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Economics of Faba Bean Production and Marketing in Northern Sudan

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Abstract

Faba bean is the most important food legume in Sudan. It makes up a major part of the daily diet for the population. Moreover, it plays an important role in sustaining the productivity of the farming systems through the fixation of atmospheric nitrogen.

The northern region of Sudan is considered as one of the main supplier of faba bean in the country. The crop is commonly produced under pump irrigation from the River Nile. The production and marketing of the crop in the region has faced manifold problems namely low level of productivity, high high cost of production, fluctuation of prices, inadequate market credit and weak marketing arrangements. This paper describes the study of the economic aspects of production and marketing of faba bean in the region.

The research revealed that the irrigation water cost constituted 26 % of the total variable cost for faba bean production, while the transportation costs amounted 64 % of the total marketing cost. The actual productivity of faba bean in the region was found very low, 450 kg feddan⁻¹ (ca. 1070 kg ha⁻¹). The yield gab with the potential yield obtained by ICARDA in this region (International Center for Agricultural Research in the Dry Areas) amounts 50 %.

The study detected further that the most important factors that significantly affect the productivity and the marketable surplus were the number of irrigation events, type of scheme, source of irrigation, seed rate, credit availability, farmers' educational level, the reserved amounts for household consumption and the produced quantities of the crop. The study concluded that faba bean production contribute significantly to farm sustainability and alleviates malnutrition in the region. However, the actual production and marketing constraints restrict the sustainability of this important crop. So, the cooperation between international organisations and governemental institutions should tackle the hindrances of faba bean production and establish adequate market infrastructures in the region.

Keywords: Food safety, yield improvement