural Produce transacted during Each Auction (Quantity in MTs and Value in Rs.)

During the survey, detail auction statements are availed only from Maradu and Sulthan Bathery markets relating the period from February 2011 to March 2012. For that reason Maradu in urban and Bathery in rural market are taken as the representative markets for the detailed analysis. Quantities of agriculture produce handled by Maradu and Bathery representative markets are shown in Table 2.

Table – 2, Quantities of Agriculture Produce handled by Maradu and Bathery Representative Markets

Months	Banana (Q.MTs)		Vegetable (Q.MTs)		Fruits (Q.MTs)		Others (Q.MTs)	
	Maradu	Sulthan Bathery	Maradu	Sulthan Bathery	Maradu	Sulthan Bathery	Maradu <sup>1</sup>	Sulthan Bathery <sup>2</sup>
Feb-11	23.00	22.45	3.00	14.37	1.50	7.01	9.30	0.28
Mar-11	42.50	12.59	6.60	20.64	2.09	10.87	8.82	0.48
Apr-11	27.70	2.44	8.10	12.09	7.70	2.74	6.37	0.95
May-11	22.00	4.42	16.51	6.66	22.76	3.20	18.76	0.14
Jun-11	25.55	19.65	14.20	1.34	27.00	1.76	21.21	0.00
Jul-11	32.10	55.54	10.10	3.77	12.40	21.33	39.30	0.00
Aug-11	86.33	68.23	4.83	0.85	0.58	16.60	33.40	0.00
Sep-11	74.40	68.80	12.80	10.39	3.80	2.45	26.48	1.67
Oct-11	54.70	62.66	14.10	15.06	0.00	1.38	24.50	3.81
Nov-11	40.00	15.08	20.70	24.39	3.00	0.50	29.26	0.06
Dec-11	17.05	12.42	9.50	67.48	1.80	0.10	16.05	0.85
Jan-12	8.60	3.97	6.58	97.52	0.40	6.02	4.00	0.78

Feb-12	15.70	0.07	9.40	134.31	7.15	8.69	12.82	1.55
Mar-12	14.90	6.12	3.30	153.88	8.60	3.89	19.86	3.69
<b>Results</b>								
CMGR*	-3.75	-9.51	0.74	20.01	14.38	-4.43	6.01	21.94
Mean	34.61	25.32	9.98	40.20	7.06	6.18	19.29	1.02
SD	23.06	26.21	5.17	51.84	8.42	6.32	10.54	1.28
t-value	0.999		2.170		0.311		6.440	
Sig.	0.329		0.039		0.758		0.000	
Source: Survey Data. (Compiled from Report on Item wise Quantity traded in Maradu and Bathery ACWMs). *Compound Monthly Growth Rate. <sup>1</sup> Majorly Tapioca and Coconut. <sup>2</sup> Majorly coconut and minute quantity of Ginger/Turmeric.								

The table depicts that average quantities of banana, fruits and other produces transacted in Maradu market is more when compared to Bathery market. Bathery market shows an increased position only in the case of vegetables transacted (40.20 MT). It is found that in Maradu market, more quantities of banana are traded during the month of August (86.33 MT), more quantities of fruits are transacted during the month of June (27 MT). As far as transactions of other produces in Maradu market are concerned, more quantities are marketed during the month of July (39.30 MT). Whereas, in Bathery market more quantities of vegetables are handled during the month of March 2012 (153.88 MT) and more quantities of banana are sold during Onam season (September) 68.80 MT. It is found that huge difference exists between Maradu and Bathery representative markets in transacting vegetables. That shows, when compared to Maradu market 30.22 MT more vegetables are transacted through Bathery market. From the survey it is understood that though Bathery market is situated in Wayanad District which is well known for ginger and turmeric cultivation, average quantities of such produce transacted through Bathery market stood as meager (1.02 MT). This indicates that only very small percent out of the total production of ginger and turmeric in Wayanad District is transacted through Bathery market.

It is obvious that CMGR of banana shows a negative inclination. As far as vegetables are concerned growth rate of Bathery is more, 20.01 MTs (SD 51.84). CMGR for fruits is high in the case of Maradu market, 14.38 MTs (SD 8.42). The CMGR of other produces in Bathery market is found more (21.94 MTs) due to its high growth rate from the initial period. The application of student t-test shows that there exists significant difference in this respect between the two representative markets. Whereas, existence of difference in handling other major varieties like banana and fruits between the representative markets seems to be insignificant. Total auction quantity of agriculture produce in relation to its value in Maradu and Bathery representative markets is shown in Table 3.

**Table – 3, Total Auction Quantity in relation to its Value handled by Maradu and Bathery Representative Markets**

Months	Quantity (MTs)		Value (Rs.)		Per unit value in Rs./1000	
	Maradu	Sulthan Bathery	Maradu	Sulthan Bathery	Maradu	Sulthan Bathery
Feb-11	36.80	44.11	3,51,184	4,23,664	9.54	9.61
Mar-11	60.01	44.58	5,42,868	3,76,181	9.05	8.44
Apr-11	49.87	18.21	3,27,529	1,61,088	6.57	8.85
May-11	80.03	14.42	4,79,976	1,20,771	6.00	8.38
Jun-11	87.96	22.75	5,91,240	2,78,113	6.72	12.23
Jul-11	93.90	80.64	9,07,587	14,99,813	9.67	18.60
Aug-11	125.14	85.68	13,77,141	29,24,150	11.01	34.13
Sep-11	117.48	83.31	11,42,463	14,83,719	9.73	17.81

Oct-11	93.30	82.90	6,08,160	9,11,571	6.52	11.00
Nov-11	92.96	40.03	5,23,287	5,74,794	5.63	14.36
Dec-11	44.40	80.85	3,27,285	12,46,065	7.37	15.41
Jan-12	19.58	108.29	2,23,191	14,07,381	11.40	13.00
Feb-12	45.07	144.61	3,69,391	16,47,518	8.20	11.39
Mar-12	46.66	167.58	3,40,482	20,87,406	7.30	12.46
Mean	70.94	72.71	5,79,413	10,81,588	8.19	13.97
t	0.118		2.110		3.135	
Sig.	0.907		0.045		0.004	

Source: Survey Data. (Compiled from Report on Item wise Quantity traded in Maradu and Bathery ACWMs).

It is clear from the table that Maradu market transacts total auction quantities at an average of 70.94 MT for value ₹ 5,79,413. Increase in the total auction quantities is visible in Maradu market during the month of August and September 125.14 MT and 117.48 MT respectively. The position of total auction quantities transacted in Bathery market shows an increasing trend from January 2012 onwards. Apart from the initial period of March, the per unit value of agriculture produce in Bathery market is found more when compared to Maradu market. It is found that increase in the average per unit value of produce in Bathery market is due to the transaction of agriculture produce of high value. Thus it is clear that Bathery market transacts the highest average quantity in relation to its value. Application of t-test prove the existence of significant difference in the value as well as the per unit value of produce handle between the Maradu and Bathery representative markets. While the average quantity handled between the representative markets prove to be insignificant. A polynomial curve is fitted to clarify the position of auction quantity and the value of agriculture produce in the representative markets. It is shown in Fig. 2.

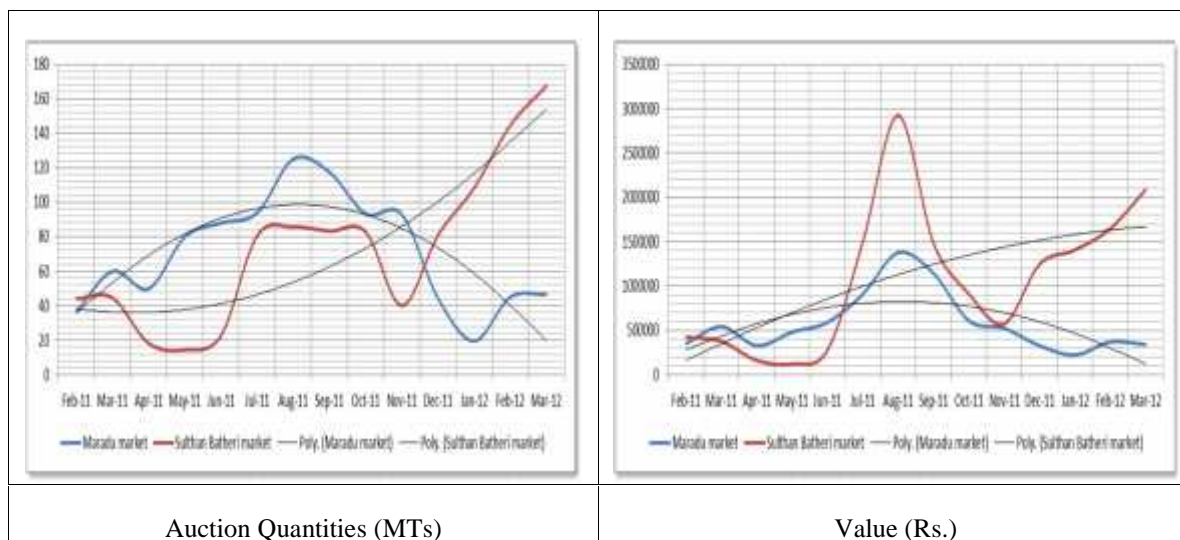


Fig.- 2 ,Auction Quantities and the Value of Agriculture Produce handled by Maradu and Bathery Representative Markets

A concave upward curve is observed from Maradu market with more auction quantities concentrated towards the central period. A polynomial curve with fewer quantities is located in the central region of Bathery market. The main similarity is that trend lines between the markets intersect in the position where Bathery is at its highest and Maradu is at its lowest point. From the polynomial curve in respect to value it is observed that Bathery market shows a striking performance when compared to Maradu market as if the trend lines show an increasing trend. Graphical representation of the per unit value of agriculture produce handled by Maradu and Bathery representative markets is shown in Fig. 3.



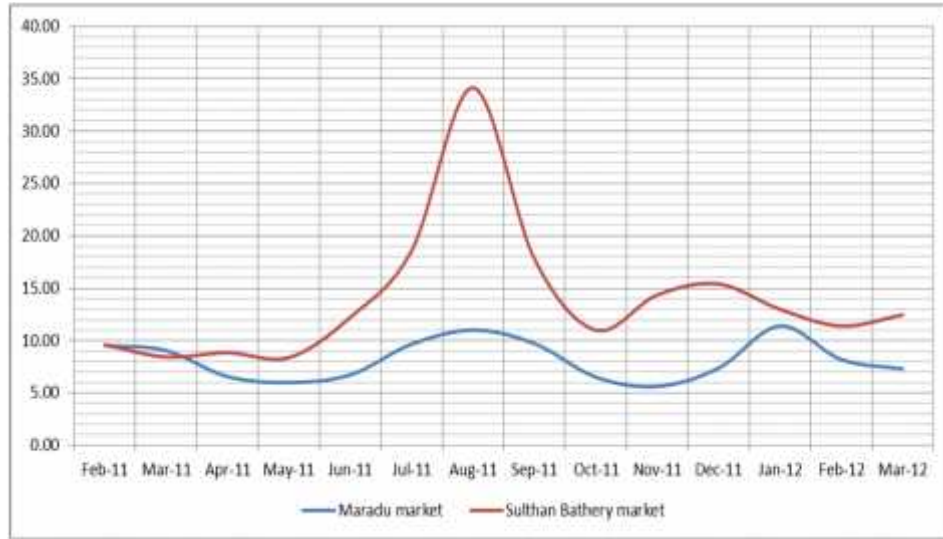


Fig.- 3,Per Unit Value of Agriculture Produce handled by Maradu and Sulthan Bathery Representative Markets

From the graphical representation existence of severe difference is clearly found between Maradu and Bathery representative markets. A smooth curve is visible in the case of Maradu market with difference ranges from 5 to 11. An enormous disturbed curve ranging from 8 to 35 is observed from Sulthan Bathery market that which shows the existence of huge difference in pricing.

A sophisticated tool is applied to determine the occurrence of minute difference in quantity and value dealt between Maradu and Bathery representative markets. Box plot representing auction quantity handled by Maradu and Bathery representative markets is shown in Fig. 4.

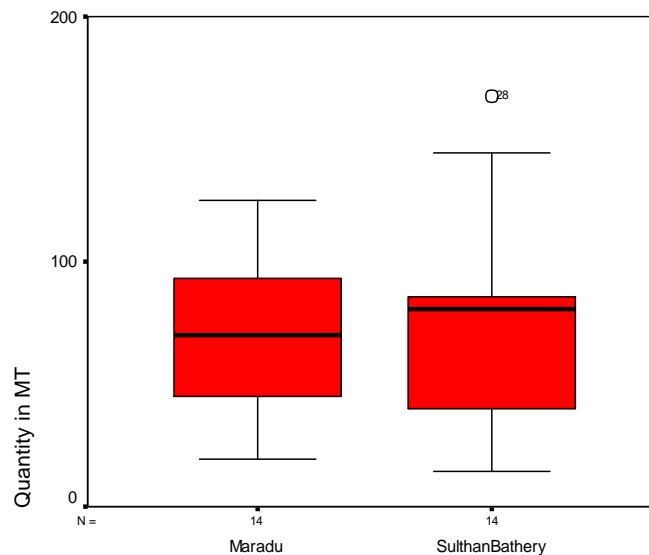
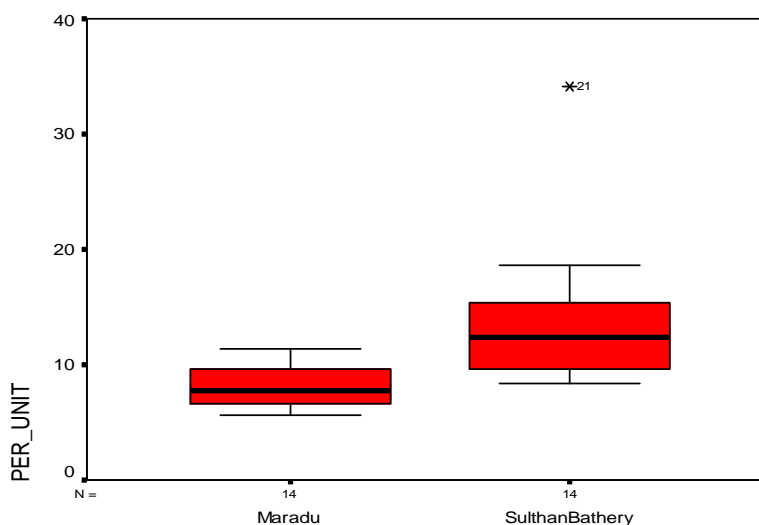


Fig. - 4, Auction Quantity handled by Maradu and Bathery Representative Markets

From the pictorial representation it is clear that distance between the whiskers of Maradu market is comparatively lower than that of Bathery market. This means the quantities of produce transacted through Maradu market is relatively lower than that of Bathery market. Minimum value of the lower quartile of Maradu market is 19.58 MT and its maximum value of upper quartile is 125.14 MT. Simultaneously, the minimum value of the lower quartile of Bathery market is 14.42 MT and the maximum value of the upper quartile is 144.61 MT with one outlier of magnitude 167.58 MT. The box region appears in the position where transactions are more frequent. It is clear that box region of Maradu market started from 44.90 MT and ended on 93.45 MT with a median (represented by a line within the box) of 70.02 MT. Thus it can be inferred that quantity of

produce transacted through Maradu market is uniformly distributed, and indicates the position that both small and large quantities of produce traded are almost in equal proportions.

Box region of Bathery market seem to be started from 35.71 MT and ended on 91.33 MT with a median of 80.75 MT. It indicates that apart from dealing in large quantities of produce, even very small quantities are also traded through this market. Median line of Bathery market is found to be very near to the upper quartile. This indicates the position that large quantities of agriculture produce are frequently handled through the market. It is also found that distance between the upper whiskers to the box is comparatively higher than that of lower whisker to the box. Thus it is clear that wide difference exists in the quantity traded through Bathery market. Box plot representing per unit value of agriculture produce handled by Maradu and Bathery representative market is shown in Fig. 5.



**Fig.- 5 ,Per Unit Value of Agriculture Produce handled by Maradu and Bathery Representative Markets**

From figure 5 it is observed that distance between the whiskers of Maradu market is found to be lower than that of Bathery market. That means, value of produce transacted through Maradu market is comparatively lower. The minimum value of lower quartile of Maradu market is ₹ 5.63 and the maximum value of upper quartile is ₹ 11.40. It is also clear that the box region of Maradu market started from ₹ 6.56 and ended on ₹ 9.69 with a median of ₹ 7.79. Thus it is obvious that produce of lesser values are frequently handled through Maradu market. Simultaneously, minimum value of lower quartile of Bathery market is ₹ 8.38 and the maximum value of upper quartile is ₹ 18.60. The box region started from ₹ 9.42 and ended on ₹ 16.01 with a median and an outlier of ₹ 12.35 and ₹ 34.13 per unit respectively. The median which lies in the central region denote that Bathery market handles both low and high valued produce uniformly throughout the period.

## 2. Participatory Marketing

To examine the intensity of inculcating spirit of participatory marketing in auctions a comparison is made among the markets based on researcher's observation. It helps to prove up to what extend co-operation exists between the market authorities, farmer groups, HORTICORP officials and the traders. It is shown in Table 4.

**Table – 4.Performance of Participatory Marketing**

Market	Very Good	Good	Average	Bad	Very bad
Anayara	x	x	x		x
Maradu	x	x		x	x
Vengeri		x	x	x	x
Nedumangadu	x		x	x	x
Muvattupuzha	x	x	x		x
Sulthan Bathery	x	x	x	x	
<i>Source: Survey Data.</i>					
“ ” represents opinion.					

It is evident from the table that Vengeri market shows a very good position for inculcating the spirit of participatory marketing. It is found that in Vengeri market, market authorities especially the Market Secretary exert an active support to inspire the farmers even by attending their harvest festivals. Results from Nedumangadu market proves to be good as if the farmers are actively participating in the auctions with the full-fledged support from the market authorities. The position of Maradu market shows as average in inculcating the spirit of participatory marketing among farmers, mainly due to the lack of energetic approach from the part of existing market authorities. But the position of Anayara and Muvattupuzha shows as bad by reason of certain disputes between HORTICORP officials and farmers in auction pricing, reduction of wastage etc. Bathery market occupies a very low rank for the reason that the trading done is not by following the open auction procedures and due to the non-participation of HORTICORP officials.

### 3. Utilization of Facilities Available

ACWMs which are popularly known as 'World Markets' are organized mainly for eliminating the intermediaries in marketing by arranging direct auctions. As per bye-law market authorities have to indulge keenly ensuring the facilities offered to farmers. So it is relevant to see how far the market authorities of ACWMs are able to utilize the available facilities for the benefit of farmers. The same is shown in Table 5.

**Table- 5, Utilization of Facilities Available in ACWMs**

SI. No.	Particulars	Anayara	Maradu	Vengeri	Nedumangadu	Muvattupuzha	Sulthan Bathery
1	Auction hall						
2	Weighing machine						
3	Carpets						
4	Trolley						
5	Recreation facilities	x	x	x	x	x	x
6	Modernized marketing technology	x	x	x	x	x	x

Source: Survey Data.

“ ” represents availability and “x” represents non-availability.

Market authorities provide only certain basic facilities such as auction halls with weighing machines, carpets (for displaying the vegetables) and trolleys. But from the survey it is found that most of the weighing machines and trolleys available in the markets are of outdated and are not yet replaced. Most of the carpets used in the wholesale markets are torn out. It is also found that farmers as well as traders are not provided with any sought of recreational facilities. Modernized and innovative techniques which are capable of attracting more traders and farmers are found not yet employed in ACWMs.

### 4. Transportation of Vegetables

From the survey it is found that no mobile van facilities are provided by the market authority for transporting agricultural produce from the farm field to the auction centre. Market authorities are of the opinion that they are not able to provide such facilities due to non-availability of sufficient staff and poor condition of available vehicles. It is understood that during the initial years, Anayara market authorities used to provide mobile sales services for agricultural produce along the road side of nearest places at Secretariat, Palayam etc. in Thiruvananthapuram. But now it is found that no such facilities are provided by Anayara market.

### 5. Provision of Cold storage/Warehouse Facility

Implementation of cold storage facility is yet another objective laid down by Agricultural Department. Such storage facilities are found vital in storing perishable produces like fruits, vegetables etc. so as to protect the needy farmers, traders and exporters. As per bye-law cold storage facilities in wholesale markets are capable of setting up a cold chain in Kerala. It is found that cold storage facilities are implemented only in two markets Anayara and Muvattupuzha. Pre cooling/Storage rooms are allotted in Anayara market in two portions each (9sq.m x 8sq.m) where commodities are stored by short period under pre-cooling. Cold storage having size of 2-20 meters (x B-4 meters x H-3 meters) with a storage capacity of 8-10



metric tones are implemented in Anayara market recently during 2012. It is during 2012 itself cold storage having 3.8sq.mx7.6sq.m of 10 metric ton capacity is installed in Muvattupuzha market. It is also found that Muvattupuzha market utilizes their dormitory block as store house for pepper, coffee etc.

### **6. Strengthening of Market Intelligence**

As per bye-law Agriculture Department intends to strengthen the market intelligence in Kerala by mounting AGMARKNET more effective through ACWMs. Effective marketing information network can provide facility generation and transmission of prices, commodity arrival information from agricultural produce markets and web-based dissemination to producers, consumers, traders and policy makers transparently and quickly.<sup>1</sup> Agriculture Department at the time of layout of ACWMs intends to implement Market Information Centers within the market premises to facilitate price quotations and to acquaint with day to day market fluctuations. But from the survey it is found that such Market Information Centers are not yet implemented in any of the ACWMs.

The section focused to evaluate the performance of ACWMs against their promises. It is found that no painful efforts are there from the management side to uplift the auction procedures through identifying the peculiarities of different wholesale markets. Non participation of HORTICORP and the lack of open auctions in Bathery market are the other noted problems. It is clear that Bathery market shows a very bad position in inculcating the spirit participatory marketing. Modernized and innovative facilities are not yet provided through ACWMs. It is found that mobile van facilities are not provided for transporting agriculture produce from the farm field to the auction centre. Cold storage facilities are not so far installed in Maradu, Vengeri, Nedumangadu and Sulthan Bathery markets. Market Information Centers are not implemented yet in the ACWMs. Thus from the survey it is clear that majority of its promises are not yet properly fulfilled by ACWMs. Therefore it can be concluded that ACWMs failed to achieve the promises for which they have been established.

### **6. FINDINGS OF THE STUDY**

1. Analysis of strengthening of marketing activities resulted in the finding that among the wholesale markets, Maradu market transacted more (20.24 MTs) quantities of agriculture produce during the auctions. However, in respect of value of produce transacted, Nedumangadu market topped first. Significant difference is noticed in respect of value and the quantities of vegetable and other produces handled by Maradu urban and Bathery rural markets, as the results were specifically identified by taking the two representative markets from urban and rural region. The difference leads to inferences that lesser values of produce are frequently handled by Maradu market, whereas in Bathery, both low and high valued produces are uniformly transacted.
2. It was observed that inculcating spirit of participatory marketing in the auctions is not up to the standard in Anayara, Maradu, Muvattupuzha and Bathery markets except from the markets of Vengeri and Nedumangadu.
3. From the survey it is found that ACWMs failed to utilize the available facilities for the benefit of farmers.
4. Though it is insisted in the bye-laws that, vegetable produces are to be transported from farm field to the auction centre, none of the markets are found doing the same.
5. Provision of cold storage/warehouse facilities which are vital for storing perishable produces was not yet implemented in Maradu, Vengeri, Nedumangadu and Bathery markets even after more than 10 years of their establishment.
6. Market information centers that can provide updated information on agriculture produce to the farmers are not found implemented in ACWMs.

### **7. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION**

Based on performance, the wholesale markets differ significantly in respect of quantity and value of produce handled. It is found that in Maradu market, both small and large quantities of agriculture produce traded are almost in equal proportions, whereas, large quantities of agriculture produce are frequently handled through Bathery market. Moreover, majority of the promises at the time of its lay down has not been properly fulfilled by ACWMs.

In the present scenario, the need for the upgrading of ACWMs is not only essential for the improvement of farmers and traders but also for the final consumers, as they could consume healthy organic agriculture produces. Keeping the necessity in view, Directorate of Marketing (Agriculture) has to indulge in the functioning of ACWMs and have to evaluate their performance against their laid down promises. As the available staff is not sufficient to carry on with the auction procedures, mobile sales services etc. it seems the responsibility of Directorate of Marketing to create such posts and have to appoint the appropriate persons. Moreover, the Government has to take up initiative steps to release the sanctioned fund for the implementation of cold storage/warehouse facilities in the market. The Government also can undertake steps to implement Market information Centers supported with necessary staff, so that the farmers can acquire up to date marketing information.



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