



Yield and Economics of Kharif Onion (*Allium cepa* L.) under Front Line Demonstration in Eastern Plain Zone of Uttar Pradesh, India

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Authors' contributions

This work was carried out in collaboration among all authors. All authors read and approved the final manuscript.

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ABSTRACT

Aim: To disseminate the technology among the farmers through front line demonstration on Kharif onions for enhanced the production and fetching the more income.

Study Design: Not applicable.

Place and Duration of Study: ICAR-IIVR-Krishi Vigyan Kendra, Deoria, conducted front-line demonstrations on kharif onion at farmers' fields during the kharif season 2017, 2018, and 2019.

Methodology: Conducted 33 front-line demonstrations at farmers' fields during the study period. The yield data were recorded.

Results: To increase the output of onions through enhanced production technology, 33 front line demonstration on kharif onion were conducted. According to the demonstrations that were undertaken, the improved variety of kharif onions (NHRDF Agrifound dark Red) produced an average yield of 274.4 q/ha, which was greater than the average yield of check (N-53) i.e. 228.83 q/ha. The average yield improvement over farmer techniques was 19.91%. It was noted that the average extension gap was 45.57 q/ha. The economics of the data showed that, on average, in demonstrations, gross returns were (277453.3/ha), net returns were (191184/ha), and benefit cost ratio was (3.2) as opposed to check (Niphad-53), where gross returns were 204160/ha, net returns were 122423.3/ha and benefit cost ratio was (2.5).

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Conclusion: The average yield enhancement over farmer techniques was 19.91%. It was noted that the average extension gap was 45.57 q/ha. The economics of the data showed that, on average, in demonstrations, gross returns were (277453.3/ha), net returns were (191184/ha), and benefit cost ratio was (3.2). Front line demonstration is one of the most important tools for technology transfer to the farmers at the grassroots level that has a significant effect on the horizontal spread of technology as well as build up the strong interaction with the farmer communities.

Keywords: Yield; economics; onion; farmer; crops.

1. INTRODUCTION

One of the significant commercial vegetable crops grown in India for both local and export purposes is the onion (*Allium cepa* L.). It is a member of the family Aliaceae, which is prized for its aromatic, flavorful, and pungent bulbs. Onion green leaves and bulbs can be eaten raw in salads or prepared in a variety of ways as a raw ingredient for soups, pickles, baked goods, curries, and other dishes [1]. Recently onion is being employed by processing industry to a greater extent for preparing dehydrated onion forms like powder and flakes. Minerals like calcium (180 mg/100 g) and phosphorus (50 mg/100 g) are abundant in onion bulbs. Quercetin a phytochemical is prevalent in onion bulbs, and it has therapeutic benefits as an anti-inflammatory, anti-cholesterol, anti-cancer, and anti-oxidant and has promise to be an antioxidant [2]. The cultivation area under this crop in India is relatively huge during the Rabi season, however onion productivity is very low when compared to other countries. As a result, there is a need to optimise onion output through the introduction of high yielding varieties and improved onion crop cultivation technology. India produced 26.64 million tons in 2021 (Fig. 1) whereas, the average Onion production for last five years from 2017-21 of 24.25 million tons in India [3]. It accounts for 16% of the world's area and occupies the second position after China in production with a share of around 14 percent. In North India, onions are typically planted as a rabi crop. The bulk (60%) of onions is produced during the rabi season, with kharif and late kharif crops producing a lesser amount (40%) of onions in different parts of the nation. Onion production and imports into India cause a recurring pattern where prices tend to peak in September to November and decline from January to March to April. Onions are very scarce from October to December [4]. While both early and late kharif onions are frequently harvested in the months of October through November and January through February, respectively, Kharif onions are

essential for satisfying consumer demand and controlling onion market prices. Production of onion in Kharif and Late Kharif season is a new strategy to have continuous supply of onion round the year [5]. The problem of foliar as well as soil-borne diseases makes onion production in the kharif season extremely vulnerable to unpredictable monsoon, cloudy weather, and constant drizzle [6].

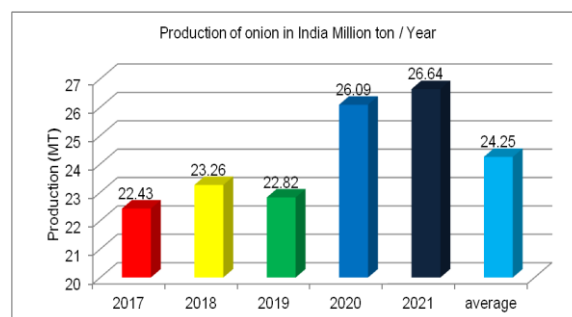


Fig. 1. Onion production (mt) in India by year over the last five years

Source: Agriculture Statistics (2022)

The two key limitations on onion growing are the replacement rate of conventional varieties with better varieties and the lack of timely access to an adequate supply of high-quality seeds of improved varieties. Therefore, in the Kharif seasons of 2017, 2018, and 2019, frontline demonstrations of integrated crop management in onions utilizing the variety NHRDF Agrifound dark red were conducted. The major objective of this FLD is to disseminate the recently introduced high yielding onion variety along with better production technologies at the farmer level, leading to widespread acceptance and technology dissemination.

2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

Front Line Demonstrations on High Yielding Variety and improved production practices of kharif onion crop was conducted by the ICAR-IIVR- Krishi Vigyan Kendra, Deoria U.P., India

during kharifi seasons of 2016-2018. In total 33 Front line demonstration, conducted in area of 3.0 ha at farmer’s field in the district.. The certified seeds of onion var. NHRDF Agrifound Dark Red was procured from NHRDF centre Deoria and distributed to farmers for conduction of demonstrations. Each year prior to the implementation of programme, all selected farmers were trained on the aspects of land preparation, preparation of nursery beds, seed treatment, seed sowing and transplanting, nutrient management and weed management practices, plant protection, harvesting, curing of bulbs and integrated crop management in onion at farmers field. The soil of farmer’s field was sandy loam with pH ranging from 7.8 to 8.5. These soils were low in organic matter, medium in available nitrogen and phosphorous while high in available potassium. Onion seedlings were grown on raised seedbeds and transplanted into plots measuring 2.5 m by 1.2 m at a distance of 15 cm by 10 cm when they were 50–60 days old. To successfully raise the crop, standard agronomic procedures were used. The yield data in both the cases demonstrated and farmer’s practices were recorded and a comparison was made with respect to some related parameters. The data on cost of production, gross and net returns, and the Benefit: Cost ratio from both the demonstration and check plots were collated and can be analysed to determine the economic feasibility of the demonstrated technology in comparison to the framer’s practise. The extension yield gap was determined using the formulas provided by Samui et al. [7].

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Yield of the front line demonstration trails were recorded which were further

categorized into extension gaps and economic analysis.

Table 1 shows improved production technologies in demonstration trials and farmer practises. During the study period, it was discovered that using improved production technology in demonstration trials increased yield compared to farmers' practises.

3.1 Crop Yield

The data regarding bulb yield of onion crop presented in Table 2 and Fig. 2. The increased onion bulb yield over the check was recorded during the three year of study period. The improved variety for Kharif season (Agrifound dark red) of onion recorded higher yield of 280.60, 275.80 and 266.80 q/ha as compared to check (244.30, 232.60 and 209.60 q/ha) in the year 2017-2019. The average per cent increase in yield over farmer practices was 27.29, 18.50 and 14.85% for demonstration. Thus, the average of the study period of three years showed that the yield of demonstrated plot (274.40 q/ha) which was 20.21 per cent (Fig. 3) more than check plot (228.83 /ha). An increased in yield may be due to high yielding demonstrated onion variety Agrifound dark red with integrated crop management contributed for increased bulb size as well as bulb weight over farmer practices. The findings indicate that enhanced technology has had a positive impact on the farming community, since they were inspired by the new agricultural technologies used in the demonstration field. Similar findings are reported by different researcher in onion and other crop Hiremath et al. [8], Hiremath and Hill [9], Kumar Udit [10], Karabhantanal et al. [11], Meena et al. [12] and Gaharwar and Jayashri [13].

Table 1. Agronomical practices used for Kharif onion growing under FLDs and farmer practice

Practice	Demonstrated Technology	Farmers Practices
Farming situation	Irrigated and sandy loam	Irrigated and Sandy loam
Varieties	Agrifound Dark red	Niphad-53
Seed treatment	Carbendazim 2.5 g/kg seed	No seed treatment
Date of seed sowing in nursery	25 June to 10 July	15 July to 15 August.
Seed Rate (kg/ha)	10 kg/ha	12-15 kg/ha
Date of transplanting	Line sowing 22.5 X 10 Cm	Broadcasting
Fertilizers (kg/ha)	100:50:50 kg NPK/ha.	80 N, 60 P and 00 K
Wedicide	Spraying of pendimethalin@1.0kg/ha with one hand weeding at 45DAT	Three hand weeding at 20, 40 and 60 DAT
Date of harvesting	Last December –Last January	Last December –Mid January

Table 2. Year wise yield of Khari Onion Variety NHRDF Agrifound dark red

Year	No of demonstration	Area (ha)	Demo Yield (q/ha)	Check Yield (q/ha)
2017	6	1.0	266.80	209.6
2018	18	1.3	275.80	232.60
2019	9	0.7	280.60	244.30
Total/Average	33	3.0	274.40	228.83

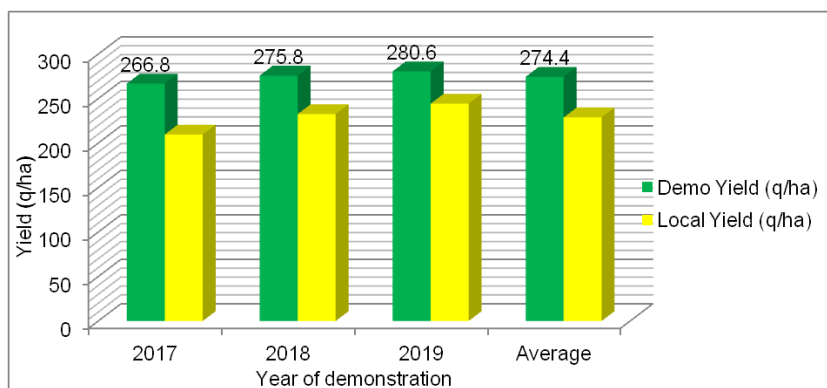


Fig. 2. Year-wise yield of demonstrated and check (N-53) in q/ha

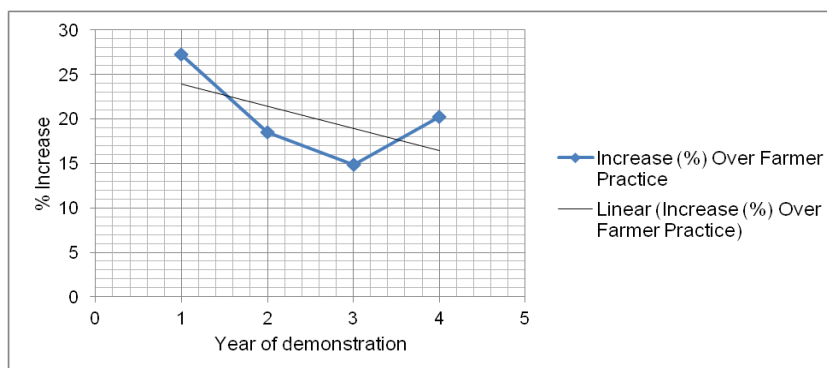


Fig. 3. Year-wise percent increase in bulb production over Check (N-53)

3.2 Extension Gap

The extension gap showed the gap in the demonstration yield over farmers yield and the average extension gap (45.57 q/ha) was noted for three years (Fig. 4). This might be due to lack in adoption of high yielding variety and improved production technology. The higher extension gap (57.20 q/ha) indicates that there is a strong need to motivate the farmers for adoption of improved technologies over their local practices. The findings are consistent with the findings of Mukharjee [14], who said that location-based problem identification and, as a result, specialised treatments may have significant implications for crop productivity enhancement. The findings of the present study are similar with the findings of Hiremath and Nagaraj [15], Hiremath and Hill [9], Meena et al. [12] and Gaharwar and Jayashri [13].

3.3 Economic Analysis

The economics of onion production were recorded year by year under frontline demonstrations and farmer practises, and the findings are shown in Table 3 and Fig. 5. According to the data, the cost of implementing enhanced technology in onions varied and was more profitable. The higher gross return of (₹316440 /ha), net returns (₹ 233090/ha) and benefit cost ratio (3.8:1) was recorded in year 2018 from demonstrated plot whereas, the maximum gross return (₹232600/ha), net returns (₹149620/ha) and benefit cost ratio (2.8:1) recorded from check in the year 2018. The average of the three years study period was calculated for gross return, net return and B:C ratio i.e. ₹ 277453.3, ₹ 191184 and 3.2:1 in the demonstration plot as compare to check i.e. ₹

204160, ₹ 122423.3 and 2.5:1 respectively. The higher returns were due to higher bubs yields obtained in the demonstrated technology over check plots. The results are in confirmation with the findings of Hiremath and Nagraju [15] and Hiremath, Hilli, [9] and Kishor et al. [16]. From the study, there exists a wide gap between demonstration yields and check (Farmer practice) in onion mainly due to extension gaps and also due to the lack of awareness about growing of onion.

Improved production technology has also showed potential in increasing onion yield. It is also recommended that sincere extension efforts are needed to educate farmers for the adoption of better production technology, in addition to strengthening improved technologies, so that resource poor farmers can improve their livelihood, provide employment to their local peoples, diversify their farming systems, and enhance soil fertility.

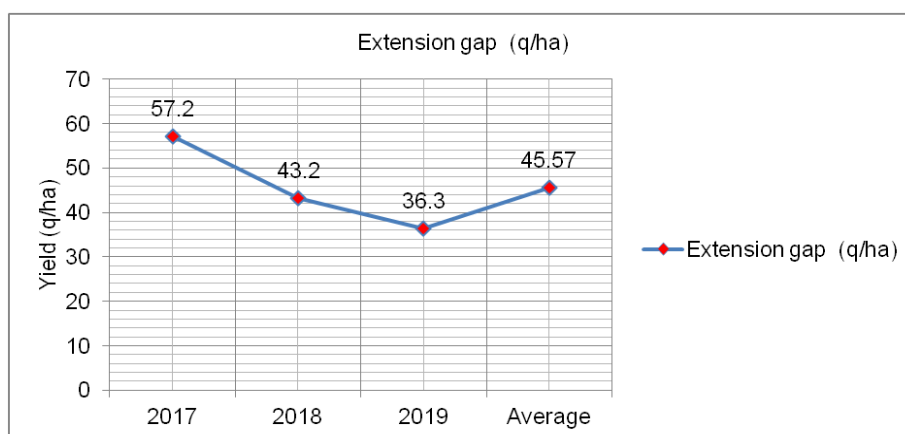


Fig. 4. Year-wise Extension gap (q/ha) during demonstrated period

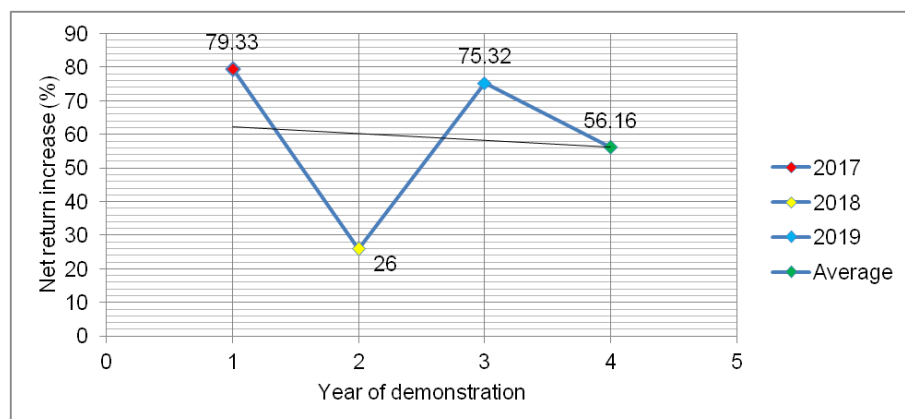


Fig. 5. Year-wise increase net return (%) over farmer's practices

Table 3. Year wise economics of demonstration and farmer practice for Kharif onion Var. Agrifound dark red

Year	Economics of Demonstration (Rs/ha)				Economics of Farmer Practice (Rs/ha)			
	Gross Cost	Gross Return	Net return	B:C	Gross Cost	Gross Return	Net return	B:C
2017	88225	240120	151893	2.7:1	82980	167680	84700	2.0:1
2018	87231	275800	188569	3.2:1	82980	232600	149620	2.8:1
2019	83350	316440	233090	3.8:1	79250	212200	132950	2.7:1
Average	86268.67	277453.3	191184	3.2:1	81736.67	204160	122423.3	2.5:1

4. CONCLUSION

According to the demonstrations that were undertaken, it is concluded that the improved variety of onions (NHRDF Agrifound dark Red) produced an average yield improvement over farmer techniques was 19.91%. It was noted that the average extension gap was 45.57 q/ha. The economics of the data showed that, on average, in demonstrations, gross returns were (277453.3/ha), net returns were (191184/ha), and benefit cost ratio was (3.2) as opposed to check (N-53), where gross returns were 204160/ha, net returns were 122423.3/ha and benefit cost ratio was (2.5). Front line demonstration is one of the most important tools for technology transfer to the farmers at the grassroots level that has a significant effect on the horizontal spread of technology as well as build up the strong interaction with the farmer communities.

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COMPETING INTERESTS

Authors have declared that no competing interests exist.

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