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## Market Access, Food Security and Nutrition: A Case Study in Yayu Agroforestry Systems, Southwestern Ethiopia

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### Abstract

Agriculture is the primary source of livelihoods and a source of food for the vast majority of Ethiopian rural households. It is also closely linked with nutrition and health and considered as the driving force to improve food and nutrition security. The link between agriculture and food and nutrition security appears intuitive and simple: growing more and diversified crops provides households with more quality and quantity of foods for a healthy lifestyle. However, it is more complicated than that. Although the majority of smallholder farmers are subsistence farmers, they often buy and sell foods from local markets seeking a balance in food, nutrients and financial terms, that is, they may not always consume what themselves produce. However, access to dynamic market is still a major constraint to smallholder farmers in much of rural Ethiopia. Smallholder farmers are poorly linked with market for several reasons, such as lack of information, low production and farm-gate prices, and remoteness. Considering the limited studies on the role of market access on household food and nutrition security, this study shed some light on the role of market access in cash crop intensive areas using econometric methods. For this study, a household survey has been conducted in rural area of Oromia region, Southwestern Ethiopia, in January 2018. More than 320 agricultural households were randomly selected using a stratified random sampling technique. The preliminary result shows that food insecurity (in terms of food access) is not a major problem; however, household dietary diversity (HDD) is low among households located far away from the market in the study areas.

**Keywords:** Dietary diversity, food security, market access, rural Ethiopia