

MARKETING

Existing Marketing System

Fruits and vegetables are highly perishable in nature, therefore these commodities should be marketed immediately after harvest and the utmost care should be taken in doing so. A price information system would help farmers to decide when to harvest and market. The present marketing system is conducted by farmers, retailers, middlemen, and businessmen. There is no permanent market in Rasuwa. Dhunche, the so-called big market, is not organised. Only a small portion of the produce is sold in the small bazaars like Bharkhu, Syaphrubesi, Kalikasthan, and Betrawati. The present market flow pattern is as follows.

The retailers or farmers bring produce directly to the consumers through small markets or through the Dhunche market. Most of the vegetables, apples, walnuts, peaches, plums, and potatoes are marketed in this manner. However, potatoes (including seeds) and apples are also purchased by middlemen, contractors, or businessmen. These commodities are then taken to Dhunche, Trishuli, and Kathmandu. The existing marketing system is shown in Figure 1.

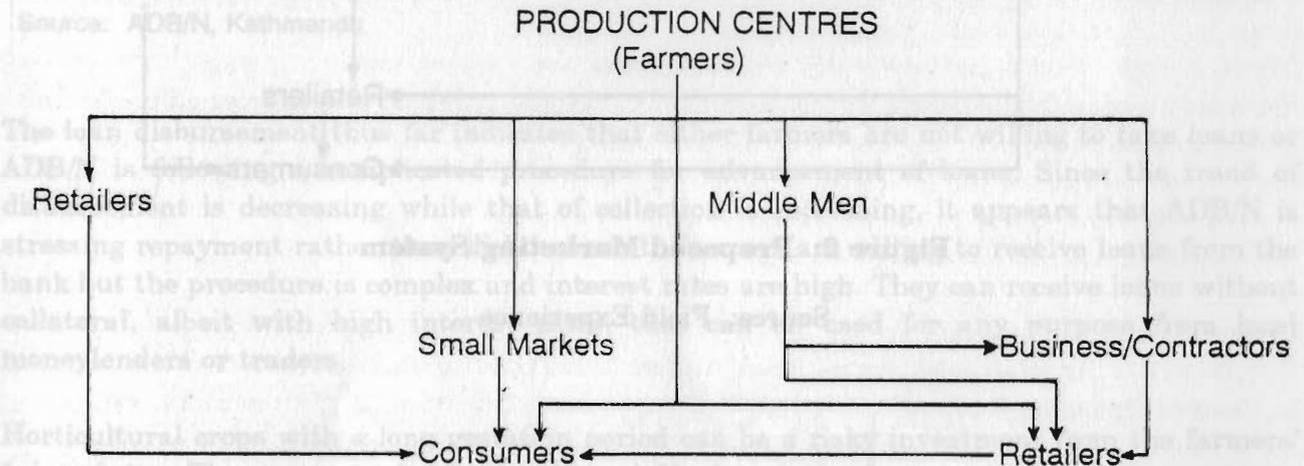


Figure 1: The Existing Marketing System

Source: Field Experience

Proposed Marketing System

The demand for fresh fruits and vegetables has increased in the district itself as a result of the influx of tourists, road development, urbanisation in Dhunche, the existence of a military base, and also the increasing population of Trishuli as well as Kathmandu. Rasuwa can play a

significant role in meeting this demand by increasing the area under crops, production, and productivity.

The present marketing system needs to be improved so that fresh, cheap produce is available for consumers, thereby yielding more benefits to producers. This system should target the Kathmandu wholesale market, reducing the role of middlemen or contractors as shown in Figure 2.

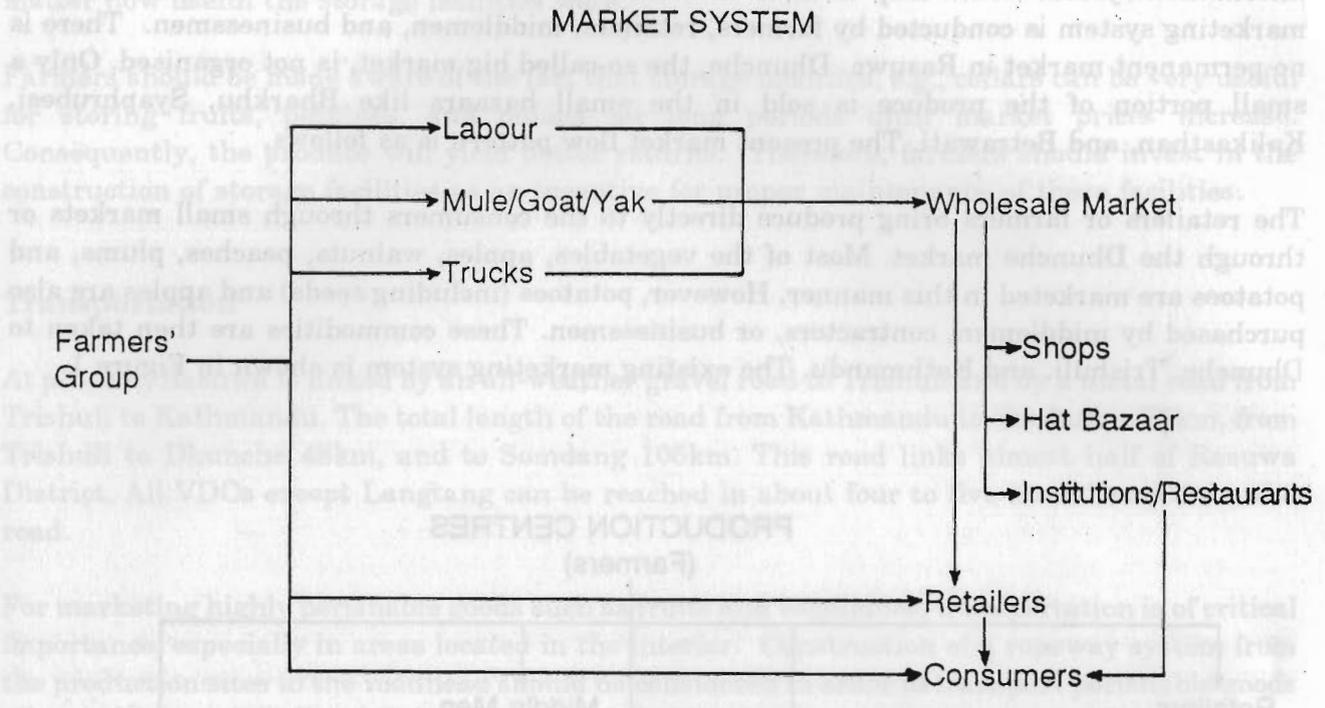


Figure 2: Proposed Marketing System

Source: Field Experience

All the farmers cannot sell their produce in the wholesale market. Therefore, the formation of Farmers' Groups should be encouraged in the form of associations or cooperatives to monitor the marketing system at all levels, i.e., from the production sites to the markets. This system will certainly increase efficiency and reduce post-harvest losses, including price fluctuation, since reliable price information will be received from all sectors. These groups can manage the storage facilities in the areas where they are needed. To support these groups, there should be (1) collection of information on the prices of all commodities, either periodically, or weekly, or daily; as well as on the supply and demand situation in concerned areas; (2) market research, promotion, and development at various stages; and (3) establishment of collection centres and *hat bazaar* in the production pockets of districts and markets.

In order to carry out these functions, the Department of Food and Agriculture must be active. DFAMS should also prepare legislation for the marketing of horticultural produce (perishable goods).