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“Solidarity in a competing world —
fair use of resources”

Do Unique Farmer Trader Relations Enhance Resilience: Case of Greengram Markets in Mbeere County, Kenya

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Abstract

This study sought to contribute to a better understanding of market dynamics of green grams (*Vigna radiata*) as a traditional crop within a resource poor producer community in Mbeere South sub-County, Kenya. The study aimed to characterise the green gram marketing channels and to evaluate the factors that influence the choice of green gram marketing channel by the producers. Further the study sought to assess farmer-trader relationships that enhance resilience. A multinomial logit model was estimated through data from households growing green grams. Results show that 70 percent of farmers in the study site grew green grams. On average, each household has 1 to 2 acres of land under green grams production each year. Farmers used three marketing channels, rural retailers (58 percent), wholesalers (14 percent) and assemblers (26 percent). The multinomial results showed that age of the farmer ($p = 0.06$), access to credit ($p = 0.065$), price of green grams ($p = 0.079$), and selling as individuals ($p = 0.000$) positively influenced the choice of rural assembler marketing channel. Gender of the household head ($p = 0.001$), production cost ($p = 0.000$) and use of mobile phone to access marketing information ($p = 0.019$) positively influenced the probability of choosing rural retailer over wholesaler marketing channel. In conclusion, farmers prefer marketing channels where they incur low production and transport costs and that offer higher prices to maximise profits. The study also shows farmers prefer selling to traders where they have repeat visits and establish trust. The study recommended first, identification and prioritisation of unique farmer-trader relations that enhance adaptive resilience and increase farmers marketing options. Secondly, interventions to enhance market-based signals e.g. price should be reinforced.

Keywords: ASALs, green grams, market signals, marketing channels