

CHAPTER 1.

INTRODUCTION

Agriculture is the backbone of India's economy and despite concerted industrialization in last over two decades, agriculture still occupies a place of pride as being the largest productive sector in the country. It is a source of livelihood for over 70% of population. About 80% of India's population lives in villages and hence, the overall prosperity of the country largely depends on the agricultural development, which, in turn, has two important dimensions, namely, improvement in agricultural production and improvement in the marketing of agricultural produce.

The Government wishes to enable the farming community to bring more agricultural produce to the market and also to ensure fair price for these produce. Indian agriculture is mostly based on the nature of subsistence economy. In recent years, however, the situation has undergone remarkable changes as a result of commendable enhancement in the agricultural production. The present agro-economy is the economy of surplus market. If a cultivator producer has to better his position and prospects, a number of infrastructural facilities for cultivation as also marketing of his produce will have to be provided by the Government, beginning with the supply of right inputs that may help him in harvesting better quality and high volume crops. However, if the cultivator is left to use the traditional channels for the marketing of his produce, he is bound to derive only a limited consideration for his efforts. Hence, the creation of healthy

marketing conditions is an important factor in the process of transformation of an underdeveloped economy. Establishment of regulated markets dealing in agricultural commodities is a course generally recommended and widely accepted for the creation of better marketing conditions.

In India, regulation of agricultural marketing has been aimed at increasing the income of a farmer and to promote the country's economics of development. The present agricultural production is a combined effort of a large number of agriculturists whose individual size of the land holding is very small. Hence, the agricultural commodities are produced mainly for self consumption, which gives rise to a very low marketable surplus. Whatever little surplus is marketed, it is marketed at a disadvantage to the producer. The agricultural markets are usually dominated by traders and middlemen who resort to a number of malpractices such as defective weights and measures, unjust deductions, unreasonably high rates of commission and market charges, etc., which take away a considerable portion of the price paid by the buyer. At such a place, the producer-seller is at a disadvantage against the relatively stronger members of the trading class. Thus, there is a need to develop regulated markets in order to improve the marketing conditions which will lead to fair competitiveness and stronger bargaining power of the farmers. The main objective of the regulated markets is to regulate the sale and purchase of the agricultural produce and create conditions favourable to ensure fair deal for the farmer in the marketing of his produce.

In India, Bombay Province set up the country's first regulated market in 1930. It is, however, observed that the growth of regulated markets was sluggish till the country attained Independence. In the year 1950-51, there were 265 regulated markets in the country. Thereafter, however, the growth was very rapid and by March-1985, the number had reached 5600. At present, the Government's policy is to convert all the markets in the country into the regulated markets.

There were only 66 regulated markets in Maharashtra in the year 1961, but now the number has grown to 637 markets.

Mangalwedha is one of the progressive talukas of Solapur district. This taluka is particularly leading in the production as well as marketing of Jawar in the entire district, covering many activities like buying, selling, pricing and trading. The taluka also promotes activities like standardisation of production and financing the trade. In Mangalwedha taluka, Agricultural Market Committee plays an important role in controlling the marketing activities of the agricultural produce, including Jawar. Taking into consideration its importance and scope, it is quite necessary for the researcher to undertake a research-study on Jawar marketing in this taluka.

It is clear from the above that the regulated markets are governed by Agricultural Produce Market Act. These markets are managed by a committee representing traders, cultivators and local interest-groups. The main objectives of such markets are to create conditions of ordinary marketing and to provide physical facilities for better marketing. Regulated markets are expected to

producer-sellers from the malpractices. The Central as well as the State Governments are in favour of the expansion of the regulated markets. In spite of statutory provisions and government aid, the functioning of regulated markets invites certain criticism. To identify the gaps in their working and suggest some effective ways and means for their working in future, it is very necessary to have a research conducted on their operations.

In Maharashtra, regulated markets are governed by the Agricultural Produce Markets Act, that there shall be at least one regulated market in each of its taluka. These regulated markets are properly known as the Market Committees. The present study is confined to the working of the Agricultural Produce Market Committee of Mangalwedha Taluka, District Solapur.

A) OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY

The objectives of the present study are as follows:

1. To study the present situation of Jawar marketing in Mangalwedha taluka as a Jawar centre;
2. To study the working of the regulated marketing of Jawar initiated by the Agricultural Produce Market Committee in its Mangalwedha Market Yard;
3. To study the problems of Jawar marketing and to suggest remedial measures for overcoming the constraints.

B) METHODOLOGY AND DATA

The primary data relating to the farmers of Jawar marketing were collected with the help of a questionnaire (Appendix-1). Out of the total regular farmers marketing their Jawar in Mangalwedha

Taluka Market Committee, about 100 (i.e.5%) farmers were selected on the basis of the marketed surplus of Jawar (ref.Table 1.1).

TABLE 1.1
SELECTION OF THE FARMERS

Market Surplus in Quintals (Jawar)	Total No. of Jawar Producers	Selected Sample of Farmers (5%)
0-30	600	30
30-60	1200	60
60-90	200	10
Total:	2000	100

Source: Register of Mangalwedha Market
Market Committee (1986-87)

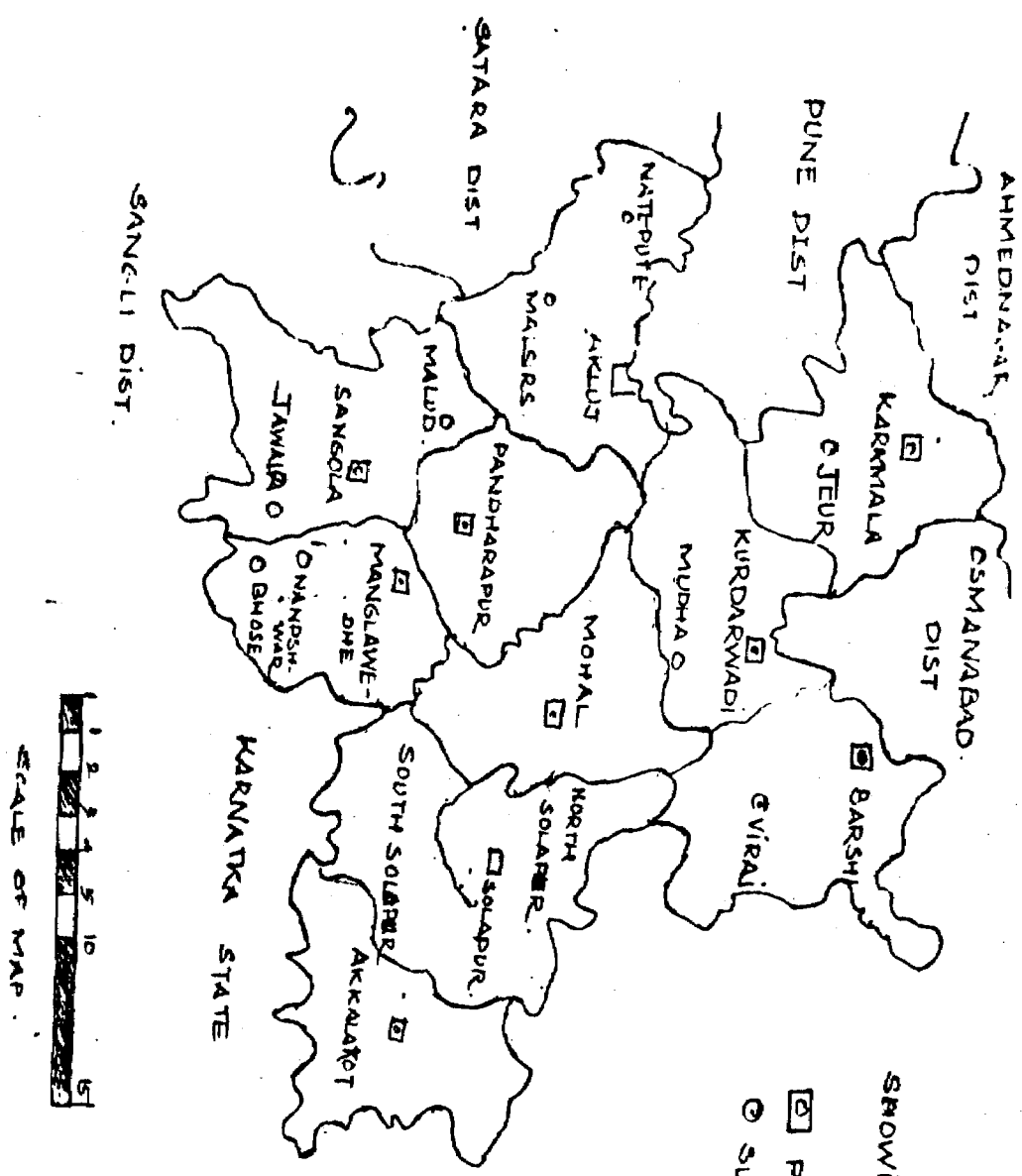
The secondary data were collected from the records of Mangalwedha Market Committee and its concerning offices. Besides this, personal interviews were held from time to time with the personnel of the market committee for supporting the present work. In addition to this, personal observation technique was used for getting first-hand information regarding actual operations in the market yard.

C) LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY.

The agricultural produce market committee of Mangalwedha taluka deals with a number of agricultural produce, viz. Hulga, Mataki, Bajara, Groundnut, Jawar, etc. However, this study is limited only to Jawar marketing.

↑ ↑ ↑

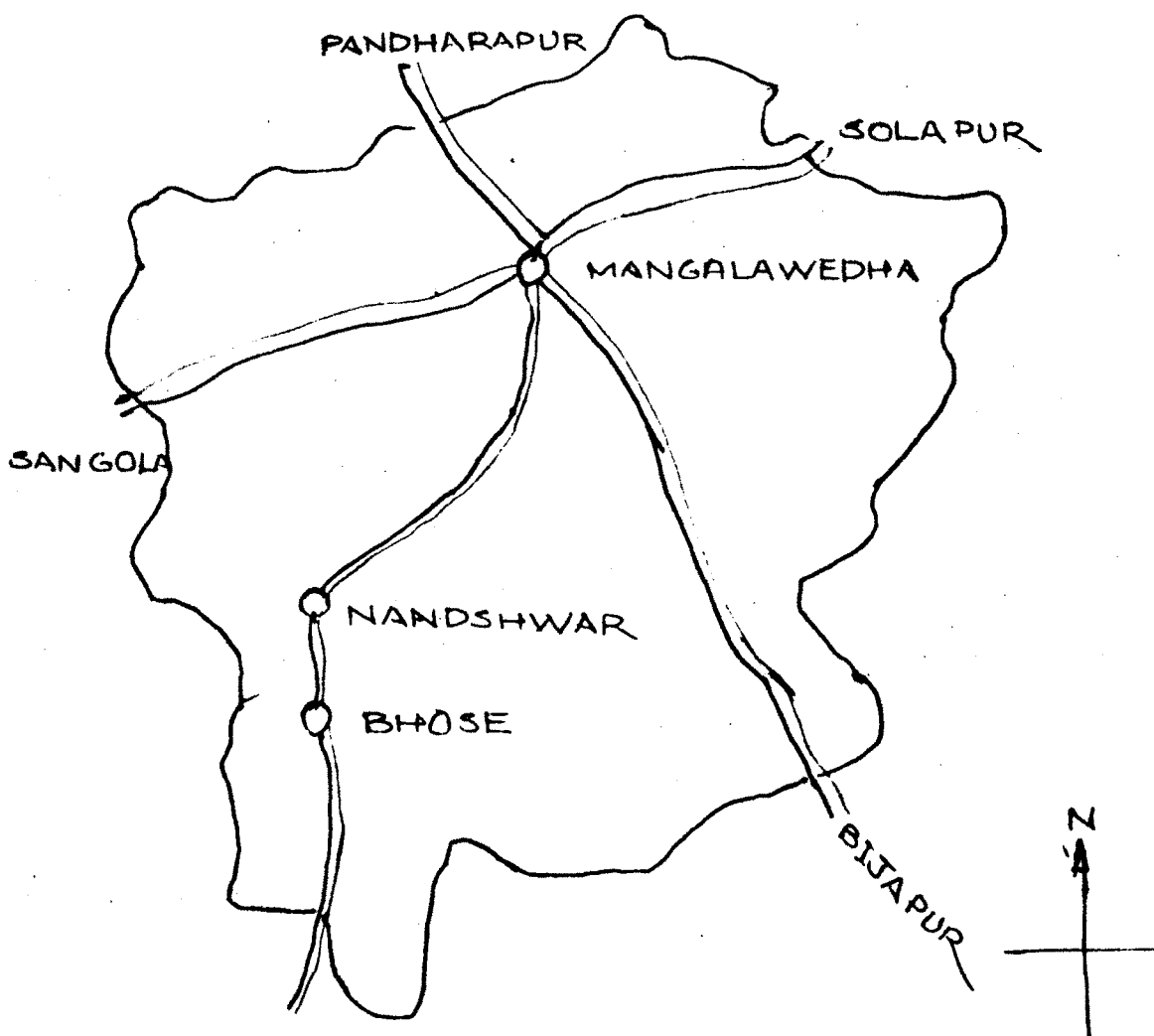
SOLAPUR - DIST.



SHOWING THE MARKET CENTERS.
 [square symbol] PRINCIPAL MARKETS
 [circle symbol] SUB-MARKETS



MANGALWEDHA TALUKA



▣ PRINCIPAL MARKET

● SUB-MARKET

= ROAD



SCALE OF MAP