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Commercialisation of Baobab (*Adansonia Digitata* L.) Fruits in North and West Kordofan and Blue Nile States of Sudan

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Abstract

Baobab is an abundant resource in Sudan and has a great potential for commercialisation, which can drive rural development. In view of these realities, this study aims to measure the level of household involvement in baobab fruit commercialisation, identify market places, and analyse the determinants of the factors influencing market orientation. Results are based on the analysis of data collected from 374 households surveyed in 24 districts of three regional states of the country in 2017 and 2018. Descriptive statistics, commercialisation index and double hurdle models were used to analyse the data. The results showed that the commercialisation index ranged between 49 % and 75 % which indicated a moderate commercial index. The econometric analysis results from this study show that for the probability model, ownership of mobile phones and radios, household size, gender of the household head, and non-farm income have positive and negative influences on marketed surplus. Similarly, for the probability model, age, household size, non-farm income, primary education, livestock and ownership of mobile phones and radios also had negative and positive influences on the smallholder farmers' decision to participate in the baobab fruit market.

Access to market information would improve farmers' knowledge of markets and aid in decision making on market participation, as well as the level of marketed surplus. This will lead to increased productivity, greater marketable surplus, and enhance the likelihood of households participating in the baobab fruit market. This study strongly recommends that the development of policies should be more supportive of different types of households of different sizes, and that expansion of land among farmers may enhance the commercial engagement of producers and improve the accessibility of baobab resources for commercial production.

Keywords: Baobab fruit, commercialisation, NTFPs, market participation, Sudan