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An Analysis of Different Marketing Channels on Greenhouse Vegetable Market in Uzbekistan: a Case Study on Tomato and Cucumber.

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Abstract

Given the current volume of vegetable production and the stratification of the population in Uzbekistan according to income level only high income earners consume fruits and vegetables. Because of low solvency, a large number of citizens cannot buy natural sources of vitamins, especially during off-season. According to the Ministry of Public Health of Uzbekistan, vegetable consumption should be 142 kg per capita annually, 28 kg thereof in the winter period. The average Uzbek has access to only 84 kg of vegetables, 5 kg thereof in winter. Additionally, many farmers producing greenhouse vegetables can not cover their production costs, which keep them from commercial farming and encourage subsistence farming.

Improvement of the marketing system in the greenhouse vegetable sector could initiate a sustainable development of this sector for two reasons: 1) if additional produce does not fetch additional revenue in the market, it may work as a disincentive to increased production. A shortage in the supply of a marketable surplus makes the development of an efficient marketing system extremely difficult; 2) if the market does not supply consumers with produce at reasonable prices and at the time and place needed, then increased production is not improving welfare in a society.

This paper attempts to understand the nature of the marketing channels, marketing costs, margins, price spread and producer's share in the consumers' price of vegetables produced in the off-season period in the Tashkent region of Uzbekistan. A field study was conducted during October 2009 - March 2010 in the Zangiota, Qibray, Chinoz and Yangiyul districts of Tashkent, which account for about 47.2 % of the country's total greenhouse area cultivated with vegetables, supplying approximately 62 % of the nation-wide production. The study included 156 farmers selected randomly.

Additionally, a survey on marketing strategies was conducted using a random sample of 63 retailers, 38 village level collectors, 8 export agents, 18 exporters and 27 wholesalers. The data were collected through personal interviews using a structured questionnaire.

Keywords: Greenhouse vegetables, marketing channels, marketing costs, marketing margin