

# Chilli farmers stare at huge losses

*90 per cent of crop yet to be harvested, farmers cite lack of labourers as reason.*

Published: 29th March 2020

By Express News Service

ONGOLE: Chilli farmers in Prakasam district are staring at huge financial losses with the 21-day lockdown in force to stop the spread of COVID-19 as most of the crops await harvesting. Around 50,000 farmers had cultivated chilli in and around 1.25 lakh acres in the district and above 90 per cent of them are yet to harvest their crop. Across the district chilli farmers are facing labour, transport and market related problems as this is the peak season for harvesting their crop.



Except in a few mandals of the district, in majority of the mandals chilli crop has been cultivated. In Addanki, Parchur, Santhanuthalapadu, Yaddanapudi, Naguluppalapadu, Inkollu, Maddipadu, Jarugumilli, J Panguluru, Markapur, Giddaluru, Yerragondapalem, Kondepi, Valetivaripalem, Ponnaluru area farmers have cultivated chilli collectively in large extent of land and most of them individually belong to micro- small and tenant farmers category with an extent of a few yards to below 5 acres cultivation area.

Earlier this year, chilli had very good demand in the market and got high price with around Rs 24,000 per quintal. But, later in the January, sudden rains damaged the crop and quality of the yield dropped and so the price also decreased. Now, chilli merchants are offering around `8,000 to 10,000 per quintal to the farmers. To cultivate chilli, it may cost around `1.5 lakh for every farmer and if things go well throughout the season, they may get around `2 to 3 lakh as income.

But, with the sudden lockdown being implemented, majority of the Prakasam district chilli farmers are facing serious financial crisis as their yield has remained in their fields or at mirchi yards. And, for March and April, they were expecting good income, but now due to the lockdown, harvesting works are stalled.

“Chilli cultivation requires lot of labour work and labour on daily wages is engaged to harvest the crop and for other processing works.

**Source:** <https://www.newindianexpress.com/states/andhra-pradesh/2020/mar/29/chilli-farmers-stare-at-huge-losses-2122955.html>