

Problems and Prospects of Marketing of NWFP in North Kerala

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ABSTRACT

This is an attempt to study the marketing of Non Wood Forest Products (NWFP) in North Kerala, which analyses the volume of collection and its sale during the last 10 years from 2008-09 to 2017-18. The Tribal Service Co-operative Societies is the major marketing channel for NWFP in the whole Kerala. The study was conducted in Kannur district, which is situated in the north Kerala. In Kannur district, there is only one Tribal Co-operative Society for the collection and marketing of NWFPs, which is located at Nedumpoil, a place close to the Kannavam Reserve Forest area in the Thalassery Taluk. The registered members of the Tribal Co-operative Society are permitted to collect NWFP from the Kannavam Forest Range under the Kannur Forest Division. The Tribal Co-operative Societies have no right to sell the products directly from the societies to the buyers. The sale should be conducted through the branch offices of the Kerala State Federation of SC/ST Development Co-operatives, Ltd. The Nedumpoil Tribal Co-operative Society is selling the NWFP through the Kalpetta Branch of the Federation, which is situated in the district headquarters of Wayanad. The Wayanad district is an adjoining district of Kannur district in the south side. The marketing of NWFP in Kannur district has faced a lot of challenges in terms of the availability of NWFPs during the last 10 years and an analysis is made in this respect to know the problems and prospects of NWFP marketing in the study area.

Keywords: NWFP, Marketing, Tribal Products, Medicinal Plants.

INTRODUCTION:

Non Wood Forest Products (NWFP) have always been an important part of survival as well as livelihood for rural communities and forest dwellers across the world. Food and Agricultural Organisation (FAO) says that the NWFP play an important role in daily life and well-being of millions of people worldwide (FAO, 1997). The NWFP can be any product, which include roots or leaves or stems or flowers of medicinal plants, honey, fruits and nuts. The marketing of NWFP in Kerala is still an important economic activity and a livelihood means for the tribal people. This study tries to understand the marketing of Non Wood Forest Products (NWFP) in North Kerala, the volume of collection and its sale during the last 10 years from 2008-09 to 2017-18. The NWFP were earlier called as Non Timber Forest Products (NTFP) or Minor Forest Products (MFP).

REVIEW OF LITERATURE:

There are several studies on the collection and sale of NWFP in many countries and also in India. In Kerala level also there are some studies have come up. In the Indian context, the studies of Rajan (1980), Yadav et.al. (2006), Jyotsna Krishnakumar, et.al. (2012), Panigrahi (2014), and others have analysed the problems related to NWFP collection and sale in India.

In the Kerala context, Muraleedharan (2003) Bindu (2008), Sathyapalan (2010) and others have studied the marketing channels and problems of NWFP marketing. In 2016, an article on the interventions of Tribal Co-operative Society in the marketing of tribal products in Kerala has been written by the researcher (Sali, 2016), which has portrayed the marketing of tribal products of Kannur district from 2009-10 to 2013-14.

The present study is virtually an attempt to update the earlier study with 10 years of data from 2008-09 to 2017-18. This paper is critically analysing the changes in marketing of NWFP or tribal products of Kannur district with latest data. In the above review, only a few literatures are given related to the broad theme of this paper. This succinct review shows the significance of the study on the NWFP marketing in Kerala and India.

METHODOLOGY:

The present study is based on various secondary data on the NWFP marketing in Kerala. The area for study is selected purposefully to understand the problems of NWFP marketing in North Kerala. Interviews have been conducted to collect data. A qualitative assessment is also made to trace out the real problem of the present topic.

Marketing Channel of NWFP in Kannur District :

The Tribal Service Co-operative Societies are the major marketing channel for NWFP in the whole Kerala. In Kannur district, the NWFP marketing has faced critical changes with the establishment of the Kottiyur Wild Life Sanctuary in 2011.

There is only one Tribal Co-operative Society for the collection and marketing of NWFPs in Kannur district, which is located at Nedumpoil. The registered members of the Tribal Co-operative Society are permitted to collect NWFP from the forests of Kannur district, which is mostly from the Kannavam forest range under the Kannur forest division. The forest ranges and its area is provided in the Table-1.

It shows the size of the forest area in different forest ranges. In Kannur, the Kannavam is the largest forest range with an area of 20754.2 acres, the Kottiyur (also written as Kottiyoor) is the second largest with an area of 20064.2 acres and the Thaliparamba has 5254.9 acres.

Table 1: Forest Ranges in Kannur Forest Division

Sl.No.	Name of Forest Range	Area in KM ²	District
1	Kannavam	83.9893	Kannur
2	Kottiyur	81.1969	Kannur
3	Thaliparamba	21.2659	Kannur
Total forest area in Kannur district		186.4521	Kannur
4	Kanhangad	59.3725	Kasaragod
5	Kasaragod	60.4774	Kasaragod
Total forest area in Kasaragod district		119.8499	Kasaragod

Source: Forest Statistics 2012

Forest Area in Kannur District:

Similar to the general geography of Kerala, the Kannur District can also be divided into three regions namely, high land, mid land and low land. The hilly area is having an average height of 914 meters, which comes under the high land. Kannur District has 48734 hectares of forest area. The total land of Kannur district is 296797 hectares. That is, 16.42 per cent of the Kannur district is the forest area.

Tribes of Kannur District:

The Census 2011 gives the total Scheduled Tribe population of Kerala and it is 484839 that form 1.45 per cent of the total population. The maximum number of tribal population is in Wayanad district, which is followed by the Idukki, Palakkad, Kasaragod and Kannur districts. Kannur district is in the fifth position in terms of the tribal population, which consists of 20141 males and 21230 females and the total population is 41371.

In Kannur district, there are three major types of tribal settlements. The first category of people is those who have settled in forest environments from the time immemorial. The second category of people is those who have rehabilitated to new places like Aralam Farm. The third category of people is those who are living in the villages outside forests. There are five major tribal communities living in Kannur district and they are the Paniyan, Kurichiyar, Karimpalan, Mavilan and Malavettuvan. The Paniyans and Kurichiyans are living in the Kannavam forest range. The tribal people living in this forest range are collecting NWFPs and selling it to the Nedumpoil Tribal Co-operative Society. The tribes of Valathod, Vaniyampara and Chathiroor in Iritty region and at the northern side of Aralam and the tribes of Peruva, Chembukavu, Parakkad, Thettummal and Kolappa of Kannavam region are collecting NWFP.

Tribal Co-operative Society in Kannur District:

In Kannur district, there is only one society, which is the Nedumpoil Tribal Co-operative Society. The Society was established in the year 1959 and it has 1445 registered members with 450 females and 995 males. However, there are only 135 active members who regularly collect NWFPs from the forests.

Challenges of Marketing of NWFP Kannur District:

The marketing of NWFPs in Kannur district had faced a lot of challenges in terms of the availability of NWFPs during the last 10 years and an analysis is made in this respect to know the problems and prospects of NWFP marketing of the study area. In Kannur district, the tribes living in or near the Reserve Forests collect NWFP and it is a critical economic support for such tribal families. The Kannavam is the largest forest range in Kannur forest division and it has an area of 20754.2 acres.

The tribes of Kannur district are collecting various NWFP for a long time. The Nedumpoil Tribal Co-operative Society collects the NWFP from the tribes as per the price fixed by the Federation from time to time. The Nedumpoil Tribal Service Co-operative Society sells the NWFP to the buyers through the Kerala State Federation of SC/ST Development Co-operatives Ltd., Kalpetta, in Wayanad District. The Scheduled Tribes, namely, the Paniyans and Kurichian are still collecting NWFP from the forests and sell it to the society. The major portion of NWFP collected in Kannur district is by the Paniyas.

Earlier, prior to the establishment Kottiyur Wild Life Sanctuary, the tribes were collecting NWFP from Kottiyur forest range also. The Kottiyur Wild Life Sanctuary was established on 1-3-2011 and with the establishment of this Wild Life Sanctuary; the tribes are not permitted to collect NWFP from that area. The reduction of forest area for the tribes for the collection resulted in the reduction of number of collection depots.

Reduction in Number of Collection Depots:

Earlier, the Society had 15 depots for the collection of NWFP before the establishment of Kottiyur Wild Life Sanctuary. At present, there are only six depots in Kanjaramkolli, Valathode, Thettummal, Chembukavu, Nedumpoil and Vaniyampara. One of the members of the NWFP collectors of each region is given charge to collect the NWFP in the depots and they were given 10 per cent of the collection charges for running the depots. The collection depots are opened only at the time of collection, particularly in the evenings. This is also based on the availability seasons of the NWFPs. In Kannur district, Cheenikka is a major NWFP and its season starts from January and end in April, therefore they open the collection depots during January to April every year.

The Tribal Co-operative Societies have no right to sell the products directly from the societies to the buyers. The sale should be conducted through the branch offices of the Kerala State Federation of SC/ST Development Co-operatives, Ltd. The Nedumpoil Tribal Co-operative Society is selling the NWFPs through the Kalpetta Branch of the Federation. The Federation conducts auctions periodically to sell the NWFPs. The buyers will have to make the payment to the Federation after the auction.

Trend of Marketing of NWFP in Kannur District:

The marketing of NWFP during the last 10 years from 2008-09 to 2017-18 can give a comprehensive picture as well as the trend of marketing of NWFP in Kannur district. During the last 10 years, there were four important items. The Cheenikka was the most important NWFP in terms of quantity collected by the tribes of the study area. They sold 89952 Kg. of Cheenikka within 10 years. Kunthirikkam was the next major NWFP and the quantity within the period was 20941 Kg. Honey was the third item in terms of quantity as it was 12096 Kg. and Pathiri poove was the fourth item with 5341.7 Kg. The other items are Kakkumkaya (1777 Kg.), Padakizhangu (278.6 Kg.) Kudampuli (118 Kg.) Kazhanjikuru (22 Kg.) and Honey Wax (17 Kg.). The year-wise collection is provided in the Table-2.

Table 2: Quantity of NWFP Collected During the Last 10 Years

Sl. No.	Product Name	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	Total Qty
1	Cheenikka	34373	0	1750	1000	7419	8020	5500	14150	7190	10550	89952.0
2	Kunthirikkam	7857	2700	450	1051	730	600	2454	1188	1482.5	2428.5	20941.0
3	Honey	1630	500	450	0	1450	2282	1000	500	1300	2984	12096.0

Sl. No.	Product Name	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	Total Qty
4	Pathiri Poove	2130	390	425	282	233	15.5	387	146.6	645.1	687.5	5341.7
5	Kakkumkaya	1286	0	0	0	0	0	491	0	0	0	1777.0
6	Padakizhange	199	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	79.6	0	278.6
7	Kudampuli	118	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	118.0
8	Kazhanjikuru	0	0	0	22	0	0	0	0	0	0	22.0
9	Honey Wax	0	0	17	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	17.0

The income generated by selling the NWFP during the last ten years is given in Table-3. It shows that the Honey is the most important and income generating NWFP, which has gained Rs. 23.11 Lakhs and the Cheenikka provided Rs. 21.45 Lakhs. Pathiri Poove was sold for Rs. 13.16 Lakhs and Kunthirikkam was for 13.06 Lakhs. The other items were sold for Rs. 49800 (Padakizhangu), Rs. 18939 (Kakkumkaya), Rs. 5900 (Kudampuli), Rs. 1750 (Honey wax) and Rs. 550 (Kazhanjikuru).

In terms of price as well as quantity, Honey, Cheenikka, Pathiri Poove and Kunthirikkam are the major items marketed during the last 10 years. Price is not depended on the quantity of the product, which is based on the type of product. The price is fixed by the Federation, the apex organisation above the Tribal Co-operative Societies.

Table 3: Price of NWFP of Last 10 Years

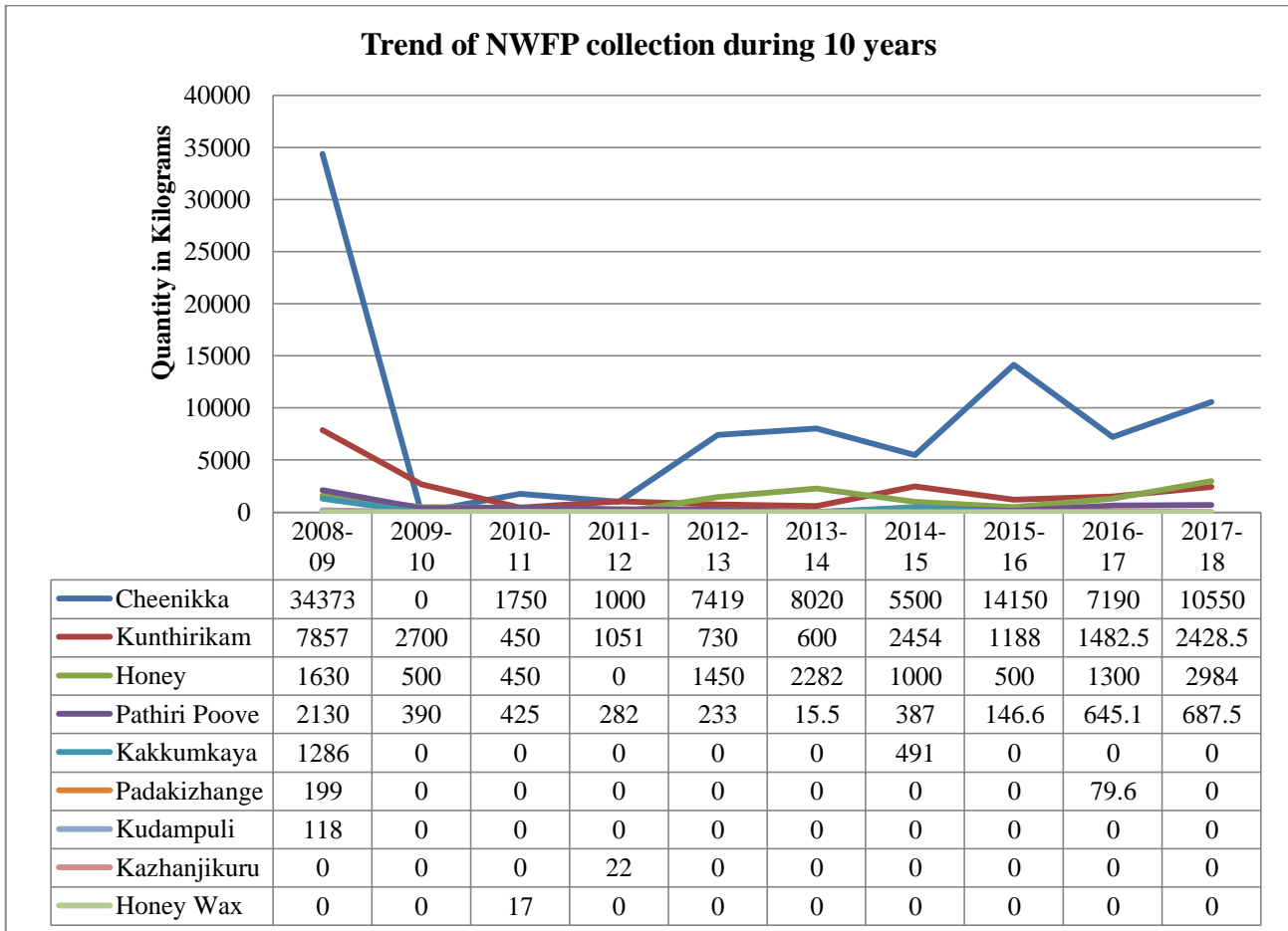
Sl. No.	Product Name	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	Total Price in Rs.
1	Honey	140125	45000	45000	0	23200	370260	220000	100000	390000	977700	2311285
2	Cheenikka	348612	0	17500	10000	111285	120300	121000	438650	334640	642700	2144687
3	Pathiri Poove	305046	47400	65190	51400	54675	3100	185658	48275	290280	265212.5	1316236.5
4	Kunthirikam	330247	108000	15750	42050	35330	30000	240245	86796	158358.5	259252.5	1306029
5	Padakizhange	19950	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	29850	0	49800
6	Kakkumkaya	11574	0	0	0	0	0	7365	0	0	0	18939
7	Kudampuli	5900	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5900
8	Honey Wax	0	0	1750	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1750
9	Kazhanjikuru	0	0	0	550	0	0	0	0	0	0	550

The trend of collection of NWFP is shown in the Fig. 1. This shows the collected quantity of each NWFP over the years. This is giving some more insights on the fluctuation of quantity and it was very low during 2009-10 and 2010-11. This can be very evident from the analysis of individual products.

The Fig. 2 gives the high fluctuations in the collection of NWFP during the 10 years and in the year 2008-09, the quantity of Cheenikka was 34373 Kg., Kunthirikam 7857 Kg., Honey 1630 Kg., Pathiri Poove 2130 Kg., Kakkumkaya 1286 Kg., Padakizhangu 199 Kg. and Kudampuli was 118 Kg.

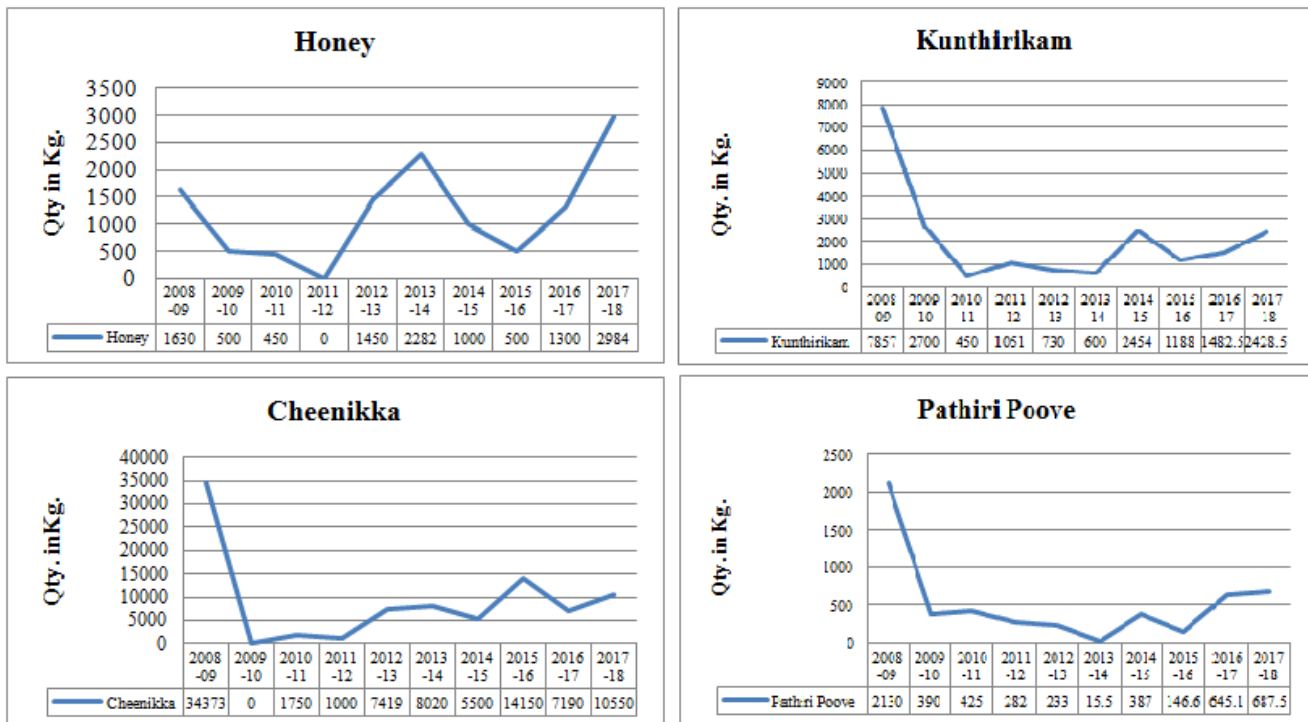
During 2009-10, the quantity of all products had started to decline and out of nine products, six NWFP have not collected. When it reached to 2010-11, four NWFP were not at all collected and the quantity of other products also had declined drastically. This is a recent change as far as the marketing of tribal products are concerned. The society does not face many problems in marketing the NWFP with the help of the Federation. But, the reduction of collection depots due to the demarcation of Kottiyur Wild Life Sanctuary and the prohibition for collecting NWFP from the Kottiyur forest had made some impact in the collection of NWFP in North Kerala.

Fig. 1: Trend of NWFP Collection During the Last 10 Years



According to Fig.1, since 2009-10 out of nine NWFP, five have become absent from the purview of collection. The trend of collection of four major individual items is provided in the Fig.2.

Fig.2: Trend of Collection of Honey, Cheenikka, Kunthirikam and Pathiri Poove



The one and only reason for this drastic change in the collection of NWFP was occurred with the establishment of the Kottiyur Wild Life Sanctuary in March 2011. With the establishment of the Wild Life Sanctuary, the tribes were not permitted to collect NWFP from the Kottiyur forest range, which has adversely affected the NWFP collection and sale or in general the marketing of NWFP in Kannur district.

FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS:

The NWFP marketing in the Kannur district were efficient from the beginning of the Nedumpoil Tribal Co-operative Society in 1959. Since then, the society had 15 NWFP collection depots in Kannur district. With the advent of Kottiyur Wild Life Sanctuary in March 2011, the tribal people of the area were prohibited from the collection of NWFP from the sanctuary. Meanwhile, the society was forced to close its nine depots due to the steady decline of NWFP. However, during the last three years, there is a slight growth in the collection of NWFP, which gives a ray of hope for the coming years.

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