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Land Use Pattern by Small Holder Indian Vegetable Farmers, Market Participation in Enhancing Food Security

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Abstract

This study attempts to understand the allocation of available land to grow vegetables, explain marketing choices of the smallholder farmers in selling their produce, and analysing performances of these marketing choices. Limited availability of the land resources paves challenge for the small holder farmer in choosing and allotting the available area for growing vegetables. Further, due to the perishable nature of the vegetables, they have to be sold as and when they are harvested. The available marketing choices for the farmers in the study area included co-operatives, regulated markets and local channels. Personal interviews with farmers and traders were conducted by using purposive sampling, and the concurrent data was collected with semi-structured schedules. Mixed methods were employed to analyse the data. The descriptive analysis indicates that the proportion of land allotted by smallholder farmers to cultivate vegetables is substantially more, while majority of the small farmers consider growing vegetables provides substantial income and it's a profitable enterprise and provides subsistence income. The comparative analysis between the co-existing marketing channels indicates that co-operatives are the more preferred channel than regulated and local channel. The result also reveals that the selling in co-operative has the positive effects on the participation performance. Socio-economic characteristics of farm households specifies that farmers with better access to extension services, those engaged in sorting and grading of their produce gave the financial stability with efficient production and higher returns by improving the livelihood condition. The research emphasises for the small holder farmers on the better allocation of the available land area and interactions of the all the possible outcomes of the co-existing market choices.

Keywords: Land use pattern, marketing choices, smallholder farmers