CHAPTER-FOUR

A PROFILE OF BELGAUM DISTRICT - THE STUDY AREA
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As mentioned earlier, this study pertains to horticultural marketing in Belgaum district. It is therefore, imperative to know the profile of the district. A detailed analysis of the background of the district and the infrastructural facilities available for the successful cultivation and marketing of the horticultural crops is made in this chapter.

4.1 Introduction:

Among the twenty-seven districts of Karnataka, the district of Belgaum district is situated in the north-western part of the state. The district headquarters, Belgaum, is a charming blend of the old and the new. Belgaum, an ancient 'Venugramma' (Bamboo Village), is the district and divisional headquarters. It was the capital of the 'Rattas' who shifted to this place from Saundatti during the close of 12th century. This city lies on the border of the states of Maharashtra and Karnataka and as such, a unique amalgam of the cultures of the two states is reflected in the lifestyles of the people living here. The city is famous for its sweets and milk products.

In the heart of Belgaum, is the Fort. At the entrance are two shrines, one devoted to Lord Ganesha and another to Goddess Durga. Co-existing harmoniously are two ancient mosques, the Safa Masjid and The Jamia Masjid. There is a Dargah of Khanjar Wali in the vicinity of this 16th century Jamia Masjid. The Kapileswara temple considered to be the oldest temple in Belgaum is worth a visit. Other temples worth visiting are the Anathashayana Temple, the Maruti Temple, Military Mahadeva and the world famous Shriharimandir of Parampoojya
Kalavatideviji. The imposing gothic stone structure of St Mary's Church was built in 1868 A. D. Here light filters through the gorgeous stained glass windows and doors to enhance the fine biblical drawings on the wall. Another historical site is the Pampa Sarovara. This was built specially for the 1924. All India Congress Session which was presided by Mahatma Gandhi.

4.2 Geographical Setting:

Belgaum district is situated in the north-western corner of Karnataka state, between 15° 23' and 16° 58' North latitude and 74° 5' and 75° 23' East longitude and sprawls across the Deccan plateau in the rain shadow region of the Sahyadrian mountain ranges on the northern-most tip of the state. It is surrounded by on the South West by Goa state, on the west, northwest and north by the districts of Ratnagiri, Kolhapur and Sangli of Maharashtra state. On the east of Belgaum lie Bijapur district, and on the south the districts of Dharwad and Uttar Kannada. The district covers an area of 13,415 Sq. Kms.

4.3 Topography:

The district is divided into four tracts of the rugged western fringes covered with forests and bush covered hills and the three belts of the eastern plains running east west drained by three rivers, the Krishna in the north the Ghataprabha in the centre and the Malaprabha in the south.

1. Western Fringes: To the west and south along the line of Sahyadri hills lies the . The extreme west is a succession of valleys running between spurs that stretch east at right angles to the main Sahyadrain ranges. The hill tops and the upper slopes here are
almost bare, the lower slopes and valleys are fairly wooded. The valleys towards east are flatter, broader and more suited for tillage.

2. **Northern Belt:** The northern belt formed between the Ghataprabha and the Krishna is marked in the west by some plateaus of poor soil 90-120 meters higher than the plain. Further east, it is marked by low rolling bare hills and on either sides of Krishna are open, well tilled, black soil plains which stretch eastwards, gradually broadening as the western ranges break in to single peaks. On the north of the Krishna is a belt of deep rich soil, beyond which the area gradually rises in waving downs. Further east, a range of low flat topped hills coming from northwest disappear near the Krishna river. East of these hills, the area becomes flatter and contains treeless flats with long stretches of sheet rock.

3. **Central Belt:** To the north, the drainage of the Malaprabha is separated by the Ghataprabha valley of the west and further east by a succession of low rather bare sandstone ranges. The Ghataprabha valley originates from the west among the rugged forest clad hills, changes eastwards into a waving plain broken by lines and low hills. It passes through a black soil plain, which towards the north is suddenly broken by a table land 90-120 meters above the neighboring valley.

4. **Southern Belt:** The west of Malaprabha Valley is covered with high rugged hills and forests. The lands are more open, leveled and arable, broken by gentle downs and sometimes by sudden masses of granite. The area close to the banks of Malaprabha river merges into black cotton soil plain. Northeast and Southwest, especially on the left bank of the Malaprabha is low rolling plateau of sandstone hills very strong
and barren. North of this, there is a rocky wilderness of poor sandy soil, deep cut by streams and covered with scrubby brush wood.

4.4 Rivers:

The district drains eastwards. The principal rivers in the district are Krishna in the north, Ghataprabha in the centre and the Malaprabha in the south. The district lies in river Krishna basin. The volume of flow in the river is much reduced and the other two rivers shrink into small streams during summer. The river Krishna, originating in the western Ghats near Mahabaleshwar in Maharashtra flows for a distance of about 70 km within Belgaum district. The Ghataprabha originates in Western Ghats at Sundargad in Maharashtra, feeds on the waters of Tamrapani, Markandeya and Hiranyakeshi rivers and also flows for a distance of about 70 km within Belgaum district. The Malaprabha originates in Chorla Ghats in Belgaum district and traverses a distance of about 50 km in the district. All these rivers have warn deep courses in the surface of black soil and laterite. None of these rivers, however, are navigable. The minor rivers in the district are Markandeya, Dudhaganga, Mahadayi, Hiranyakeshi, Vedganga and the Agrani. Out of these only Mahadayi is the west following river and joins the Arabian Sea near Panjim in Goa, where it is called Mandovi. The district is thus gifted with nine rivers and several major streams. The flood terrains and flood plains of all these have endowed the district with substantial soil fertility.

4.5 Climate:

The climate in the district is healthy and characterized by a general dryness. The most pleasant climate is noticed between the western forest and the eastern treeless track. In summer, excepting in the Far Eastern
tracts, the climate is not very hot even in May, the nights being cool and sometimes chilly. The year may be divided into four seasons. (1) Summer Season from March to May. (2) South West monsoon season from June to September (3) Post monsoon season of October and November and (4) the cold season from December to February.

4.6 Rainfall:

The average rainfall in the district is 785 mm. The rainfall is high in the south-western part in the close proximity of the Western Ghats and decreases very rapidly from 1,685 mm in the west to 510 mm in the east. Hence three broad south-west monsoon rainfall divisions in the district may be defined as (1) The Western Zone receiving heavy and assured rainfall (2) The middle zone receiving moderate but fairly regular rainfall, and (3) the Eastern zone receiving low, irregular and uncertain rainfall. The north-east monsoon visits the entire district as a light drizzle after the south-west monsoon period.

4.7 Temperature:

The temperature rises steadily after February, April generally being the hottest month with the mean daily maximum temperature being 36° C and the mean daily minimum temperature being 20° C, accompanied by occasional afternoon thunder showers. With the onset of the southwest monsoon early in June, there is an appreciable drop in the day temperature but nights continue to be warm. From September onwards, the day temperature rises slightly but the nights become progressively cooler. December is generally the coldest month with temperature range being 29° C maximum and 14° C minimum. On individual days, night minimum temperatures may fall as low as 7° C.
4.8 Humidity:

The relative humidity depends not only on the amount of water vapor in the atmosphere but also on temperature. The humidity is generally high being 85 percent in the monsoon season and decreases in the post-monsoon season. The driest part of the year is the period from January to March, when the relative humidity in the afternoons is about 30 percent.

4.9 Soils and Cropping Pattern:

According to the agro climatic conditions, the district is classified into three regions, namely north dry zone, northern transitional zone and the hilly zone.

The north dry zone consists of five talukas viz., Athani, Raybag, Ramdurga, Gokak and Soudatti occupying about 55 percent of the total area of the district. The annual average rainfall in this zone is 500 to 620 mm. Shallow to medium black soils and deep to very deep black soils are found in Athani, Raybag, Gokak and Ramdurga talukas, while deep to very deep black soils are found mainly in Ramdurg, Soudatti and parts of Gokak talukas. The region is predominantly a rabbi area in which the major crops grown are Jowar, bajra, wheat, Cotton, Sugarcane and vegetables.

The northern transitional zone consists of four talukas, viz. Chikodi, Hukeri, Bailhongal and Belgaum forming 33 percent of the total areas of the district. The annual average rainfall in this zone is 630 to 1300 mm. Shallow to medium black soils are found in chikkodi, Hukeri, Bailhongal and Belgaum, deep to very deep black soils in Bailhongal, red sandy loams in Hukkeri, Bailhongal and Belgaum and red laterites in Chikkodi and Belgaum. The zone is mainly a Kharif area and the main
crops grown are paddy, Jowar, groundnut, sugarcane, tobacco, Chillies and Vegetables.

The hilly zone comprises of Khanapur taluka covering 12 percent of the total area of the district. The annual average rainfall in this zone is 1700 mm. Lateritic soils appearing in this zone are of poor quality. The zone is mainly a Kharif Zone area and major crops grown are paddy, sugarcane and vegetables.

4.10 Minerals:

Belgaum district has rich mineral resources. Major minerals, in the order of their economic importance, in the district are Manganese, Bauxite, Moulding Sand, Limestone and Dolomite, Feldspar, Fire clay and Yellow clay, for which there are sizeable mining operations in the district. Minor minerals in the district are building stones, ordinary sand and clay and boulders. Above all, gold is noticed in much of the coarse grained gravel in many parts of the district. Particularly the Malaprabha valley contains two established gold deposits. One about 40 kms east of Belgaum and another at Belawadi on the South side. These deposits are very much investigated further.

4.11 Fisheries:

Being an inland area, the development of fisheries in the district is mostly confined to the major reservoirs, namely, the Ghataprabha, Malaprabha and Rakaskop besides a number of tanks. The district also has eight river stretches totaling a length of about 500 kms that provides a suitable habitat for a large number of fish. Kolara, Kanaga, Tambri Kemma, Parakemeenu and Balemeenu are the important fish varieties. Fishery as a part time or whole time occupation is scattered in all the talukas of the district. Recently fish farms have also come up in several
hamlets to cater to the local markets. In many places, fishermen have joined together in fishery co-operatives.

4.12 Forest:

Belgaum has the fifth largest forest area in Karnataka State. Forests are mainly on the spurs of the Western Ghat with a total of 1,89,741 ha (about 14 percent of the total district area). The distribution of forests in the district is uneven and these may be classified as semi-evergreen, moist-deciduous, scrub and thorny brush. Semi-evergreen forests are situated in places where the rainfall is above 1500 mm. Softwood trees in these forests are used for plywood, match wood, packing timber etc. Moist deciduous forests are noticed in the rainfall area of 1000 mm and more. These forests yield substantial quantities of firewood, small timber and logs and hence, are very important from the economy viewpoint. Scrub and thorny brush are found in places where the rainfall is below 600 mm. which are mostly put to use as firewood.

Forestry in the district has long been a substantial revenue for the government. But the forests are disappearing rapidly under population pressure, increased demand for agricultural land, firewood etc. Since 1980s the Government has undertaken large scale of forestation programmes like Forest Development Fund, Drought prone Area Programme, Integrated Western Ghat Development Programme and Social Forestry.

4.13 District Administration:

For administrative convenience, the district is divided into three subdivisions namely Belgaum, Chikodi and Bailhongal. The District Collector along with the District Judge, Superintendent of Police, Chief Executive Officer of Zilla Parishad and other senior officers of the state
Government, look after the development and regulatory functions in the
district. At the Taluka level, the Tahsildar, Block Development officer,
Judicial Magistrate, Deputy Engineers and other officers look after their
respective departments for development and regulatory functions.

4.14 Population:

According to 2001 census, the total population of Belgaum District is
42,07,264 comprising 21,47,746 males and 20,59,518 females. The
urban rural ratio of the population is 24.06%, 75.94 %.

The urban population is distributed among 22 towns. Among them
one (Belgaum city) has a municipal Corporation, 16 (Athani, Gokak,
Nippani, Saundatti-Yellamma, Ramdurg, Bailhongal, Gokak-Falls,
Chikkodi, Sadalga and Sankeshwar) have municipal councils and five
are census towns. Belgaum is the most populous town as more than half
the urban population of the district is concentrated in it.

4.15 Population Growth:

Compared to 1991 census, the population of the district has
registered a growth rate of 17.40%. The decidable growth rate of the
state at 17.25%.

4.16 Population Density:

The overall population density in Belgaum district is 314 persons per
Sq. km. Which is slightly above the state average of 275. The district
holds the 2nd place with regard to its population density in the state.

4.17 Sex Ratio:

According to 2001 census, in Belgaum district there are 959 females
for every thousand males. This is identical to the state average of 964.
The sex ratio in the urban area is 942:1000 (compared to states ratio of
While the sex ratio in the rural areas is 967:1000 (states ratio being 976:1000) indirectly indicating the absence of large scale inter and intra district migration of male population to urban areas in search of employment opportunities.

4.18 Education:

Education in Belgaum district had its beginning in the 11th century institution of Agraharas, the centres of learning and scholarly pursuits founded with donations from royalty and philanthropic individuals. Agrahars were usually attached to the local temple. As late as 18th century Maratha Peshwas established a few Agraharas in the area. Agraharas catered exclusively to Brahmin Children aspiring to become proficient in shatkarmas of Brahminical duties. Kalamukha shaivas, with a significant population in Karnataka, also owned and managed several temples together with Mathas (an attached hostel for the students) Kalamukha teachers were renowned for their scholarship and piety and they conducted religious education activities. Jain saints in their 'Bastis' were known for their scholarship and helped the cause of education in their own way. Veerashaiva Mathas that come into existence after the 12th century took over many Kalamukha temples and continued the tradition of educational activities. After the ascent of muslims, every mosque had a 'Maktaba' where reading, writing, elementary arithmetic and fundamentals of Islamic religion were taught. Muslim "Madrasas' were centres of higher learning and there were quite a few of them in the area of Belgaum district. The rich and the upper castes engaged private tutors to educate their children in the home.

Facilities for general education on a wider scale, however, came into existence only after the advent of the English. The first government Marathi primary school was opened at Belgaum in 1830. In 1832, Rev
Taylor of the Methodist London Mission opened the first Anglo Vernacular School imparting English education. A Kannada school was opened in 1838. In 1840 a Board of Education was founded in Bombay to supervise the educational activities in the presidency which gave further boost to the spread of general education. In 1856, a European lady opened the first Marathi Medium school exclusively for girls and in 1882, a Roman Catholic priest opened an English medium school for girls. By 1900, the number of primary and high schools in the district has risen to 291 and these were located in 234 villages.

As per the census of 2001 primary education and secondary education facilities are available in all the towns and in a large number of villages. In Belgaum district there are 3413 primary schools, 579 secondary schools, 87 pre university colleges, 65 Degree colleges, 11 polytechnics, 4 engineering colleges, 5 law colleges, 11 medical colleges 46 professional institutions and 150 adult education centres.

4.19 Literacy:

The literacy rate in Belgaum district has risen from 53.00% in 1991 to 64.42% in 2001 (75.89% males and 52.53% females)

4.20 Agriculture:

Belgaum is an agriculturally advanced district in Karnataka State. Served with moderate rainfall, one third of its cultivable land is provided with irrigational facilities. Its soil is also rich.

The total geographical area of the Belgaum district is 1344382 hectares as computed by the survey of India.

The cultivated area in 2002-03 was 87,38,29 hectares, which formed about 64.9 per cent of the total geographical area. The percentage of the
net area sown, to total geographical area was 67.3 in 1979-80, 67 in 1983-84, 77.4 in 1997-98 and 64.9 in 2002-03.

4.21 Irrigation:

Under the auspices of five-year plan from 1951, the Ghataprabha stage I and II, and Malaprabha project were taken up and completed. A number of minor irrigation projects were also taken up and completed. The percentage of net area irrigated to the net area shown in the district during 1991-92 was 30.4 percent, whereas during 1997-98 it increased to 38 percent. The hectares of net area irrigated by different sources of irrigation for the year 1997-98 was

- Canals: 65,982
- Tanks: 7,380
- Wells: 89,142
- Bore well: 40,591
- Lift irrigation: 48,149
- Other source: 64,512

4.22 Transport:

Belgaum district is well connected with Road, Rail and Airways during 2001-02. The total length in this district was 8626 Kms. The roads under different categories are mentioned as follows:

- National High ways: 201 Kms
- State High ways: 732 Kms
- Major District Roads: 2331 Kms
- Other District Roads: 53 Kms
- Village Roads: 5309 Kms

Total: 8626 Kms
4.23 Railways:

The railway service was introduced in this district in 1887. At the end of 2001, the district has a railways track of 220 Kms.

4.24 Airway:

Belgaum was placed on the air map around 1940 for military purpose. The airport is situated at Sambra, about 10 Kilometers from Belgaum. It occupies a land area of 480 acres and 1800 m runway has been provided. This airport is considered as a standby airport to Goa airport. The Indian Airlines was operating flights in the following sectors.

1. Bangalore – Goa – Belgaum

2. Belgaum – Mumbai.

As the traffic in Bagalore – Goa – Belgaum sectors dwindled, the flight to Bangalore was cancelled in 1984 and only one flight in the Belgaum – Mumbai sector is being operated by Vayudoot.

4.25 Communication:

Postal service are said to have been in existence in Belgaum district since 1787. At the end of 2001-02. There were 727 post officers 184 Telephone exchanges and 1,37,435 Telephones in the district.

4.26 Banking:

Belgaum district can boost of having good Banking network spread over the entire district. The Banks have reached remote possible villages. The district has 216 commercial Banks, 96 Grameena Banks, 121 Urban Co-operative Banks, 10 PLD Banks.
4.27 Trade and Commerce:

Trade and manufacturing related commerce are the activities of considerable importance in all the urban areas in the district. The items that are brought into the towns consists of food grains and provisions, cloth, fruits, vegetable etc. which are directly consumed while items like groundnut, sugarcane, tobacco etc are used as raw materials by the local manufactures. The items manufactured vary from town to town. When the first most important commodity reported for the towns is considered. Athani and Chikodi are noted for leather footwear while Belgaum city is known for aluminum ingots and engineering items. The other items reported are groundnut oil, sugar, cotton (lint) firebricks and ceramic products and handloom textiles by two towns each, tiles and bricks, beedi snuff, cut-sizes of timber and Agarbatthi by one town each. Generally, it is the goods produced in the town that are traded. The commodities trades cover such items as tanned leather, betel leaves, ground nut, rice, yarn, ground nut oil, sugar and jugglery, sarees, sand as also aluminum metal ingots and engineering items like casting and pumps.

4.28 Horticulture:

Horticulture considered as a part of agriculture in general began to receive separate and special attention in the sixties. The growing of fruits and vegetable was encouraged and efforts were made to drive home to the people the high significance of horticultural products. As a result, the Department of Horticulture came into existence in the state in 1963 and its district office was opened at Belgaum during the same year. And the most important horticultural crop of the district is fruits and vegetables, which has a prominent place in the markets of several trade centers of the district. Total fruit production is 1,62,688 tonnes in 9134
hectares. Vegetable production in the district covers about 35,434 hectares and it accounts for 5,94,132 tonnes. Commercial flowers are grown in 469 hectares and its production is 3988 tonnes. Spice production in the district is 21,890 tonnes in 6929 hectares. Total garden and plantations crops production is about 5176 tonnes and it covers about 7960 hectares. In the year 2002-2003 in the district, the total production is about 7,87,874 tonnes in 59926 hectares and the area covered has increased by 10.5 percent and production has increased by 25 percent over 1998-99.