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Performance Assessment of Land Enhancing Technologies: an Economic Analysis for Food Crop Farmers in Southwestern Nigeria

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Abstract

Many consumers' behaviour shows that their (consumers) general preferences for the attributes or traits of products are subjective. More so, their perceptions of and impressions about the characteristics of the products affect significantly their demand for them. Consumers' preferences for agricultural products are however subject to their availability in motivating qualities and quantities. In turn, farmers' role in preferential adoption decisions, which enhance agricultural productivities and crops' qualities, have had very limited attention in research. This forms the basis of this paper. Two sets of improved management systems introduced by the Oyo State Agricultural Development Project to food crop farmers were investigated for their performances. These involve the adoption of land enhancing technologies that include **(1)** repeated leguminous cover crops and **(2)** appropriate fertiliser application. A participatory survey was conducted with one hundred and eighty (180) food crop farmers in five differently scattered farming communities in the derived savannah agro ecological belt of south western Nigeria. The main aim of the survey was to identify the farming methods practised by the sampled farmers , analyse the economic efficiency of each method, and determine the socioeconomic and demographic factors, farm specific and other intrinsic "risk" factors affecting the farmers' productivity. Though both farming methods showed significant improvement in terms of crop yield over the yields on farm lands with partial or no application of any of these technologies, financial returns from both methods are found to be almost at par with probable overwhelming financial returns from the method of the "leguminous cover crops" in the nearest future. The paper also showed that the framers' choice for any of the two introduced land enhancing technologies depends largely on the food crop type cultivated. From the findings, a reach out to all case is made for peasants who appear inaccessible by the agricultural development project's agents to incorporate them into the main scheme of better and improved agricultural management technologies. This will enable a wider acceptability of these technologies and many other ones that are suited for differing farming communities.

Keywords: leguminous cover crops, management technologies, preferential adoption

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