BOOK REVIEW

"SPICES"

Authors: V.B. Singh and Kirti Singh
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The book is an attempt to provide valuable guide to the field workers and growers of spices-crops for increasing production by adopting modern scientific techniques. It will be a need based book for students, teachers and research workers in Agriculture Sciences.

One can find a vivid description of each of the spices depicting composition, uses, botany, climate and soil, manuring, varieties, planting, harvesting, diseases & pests, yields etc.

The spices discussed are: Black Pepper, Cardamom, Ginger, Turmeric, Chillies, Coriander, Cumin, Fennel, Fenugreek, Celery, Dill, Kala Zira, Garlic, Onion, Clove, Cinnamon, Saffron, Nutmeg and Mace. The production and export figures are given almost for all the spices excepting a very few. The trend in production and export in different years indicate the prominent position each of these crops played in international trade. Yearwise data will be useful to students and research workers in making trend studies and thereby predicting production for a few years ahead. The authors have done a good job by providing almost exhaustive references for studies carried out on each crop.

Data on production and export for some crops are only upto 1990-91 or for earlier years. Efforts should have been made to give latest figures. Analysis and interpretation of data would have enhanced the utility of the book and helped the policy makers. The authors may like to take care of these limitations while revising the edition.

On the whole, considering the wealth of information provided, the book is undoubtedly a very useful contribution and one will find the reading quite rewarding.

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BOOK REVIEW

"Weather and Supply Behaviour in Agriculture — An Econometric Approach"

The book presents the crop-weather relationship in Punjab which is considered to be one of the agriculturally advanced state in the country. Attempts have been made to examine the supply behaviour in the state under changing farm technology. The author has shown that there exist vast untapped potential of crop output particularly wheat in some areas in the state.

All the aspects are covered in six chapters keeping in view the importance of the weather parameters. Chapter I mostly deals with the relevant studies carried out by various research workers and their findings. In chapter II the extent of data used in the analysis and limitations of the study are discussed. The crops taken up for the analysis are Wheat, Rice, Cotton (Desi and American), Sugarcane, Rapeseed and Mustard in some districts which are classified as developed and less developed for each crop. It is not clearly stated what objective or otherwise criteria are considered to classify the districts into these two parts. Chapter III deals with the rainfall behaviour in the state. The trend in the annual rainfall at the selected stations as well as variations are examined using appropriate statistical analysis. The growth and fluctuations in production of each crop are discussed in Chapter IV using different well known Growth-Curves. Chapter V provides estimates of the effect of weather factors such as rainfall, maximum, minimum and mean temperature, mean relative humidity on the yield and acreage of different crops. Different regression functions are fitted in analysing the data and drawing conclusions. While discussing supply behaviour in agriculture in Chapter VI, the author has put forth some policy implications particularly emphasising the need for a well designed agricultural price policy. Some suggestions are given without support of any factual data.

The book packs valuable quantitative information for Punjab. This should serve a guideline in undertaking similar studies for other states as well. It is well known that conclusions and predictions would be more appropriate, realistic and convincing if the analysis is based on a long time-series data, say for 30 years. The author may attempt to add a few more years data if and when the book is revised. On the whole, the book provides valuable insight for researchers and policy makers and explains lucidly the utility and limitations of the study. From the academic standpoint, there is no hesitation in strongly recommending the book for students and research workers interested in the area of the study.

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