

F-30 An Investigation on the patterns of the persistent seasonal gluts and shortages of vegetables

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An investigation on the patterns of the seasonal gluts and shortages of vegetables is the main objective of this study.

Secondary data on prices was collected from Agrarian Research and Training Institute price bulletins. Data on vegetable prices for the period 1991-1995 were tabulated and presented in graphical form. Graphs were plotted using monthly average retail and wholesale prices. The curves drawn were wholesale average price curves of up and low country vegetables, wholesale and retail average price curves of up and low country vegetables, wholesale and retail average price curves of vegetables. Monthly average price of vegetables for years 1996 to 2000 were projected by the use of regression analysis. Regression results were also converted to graphical form.

The study concluded that vegetable production shows a clear and persistent seasonal glut and shortage periods. This pattern will continue to exist even in the future. Two clear persistent glut periods are the months of September, October and the period from February to April. The months of May, June and July represent the persistent shortage period. The study also shows that low country vegetables are not always cheaper than upcountry vegetables. During the months of September, October, November and December, an average low country vegetable fetches a higher price than an average up country vegetable. The study also concludes that the gross margin between the wholesale price and the retail price is almost consistent throughout the year, suggesting that wholesale trader or retail trader profits are not the reason for high price fluctuation.