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Utilisation of Organic Farming Practices among Arable Crop Farmers in Akwaibom State, Nigeria

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Abstract

Agroecological agriculture which has great potential for organic farming and uses low level inputs is practised by small scale farmers in Nigeria in order to ensure sustainability of available natural resources. This study therefore assessed utilisation of organic farming practices among arable crop farmers in Akwa Ibom state of Nigeria. Purposive and simple random sampling techniques were used in the selection of 80 arable crop framers. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire and Focus Group Discussion and analysed with descriptive such as frequency counts, mean scores and percentages and inferential statistics (Tobit regression analysis). The result showed that arable crop farmers sourced information on organic practices from personal observations, research institutes and fellow farmers. The result revealed that there was high awareness ($=2.1$) of organic farming practices, positive perception on effects of organic farming ($=3.4$) and high utilisation ($=2.1$) of organic farming practices in the state. The result of Tobit regression estimates showed that coefficients for increased crop yield, maintenance of soil fertility, high storage potential, reduced effect of pest, enhanced control of weeds and increased medicinal value of crops influenced farmers' use of organic farming practices in the study area. The study revealed that climatic factors, low levels of education and low extension contacts were constraints to utilisation of organic farming practices among arable crop farmers in the study area. The study therefore recommends research into improved varieties with traits for high yield, drought resistance to pests and diseases and good canopy and increased extension contacts to encourage farmers to adopt organic and environmental conservation practices in the study area.

Keywords: Arable, crop, farming, organic, utilisation