

# Policy implementation and impact in Kenya agricultural sector: a case of potato marketing regulations.

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## **Abstract:**

Potato (*Solanum tuberosum* L.) is the second most important food crop in Kenya after maize, both in terms of production and consumption. However, the crop value chain is known to be imperfect and complex, resulting to low income gained by farmers. To streamline the value chain for the benefit of farmers, the Government of Kenya established a legal notice no. 44 of 2005, which preceded legal notice no. 113 of 2008 (ware potato packaging size and weight regulations). This study was carried out to monitor the implementation, enforcement and economic impact of this 2008 legal notice using formal questionnaires administered to traders and farmers in selected seven markets and regions, use of focussed group discussion as well as stakeholder participation in a workshop. The study was conducted between December 2009 and February 2010. The findings show that both traders and farmers are aware of the regulations but none are implementing them except very few traders. Farmers had higher (97%) knowledge of regulations compared with traders (92%). Farmers were unable to implement the regulations due to cartels (broker/trader), lack of storage facilities as well as lack of information about the potato production costs and the prevailing market prices at any given time. The study shows that the contribution of potatoes to the Kenyan economy is 300% higher than what is recorded in government reports. Lack of transparency in the value chain has reduced the benefit of potato production to farmers. The amount lost to brokers is valued at USD 13.9 million while corruption on the way to the market is estimated at USD 6.5 million. This study outlines several policy recommendations to ensure enforcement of the regulations and streamline the potato value chain in Kenya.