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Analysis of Factors Influencing Profitability of Rabbit Farming in Kenya

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Abstract

Rabbit (*Oryctolagus cuniculus*) farming is one of the fastest growing micro-livestock enterprises in Kenya. Rabbit is preferred as a sustainable source of proteins in an era where climate change, population and changing meat consumption patterns are growing in developing countries. Despite the high potential of rabbit farming in Kenya, the sector has not been fully exploited. Although past studies have shown that most farmers in Kenya have adopted rabbit farming as a commercial enterprise, little has been done to systematically determine the factors influencing the profitability of the enterprise. The study aimed to bridge the gap by assessing the factors which may influence the profitability of rabbit farming in Nakuru, Kiambu and Nyeri counties of Kenya. Multi-stage and stratified sampling techniques were adopted. Structured questionnaires were used to obtain information from 459 farmers of the three counties. Two-stage least squares (2SLS) regression model and descriptives were used to analyse the obtained data. Comparison of means showed that the mean difference between rabbit and non-rabbit keepers for age, education, household size, gender, distance to market, group membership and access to credit and extension was statistically significant. Age, household size, education in years, land size in acres, number of rabbits kept, group membership, extension access, credit access, wealth index and income were the main factors influencing gross margins. The study suggests awareness creation on importance of rabbit farming. In addition, promotion of income diversification initiatives among rural farmers is necessary to improve their well-being and employment creation. Credit lending institutions should work towards providing affordable and accessible credits to rabbit farmers.

Keywords: 2SLS, Kenya, profitability, rabbit