

STUDY TO DETERMINE POST-HARVEST LOSSES OF AGRI PRODUCES IN INDIA BY NABCONS

Assessment of post-harvest losses is essential as it adversely impacts food security, nutrition, and economic stability of several stakeholders. Assessment of 54 crops were carried out across all the 15 Agro Climatic Zones (ACZs) of India in order to monitor the quantum of post-harvest losses and re-orientation of policy. Our team interacted with more than 68,000 in 292 districts of India.

In comparison to post-harvest losses during 2014-15, losses during 2020-22 reduced significantly for 25 crops while non-significant reduction was observed in 17 crops. However, in 3 crops viz. black pepper, turmeric and tapioca, estimated losses were slightly higher than the previous assessment. It was identified that for better post-harvest management, development of infrastructure at both farm and market level is required. At farm level, support for mechanical harvesters, threshers and packaging materials needs to be available for the farmers. Creation of collection centres, pre-cooling units, storage structures and packing units near the production centres is essential. At the market level, forward and backward linkages, adequate storage structures along with modern retail infrastructure and effective transportation facilities (insulated/ refrigerated) are needed.

At both farm level and market level operations, a number of technologies and policy interventions could be deployed to potentially reduce the post-harvest losses. For instance, organised marketing through creation of FPOs/ FPCs, improvement in crop production & protection technologies and training and capacity building of farmers through extension activities to impart skills regarding better management of crops are required to be taken up. Our findings may help in identifying the areas of losses where policy, guidance and support from government is required in terms of setting up of post-harvest infrastructure for reducing post-harvest losses.