

Factors influencing the intensity of market participation by smallholder farmers: A case study of rural and peri-urban areas of Kenya

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Abstract

Participation in commercial agriculture holds considerable potential for unlocking suitable opportunity sets necessary for providing better incomes and sustainable livelihoods for smallscale farmers. This study examined factors that influence the intensity of market participation among smallholder farmers in Kenya. Data was obtained through a rapid rural appraisal and a household survey. A truncated regression model was applied in the analysis. Results showed that farmers in peri-urban areas sold higher proportions of their output than those in rural areas. Distance from farm to point of sale is a major constraint to the intensity of market participation. Better output price and market information are key incentives for increased sales. These findings demonstrate the urgent need to strengthen market information delivery systems, upgrade roads in both rural and peri-urban areas, encourage market integration initiatives, and establish more retail outlets with improved market facilities in the remote rural villages in order to promote production and trade in high value commodities by rural farmers.