FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE THE ADOPTION OF POST HARVEST MANGO PROCESSING TECHNOLOGY

BY FARMERS IN EMBU COUNTY

KENYA

By

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ABSTRACT

The study investigated the status of adoption of post-harvest mango processing among smallholder mango farmers in Embu County and also determined the factors affecting mango post harvest processing within the county. This study analyzed production, marketing of raw mangoes and value added products among 112 male and 70 female farmers from 22 villages in Mbeti south sub-location of Embu County. The average age for small holder mango farmers was 49 years with the youngest being 20 years and the oldest being 84 years. Fresh mango was found to be most widely consumed at home (86.3%). The status of adoption of postharvest processing particularly juice extraction and drying was below 5%. Improved prices for fresh mangoes (20.4%) and value addition (13.2%) were found to be some of the main factors influencing adoption of post-harvest innovations. As the size of land holding increased, so was the correlation between number of mango trees owned (r=0.176) and number of matured mangoes (r=0.158) which was deemed to be significant at 5% level. However the correlation between the variables was found to be very weak. Land holding size is therefore not a causal factor in low production. Farmers organized in groups produced, sold and processed significantly ($P<0.05$) more Mango than those who did not belong to farmers groups.

Smallholders' farmers are faced with the challenges of declining delivery of extension services by the main extension services providers such as the government and NGOs, due to the perishable nature of fresh mangoes, export market presents a formidable challenge since farmers need to invest in capital intensive cold storage and refrigerated transportation and the technical capabilities which are beyond them.

Increase in funds opportunities for the farmers carrying value addition. Increased extension services the farmers. There is need to explore new markets for the farmers produce.

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