



A Study on Cassava Marketing in Chang Krang Commune, Chhet Burei District, Kratie Province

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Abstract Cassava, an agro-industry crop, has been cultivated for years by farmers; however, it was not popular in the past. Recently, the market demand for cassava root has radically increased; hence, the number of farmers and cultivated areas has boosted considerably. This study on Cassava Marketing was conducted to measure: 1) cassava household production, 2) cassava marketing, and 3) the important of cassava production in farmer household. 81 producers, 5 traders and 4 key informants in Chang Krang commune, ChhetBurei district, Kratie province were selected. Multiple tools in Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) method were employed. The result of the study shows that the majority (95%) of Chang Krang commune farmers depend on Cassava production. The cultivating method is operated in a traditional way and depends on rain fed-crop. The majority of households own more than one ha of cassava field. Mostly, cassava is converted into dry chip and sold between January and March; the average price was 850 riels/kg. Approximately ninety five percent of the yield is exported to Vietnam. The cassava marketing pattern in the selected area was appropriate as not only are they rich in middlemen, but also the location is close to the Vietnamese border. The cassava price is defined by Vietnamese buyers and the information regarding to market price was limited. Most farmers could get benefit both from cassava root and trunk. Cassava production contributed 87.68% to rural livelihood. The advantages of planting cassava included not only generating family income but also employing rural workers and reducing local and cross border migration. In conclusion, cassava production is very important for farmers in Chang Krang commune and the marketing situation is the main factor that effects production chain.

Keywords cassava household production, marketing, income household

INTRODUCTION

Agriculture is the most important sector in the Cambodian economy and plays an important role in improving economics, poverty alleviation, and building social sustainability. In 2009, agriculture contributed 33.5% to the Gross Domestic Production (GDP) and crops production was 52.9% of agriculture sector (Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, and Fisheries“MAFF”, 2009). Besides rice, which is the major food production in Cambodia, farmers, local and international traders, and industrials are attracted to cassava production. Recently, Chinese businessmen have been fascinated with cassava and plan to produce cassava in Cambodia- about 150,000 tons per year for export to

Republic of China (Phnom Penh Post Newspaper, 2011). As a result, cassava growing areas have risen remarkably. In 2008, the cassava growing area was only 108,122 hectares and, in 2010, it was increased to 200,821 hectares (MAFF, 2010).

Cassava is a kind of root crop that is convenient to grow, drought tolerant, insect and illness resistance, and has a high yield (FAO, 2007). In Cambodia, there are two main types of cassava: sweet cassava and bitter cassava. Sweet cassava is commonly grown for family consumption and bitter cassava is generally grown for animal feed or as a raw material for processing industries (Hung, J. et al., 2009). According to the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the utilization of cassava will continue to increase in food processing and animal feed both locally and for export abroad.

Nowadays, the government of Cambodia has tried to attract local and international businessmen to invest in the cassava market, especially, the Chinese. This is because cassava will become the root crop of the future (Cambodia Daily Newspaper, 2011).

In conclusion, cassava production will continue to be developed, especially its technical production and marketing. As technical production improves, it will extend to all farming areas. As for marketing will be promote both in local and international. As a result, farmer living standard will be better and prosperity from cassava production.

METHODOLOGY

Study site: The study was conducted in 3 villages (Chang Krang, Or Chhor, and ToulTrang village), Chang Krang commune, Chhet Borei district, Kratie province. In these areas, most people grow cassava and depend on it.

Sampling size and method: The study included 81 farmer households, 5 traders, and 4 key informants in this commune. The samplings of 81 farmer households were chosen in 3 villages; Chang Krang had 51 households, Or Chhor had 6 households, and Toul Trang had 24 households. Moreover, it was including 1 person from the Kratie Provincial Department of Agriculture, and 1 person from the Provincial Department of Commercial.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

History of Cassava in Kratie Province

Cassava was brought to grow in Kratie Province in 2004 by Mr. Leang Seng, Deputy Director of Provincial Department of Agriculture. He cooperated with Ben Perk Province, Vietnam. Vietnam has provided the KM-94 variety of cassava for Cambodia two times: 2004 and 2005. Cassava was initially grown in Pi Thnou and Sre Char communes, Kratie Province.

Table 1 Initiative of growing cassava in Kraties Province

Year	Amount of Cassava (trunk)	Grow Area size (ha)	Yield Harvested of fresh root (t)
2004	400,000	300	-
2005	650,000	500	9.000

Cassava Household Production

Capital: Cassava production capital was from loan provider and farmers' own capital. Typically, farmer used their own capital for production account to 60.49% and borrowed from loan provider about 39.51%. The reason that farmers didn't prefer to use outside capital because the interest rate was high and farmers could not afford it. For farmer that accept loan, they commonly paid back in dry chip cassava. They were unable to pay back in interest rate. Farmer in study area could not use

credit from Rural Micro-Finance for the reason that they have no property or land title to pawn for the Micro-Finance.

Machinery for land preparation: For land preparation, farmers mostly use their own machinery (tractors) because their land could not be prepared by animal power. Farmer who does not own the machinery hired it from others. Farmer use tractor for land preparation around 80% of the time and prepared the land with animals, which accounted for 20%.

Size area: According to the results, Cassava area was larger than other kind of crops' area. In all three villages of Chang Krang Commune, the cassava area was larger than 50%. The cassava area in Chang Krang was 58.05%, Toul Trang was 53.76%, and Orchor was 65.86%. So, we can conclude that farmers paid more attention to cassava than other crops like corn, soy bean, sesame, and bean.

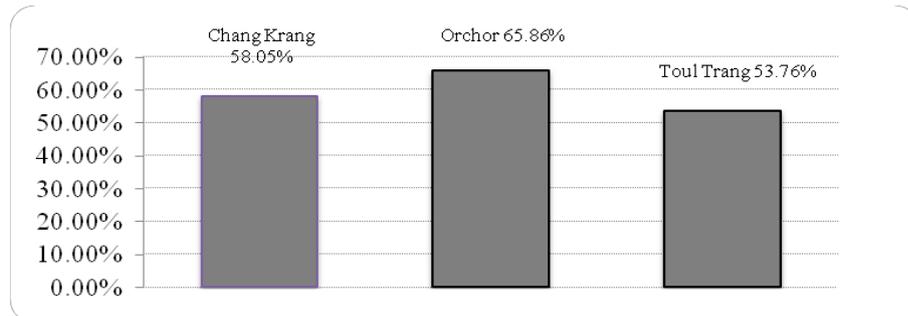


Fig. 1 Cassava area of each village

Growing Technique: Farmers in the study location had poor knowledge of growing technique. They applied traditional techniques, cultural way, and rain water. For maintaining the growing area, farmers did not use chemicals or fertilizer. They just cleared small forests or grasses several times.

With respect to cassava variety, farmers grow only KM-94 that has been imported from Vietnam. This variety provides high yield and is tolerant to drought and pests. This variety is suitable for processing in dry chip form. KM-94 is commonly called Migort or Mimaly by farmers, which in Thai is called KU-50.

Generally, the cassava season lasts for 8 months. Farmers start to grow cassava at any time between February and May. It depends on rain: if there was enough rain in February, farmer will start to grow in February. But, if there was less rain, farmer will wait until to April or May. The harvest time is from October to February. Farmer harvests the product by relying on the market. Frequently, if farmer grow in February or March, farmer will harvest in October or December. However, if they grow in May, they will harvest in January or February.

Cassava marketing

Cassava in the market: The majority (95%) of cassava production was exported to Vietnam through the Kratie and Kompong Cham Provincial Border. These two borders were extremely economically for exporting agricultural products to Vietnam. Local consumption of cassava production was around 5%. Vietnam is the most important market for traders.

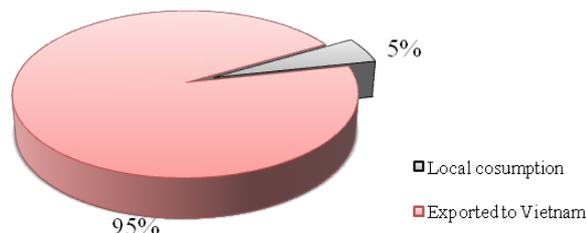


Fig. 2 The percentage of cassava exported to Vietnam

Traders export yield to Vietnam because the local demand is low and limited. The processing industries are only located in Phnom Penh capital city and Kompong Cham Province. On the other hand, exporting products to Vietnam is easier because it is convenient to transport and high demand. Moreover, farmers around industrial areas could afford the industry’s raw materials. So, when it was surplus in the local market, the traders need to export to another area, especially, to Vietnam.

The main factors in the market: The main factors that play an important role in the cassava market are: the farmer, the collector, the small trader, the trader that transports cassava to Vietnam, the loan provider, and the Vietnamese trader that stands at the Vietnam border.

- Farmer: the producer
- Collector: someone who collects products from the farmer for the trader that transport to Vietnam and get the commission
- Small trader: someone who buys the products from the farmer in small amounts and sells it to traders that transport to Vietnam or the loan provider to get some profit. A small trader is the one who lives permanently in Chang Krang commune
- Trader that transports to Vietnam: the one who transports all cassava products to Vietnam and cooperates closely with Vietnamese traders
- Loan provider: the one who provides loan to farmers and allows farmers pay back in dry chip cassava. The loan provider also exports cassava to Vietnam directly
- Vietnamese traders: They are all Vietnamese, who stay at Vietnamese borders to get the products from Khmer traders

Marketing structure: The marketing structure starts from the farmer, who is the producer. The product flows from farmers to Vietnam border through collectors and small traders. Collectors transfer products to the trader that transported to Vietnam and small trader exchange products to trader that transported to Vietnam and also to loan provider. Traders and loan providers bring the products directly to the Vietnam border. Moreover, farmers sell their consignment directly to the trader and loan provider as well. After collecting enough cassava, traders and loan providers deliver the products to the Vietnamese traders via two different borders, Kratie and Kompong Cham provinces.

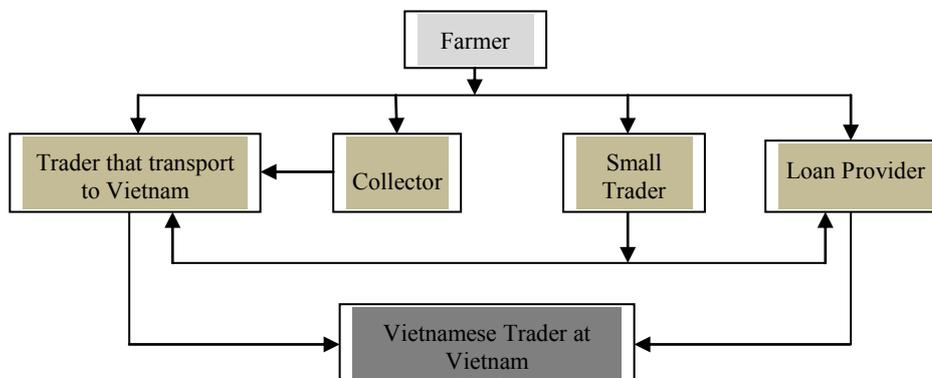


Fig. 3 Marketing structure

Marketing constraint: The biggest marketing constraint is price fluctuation. The price of cassava is seemingly unpredictable. Both traders and farmers were not satisfied with the price situation. In fact, this year the price was high and farmer enjoyed with it, but they were really not happy with the price instability. Farmer was unable to predict for the price next year and later on because they have experienced extremely low prices in the past.

The importance of cassava in farmers’ households

Cassava is very important for family households in rural regions. Households mainly rely on cassava production. In families, both fresh leaves and fresh root cassava are commonly consumed for food. As for fresh root, farmers boil it for a snack. Cassava is not only for household

consumption, but also for gross income. Cassava provided farmer income that can support the family living situation. The benefit of cassava product is extremely important for all households in the surveyed region. Farmers can support child education, material and equipment, household repairs, food and other nutrients, and other expenditure for daily living.

Furthermore, cassava production offers employment to all members of the family. It reduces migrant labour and members of household can earn more profit from hiring labor in cassava production.

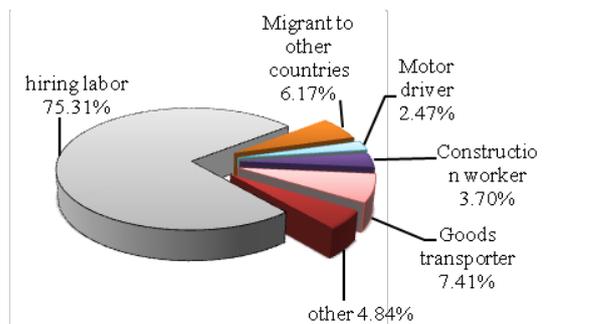


Fig. 4 The percentage of hiring labor and other activities

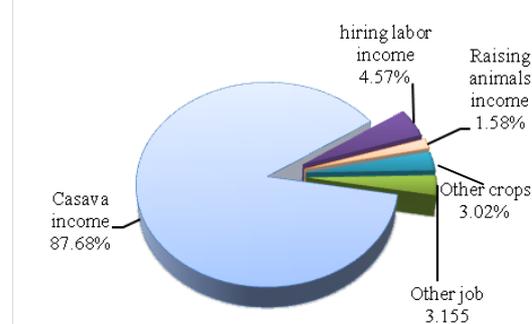


Fig. 5 The income source in the household

CONCLUSION

Cassava production is the main root crop for farmers in the surveyed region. People rely on it more than other kinds of crops. However, the growing techniques were still inefficient, simply using traditional methods and rain water. Most cassava produced is exported to the neighboring country of Vietnam and a small amount is left that is need in local industrials. Kratie and Kompong Cham were the most important borders for transport to Vietnam. The significant factors that play important roles in marketing were: the farmer, the collector, the small trader, the trader that transports to Vietnam, the loan provider, and the Vietnamese trader that stands at the Vietnam border. In addition, the core income in farming households was from cassava. Farmers can support their living standard by depending on this crop. Finally, farmers' income was maily from cassava production. So, in conclusion, growing technique and market were the main point that could improve farmers' living situation.

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