

Production and marketing of gums in Andhra Pradesh

Govind Pal and A. Bhattacharya

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ABSTRACT : Millions of forest and sub-forest dwellers in the central and western India states depend on gums as a viable income source. Gums tapping also generate employment opportunities, particularly in the off-agricultural season. Andhra Pradesh is major gums producing state of the country. The gums produced in the state are Gum Karaya, Kondagogu, Olibanum, Dikamali and Thiruman. The present paper is based on the secondary data collected for the period of 10 years ranging from 1997-98 to 2006-07. The analysis of data showed that last 10 years average annual production of all gums in the state was 780.40 tons. Gum Karaya contributes around 76 per cent of the total gum production of the state and Khammam district contribute maximum (48.86 per cent). Gum Karaya and Kondagogu produced throughout the year, while Gum Thiruman, Olibanum and Dikamali produced specially in summer seasons from February to May. GCCL, Visakhapatnam has monopoly rights for marketing of gums in Andhra Pradesh, hence only one gum marketing channel exist in the state. The producer's share in consumer's price was around 65, 56 and 59 per cent for Grade I, II and III, respectively in Gum Karaya marketing. There are some constraints associated with the production and marketing of gums *i.e.* decline in the gum trees population due to unscientific tapping, control of end markets by few traders and foreign buyers, weak linkages between gum pickers and end users, which needs proper attention to overcome the same. Being a natural product and various uses of gums in industrial and domestic applications, it has a continuous and stable demand.

Key Words: Production, marketing, gums, non-timber forest products.