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## Agricultural marketing in Assam with special reference to Morigaon district

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### Abstract

Agriculture sector is the heart and soul of the Indian Economy. India's 43% of geographical areas is occupied by Agricultural land. Out of total geographical area (2.72 lakh ha), of Assam, 41.03% area is cultivable, 27.23% is under forest (Agricultural Department, General Statistics, Govt. of Assam, 2022) <sup>[1]</sup>. The Morigaon District of Assam has total geographical area of 1.43150 lakh ha and the soil is mainly clayey, clayey loamy, sandy and sandy loam (Soil survey report of Morigaon District, National Bureau of Soil survey & Land use planning – ICAR, North Eastern Regional Centre, Jorhat). Assam is the land of major production of predominant crop – Rice along with other important crops – Pulses, Jute, Silk, Tea, Sugarcane, Potato, Cotton, Oil Seeds, Fruit crops, Coconut etc. Morigaon District of Assam has cropping intensity of 186% and Paddy, Maize, Black Gram, Mustard, Jute and other vegetables are prominent crop of the District. It has been observed in Agricultural marketing sector in Morigaon district as well as in the whole state that the Farmers or growers who are the backbone of our society do not get the reasonable price of their products, besides the price of the maximum commodities are high and fluctuates at different market within the district due to various reasons. Agricultural Marketing board, other channels, facilities are running in the District to control the marketing system, they have their protocols in the market but still the marketing system is facing many small or big issues. Therefore it is very important to find out and solve those problems in the district. The motive of this study is to observe and identify the present scenario of the marketing system and find out the issues faced by the Growers as well as by the Consumers in the market in Morigaon district as well as the state of Assam. In the present study it was revealed that inclusion of numerous middle man in the market results hike in commodity's price which leads to imbalance in the marketing system. Due to lack of advanced storage facility in the district the growers are unable to store their products for longer period results in unable to export their products to nearby districts or state.

**Keywords:** Agricultural marketing, agriculture economic development, efficiency, market channel, etc.

### 1. Introduction

Agricultural marketing system is a platform and linkage between farmers and consumers for exchange of agricultural commodities. It comprises the activities like buying, selling, storing, procurement, transportation of the Agriculture products. A well organized and controlled marketing system helps in economic development of the district and the state. The socio-economic condition and nation's economic development is highly depends on good Agricultural marketing system.

The economy of Morigaon district and the state are totally based on Agriculture. The Agriculture marketing in rural areas of the state and the Morigaon district is not flexible (Agricultural Marketing System in Assam", National Institute of Agricultural Marketing (NIAM), Rajasthan, 2012) <sup>[2]</sup>. It has been observed that maximum number of private traders control the marketing system in rural areas. The stratigraphy of the district is not favorable for the transportation of the products. Besides, the basic structure, procurement implementation, other facilities, the transportation of Agriculture products limited in rural areas of the district. In Agricultural marketing system due to demand and supply and interference of middle man the prices of the products fluctuate in the market (Murugesan and Rajarajan, 2016) <sup>[4]</sup>. The market channels are highly affected by the scarcity of advanced storage facility and cold storage facility in the district. The production of agricultural commodities - Paddy, Jute, Maize, Black Gram, Mustard and other vegetables are very high in Morigaon district, but there is a limited export to nearby districts. The export to other states is very low in proportion. It is necessary to make more organized and advanced marketing system and the marketing channel in the district as well as in the state.

Therefore it is important to focus on those problems facing by growers and consumers in a regulated market, so that we can suggest some solution and measures that should be taken to overcome these issues and to upgrade the marketing system in the district and in the state.

## 2. Objectives of the Study

- To study the present scenario of the Agricultural marketing system in Morigaon District and Assam.
- To find out effective measures to overcome the problems faced in Agricultural marketing system in the district as well as in the state.

## 3. Methodology

Both primary and secondary data were collected for the present study. Primary data were collected through personal interviewing method with the farmers, traders, marketing committee and local consumers of the district from important daily and weekly market of Morigaon district. Information were collected from the markets like Moirabari market, Laharighat market, Bhuragaon market, Jagiroad market. We also visited the dry storage, godowns, cold storage available in the district. The secondary data were collected from Dept. of Agricultural Statistics, Government of Assam, Agriculture Marketing Board, research paper and journals related with agricultural marketing. Different statistical tools like tables and graphs were used to describe and evaluate the present scenario of the marketing system.

## 4. Results and Discussion

Agriculture plays a vital role in the economy of the state. The state has produced 5213852 (in tonnes) with an average yield 2237 kg/hectare in the year 2020-21 (Economic Survey, Assam, 2021-22) [5]. After the whole sale market survey in different market of Morigaon district, it has been seen that the prices of the commodities varies according to different markets in the same district. The prices of the maximum

commodities are low during its production season and high during off season. The prices of the commodities also low in those market places which are dominated nearby production area. Those markets which are regulated from a far distance from the production area of the district shows hike in price of the commodities. The Jute production area in Morigaon district is high in Moirabari and Laharighat area where the whole sale prices are low as compared to Jagiroad town and other region of the district, it is due to transportation, labor cost, middle man involvement and other expenses. One more important reason is due to financial burden of the small and marginal farmers, they use to sale their products at lower prices at the farm level. Taking advantage of this situation, the middle man collects the products and sells it at higher prices which leads to hike in consumer price in the market. The huge margin of price fluctuate of the various commodities has been seen in the district during last one year.

These are the common issues has been seen in Morigaon district. During off season in Morigaon district it has been observed that Potato mainly comes from West Bengal (Dhupguri, Alipurduar), Uttar Pradesh (Agra) and Punjab (Jalandher). The traders stock in a limited quantity and sell according to their profitable price. If our farmers and consumers had advanced storage and cold storage facility in the district then they could store their commodities for a longer duration for off season so that the prices will not hike at markets during high demand.

Assam has so far constituted 24 nos. of Regulated Market Committees (RMCs) all over the State, except the sixth schedule areas with 20 nos. of Principal Market Yards and 206 nos. of Sub Market Yards (Department of Agriculture & Horticulture, Government of Assam 2022) [3]. During peak harvesting season (January-March) of Rabi vegetables, huge quantity of vegetables are available in the market and the farmers sell their produce at a low price due to scarcity of cold storage facility near their place.

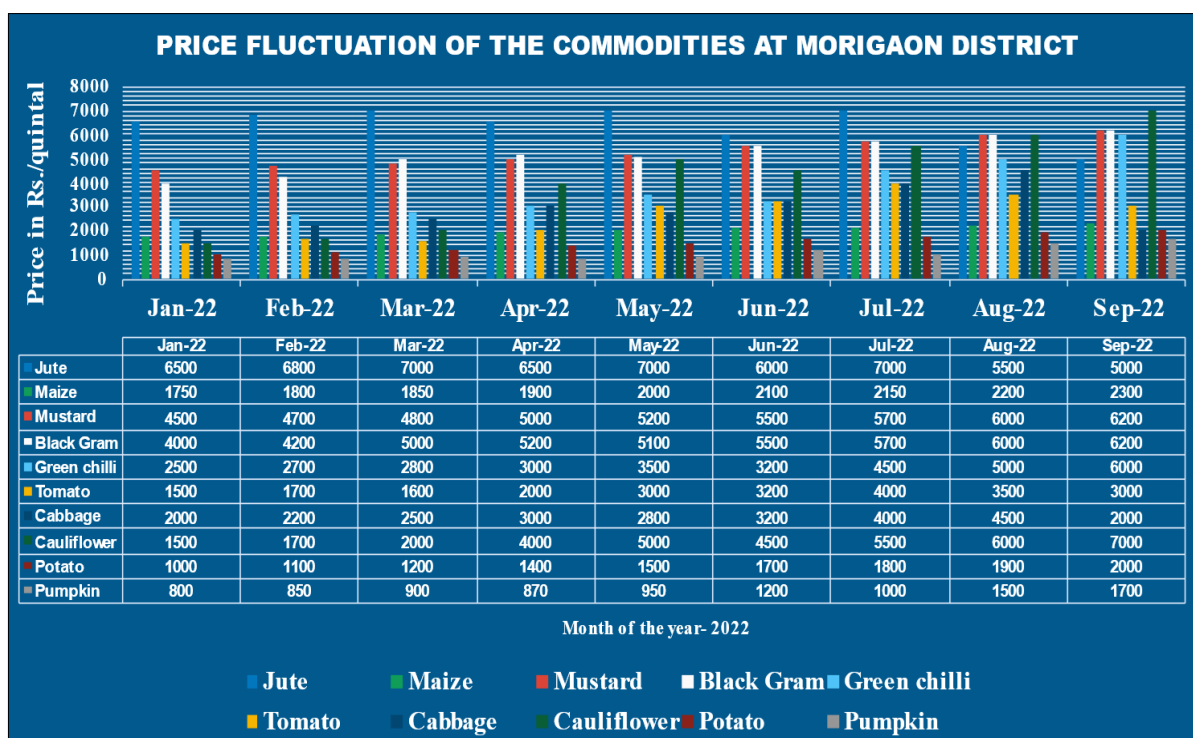


Fig 1: Price fluctuation of commodities in Morigaon District.

**Table 1:** Market infrastructure details of Assam

RMC	Auction Platform	Drying Platform	Market Shed	Retailer Shed	Cattle Shed	Assortment Shed	Marketing & Selling Complex	Veg. Pack. Shed	Godown	Rural Godown	Sale counter of Agri. prod.	Krishakor Dukan	Cold Storage	Walk in Cooler	Community Toilet Block	Krishak Bhawan	Weigh Bridge
Baharihat RMC	6	2	7						4	1	1						
Bongaigaon DRMC	6	1	2	3													
Cachar DRMC	14		4		6										1	1	
Darrang DRMC	28	1	7	8		2	2		4	1			1		18		2
Dhemaji DRMC	6	3	1		3				3							1	
Dhing RMC	38		10			1	1		4		1				2	1	
Dhubri DRMC	45	5	5			1	9		10	4	1				2	1	1
Dibrugarh DRMC	13	1			1												
Goalpara DRMC	20		2							2							
Golaghat RMC	41	2			4				4	2							1
Guwahati SDMC	52	7	9	16	3		5		6	3	2	7	1		7	4	3
Hailakandi DRMC	10	3	1												2		
Howly RMC	24	1	5	1		1	2	2	4					1	1		
Jorhat DRMC	44	4	30	5	5		1		1	4	1	1	1		2	1	1
Kokrajhar DRMC	22	1							1	1			1				
Karimganj DRMC	2	1			1						1		1				1
Lanka RMC	9		4	1	1		7		2	1				1	1		
Morigaon DRMC	12	2	3						1					1	1	1	
Nalbari DRMC	11	1	5	2	4					1	1					6	
North Lakhimpur	16		1						2						2		
Rangia SDRMC	5		2				1			1							
Sivasagar DRMC	16	1	3		1		1				1						
Sonitpur DRMC	12	1		2					1		1					1	
Tinsukia DRMC	15	1	2	2			4		1	1	1						
Total = As on 31-03-2021	467	38	103	40	29	5	33	2	48	22	11 NON AC = 2 AC=9	8	5	3	39	17	9

**Source:** Department of Agriculture & Horticulture, Government of Assam

Above table shows that limited storing, marketing and other infrastructures enable to execute the marketing feature in the district and also in the state.

In Morigaon district, limited godown facility is available and most of them are under government undertaking (FCI, Assam Food & Civil Supply). There is only one cold storage, Sitajakahala Dugdha Utpadak Samabay Samity available in the district which deals with Dairy products with maximum capacity of 10 MT with 2 units.

## 5. Conclusion

From the study it can be concluded that the agriculture sector has a huge prospects in Morigaon district provided by assured and organized market facilities. Layers between producers and consumer need to be cut to ensure benefits to farmers and consumers. For horticultural crops huge quantities of various perishable products are produced every year but due to lack of cold storage or advanced storage facilities farmers have to go for distress sale. One nation one market by organization of farmers in form of FPOs, co-operative societies, agripreneurs, and SHG.

Inclusion of many middlemen in marketing system also creating problems in getting optimum price by the farmers. Though the Assam State Agricultural Marketing Board (ASAMB) has proposed various acts to control the marketing system it needs to be implemented properly to facilitate the marketing system. Various awareness programs, use of farmer online app like "KISAN RATH" etc. would be beneficial for the farmers to update the prices and about the markets regularly. Risk reduction of climatic disparities to be addressed by implementation of PM Fasal Bima yojana in every field

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