FACTORS INFLUENCING THE ADOPTION OF MAIZE STORAGE TECHNOLOGIES IN MALAWI

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Abstract

The widespread post harvest maize losses experienced in Malawi have been mostly attributed to the Larger Grain Borer (LGB) (*Prostephanus truncates*). The government of Malawi introduced various maize storage technologies to minimize the post harvest maize losses. However, the adoption of the modern maize storage technologies remains low. The purpose of this study, therefore, was to analyze factors influencing the adoption of maize storage technologies in Malawi. Binary logit model was fitted to data obtained from household survey conducted in 2010 in Zomba District, Malawi. Regression results indicated that adoption of the modern gas hermetic bag (and related modifications) was significantly influenced by location of farmer, distance to the market, farmer field school training, off farm income, extension and perceptions about the efficacy of the storage technology regarding security against maize theft. The results also showed that when compared with farmers using traditional maize storage technologies, farmers using modern gas hermetic bag realized higher gross margins. The study recommended that, among other things, government should promote development of maize storage technologies taking into account location of farmers. Extension service delivery should be prioritized. Farmer perceptions on technology attributes should be given proper attention when designing maize storage technologies. Farmers should be encouraged to use modern technologies in view of their (modern technologies) economic superiority over traditional technologies.

Key Words: Maize storage technology, Post harvest maize losses, Larger Grain Borer, Adoption, Logit, Zomba, Malawi