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Constraints and Opportunities of Organic Fruit Production in Tanzania

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Abstract

In Tanzania, smallholder farmers mostly dominate agricultural production. A large number of farmers do practice organic farming and this could give a massive opportunity for the majority to benefit from the market offered for organic agricultural products. Majority of smallholder farmers do practice traditional agricultures, which are closed to organic agriculture. The study examined opportunities and constraints on organic fruit growers in Madeke, Kiwangwa and Mwanambaya villages located in Njombe, Bagamoyo and Mkuranga districts respectively. In these villages, farmers are producing various organic fruits, including mango, pineapple and passion fruits as source of income in household. Interviews 120 were conducted to collect information and gather views from the farmers on the actual situation concerning potential of organic fruit production. Results: More than 70 % of respondents mentioned their main activity being agriculture and it is the major source of livelihoods. Among the agricultural practices used by farmers were intercropping and crop rotation in farmers' fields. The study revealed that farmers could achieve twice as much of their benefit per acre on pineapple compared to mango and passion fruits production. High organic certification cost, lack of capital and post-harvest losses were mentioned to be the major constraining farmers in organic production. Intercropping and crop rotation being the main practice in organic farming and fruit production were realised to be important agricultural practices. Conclusion: In organic farming smallholder farmers may have opportunity to utilise their traditional farming practices with low capital investments costs. A cheaper certification procedure could enable majority of farmers to produce organic agricultural products.

Keywords: Constraints, mango, organic farming, pineapple, yellow passion fruits