From Competition at Home to Competing Abroad: A Case Study of India's Horticulture

By Aaditya Mattoo, Deepak Mishra, and Ashish Narain

Oxford University Press, New Delhi, India, 2007. Paperback. Book Condition: New. First Edition. India has a large agricultural base. Yet its share in global agriculture exports is insignificant and its domestic market is increasingly protected. In global trade negotiations, Indias efforts have been directed more towards retaining the right to protect than towards eliminating distortions at home and abroad. This report addresses the dilemma by studying the horticulture sector, one of the most dynamic segments of Indian agriculture and international trade. It undertakes an integrated analysis of the sectorfrom farm to retailbased on primary surveys of farmers, agents, and exporters across fifteen different Indian states. The study identifies three major impediments to exports: The logistical tax imposed by high farmer-to-consumer delivery costs, which erodes the production cost advantage enjoyed by Indian farmers; The standards gap between the stringent health, safety, and quality requirements of governments and buyers, especially in richer countries, and assessment mechanisms in India; and Trade policy barriers that Indian exporters face in foreign markets. Providing clear policy prescriptions the report recommends eliminating both the logistical tax and the standards gap. This will require the creation of an integrated and competitive domestic agricultural market, along with improved communication,...

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