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Homegardens: Commercialisation and Contribution to Food Security in the Upper East Region of Ghana

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Abstract

Homegardens have become a center for development initiatives by governments, non-governmental organisations as well as development agencies to help in the global challenge of food production and food insecurity especially in developing countries. They embark on this through providing aid and building the local capacity to promote sustainable intensification of homegardens to improve food and cash security of households. This study therefore aimed at determining homegarden commercialisation and its impact on the food security of smallholder households in the Upper East Region of Ghana. Mixed sampling technique was used to select 120 farmers who were running homegardens. Commercialisation was calculated using commercialisation index, which served to categorise the homegardens into more and less market oriented. Food security was measured via Hfias Score. Ordered probit regression was used to analyse the contribution of homegarden commercialisation on the household food security. The results showed that homegarden commercialisation significantly contributes to food security of farmers in the Upper East region. Also, outcomes from qualitative analysis confirmed that farmers highlighted important role of homegardens in terms of food security and gaining additional income. Major constraints in homegardening were high initial capital of investment, lack of water and lack of agricultural extension service. We, therefore, argue that governments and development agencies should include and support homegardens in agricultural and rural development policies in Ghana.

Keywords: Commercialisation index, Hfias score, multiple linear regression, ordered probit model

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