



Market structure and vendor performance of Slow Food Earth Markets in Kenya

Iris Scherer¹, Louis Amprako¹, Gudrun B. Keding¹, Mutheu Mutune²

¹ Justus-Liebig Universität Gießen, Department of Nutritional Science, International Food and Nutrition Security, Germany
² Slow Food Kenya, MEAL Department, Kenya

INTRODUCTION

Research on agroecological markets is heavily skewed toward the Global North; Sub-Saharan Africa remains understudied¹.

Kenya's Slow Food Earth Markets are one such understudied case: agroecological markets connecting small-scale producers selling local, often indigenous listed products.

Little is known about their structure or economic outcome.

>> **Research Question: How are agroecological markets performing in Kenya?**

METHODS

Quantitative, descriptive research design with secondary data, prepared to provide insight into markets, sales, products, and vendors.

150 market observations from 2023–2025 across 7 Kenyan Earth Markets in 4 counties.

Performance measured via sell-through rate* (kg), daily revenue, satisfaction.

Analysis: IBM SPSS (multiple response analysis, frequency distributions).

RESULTS

Market	Started	No. of vendors	Type	Frequency
Molo	2018	30	integrated	biweekly
Nakuru	2022	55	standalone	biweekly
Kagio	2022	32	integrated	biweekly
Gilgil	2022	24	integrated	biweekly
Murang'a	2023	47	Integrated	biweekly
Embu	2024	21	integrated	weekly
Njoro	2024	20	standalone	weekly

Table 1: Overview of the seven Slow Food Earth Markets in Kenya, including founding year, vendor numbers, market type, and trading frequency. "Standalone" = market operates at its own dedicated location; "integrated" = market takes place within an existing (e.g. general) market.



Image 1: Green onions, curly kale and kale being sold at the Njoro Earth Market, Kenya, 2024.



Image 2: Spinach and coriander displayed for sale at the Njoro Earth Market, Kenya in 2024.

Female (71%)

Over 36 years old (51%)

Sells vegetable (41%)



Part of SF Garden community (99%)

Generates income through agricultural sales (87%)

Figure 2: Socio-Demographic profile of Earth Market vendors in Kenya (n=112).

Sales Through rate*

88 %

* Sell-through rate: percentage of products sold relative to the quantity brought to the market.

Average daily revenue

2.079 KES
~ 14,82 EUR**

** (exchange rate: 140,37 KES = 1 EUR, March 2025).

Days per week selling at Earth Market

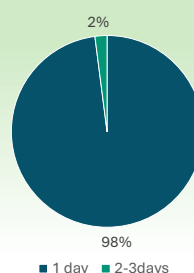


Figure 3: Frequency of vendor attendance at Earth Markets (n=148).

Satisfaction with market outcome

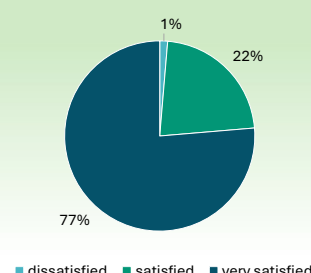


Figure 4: Vendor satisfaction was high, with 98.7% of vendors reporting that they were satisfied or very satisfied with the market outcome (n=148).

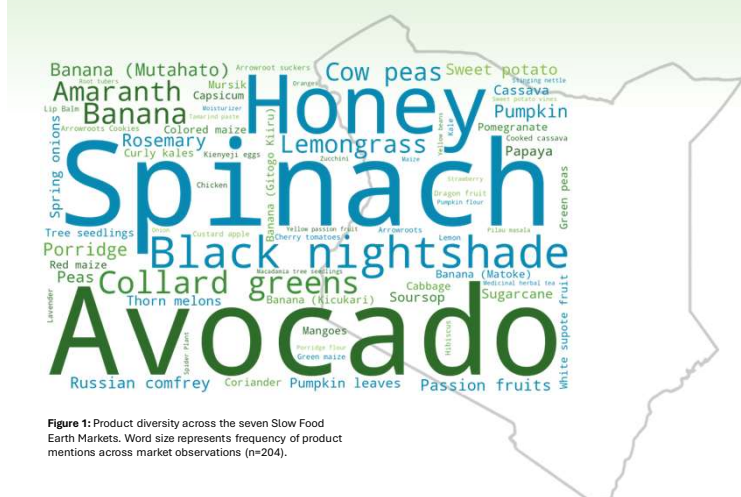


Figure 1: Product diversity across the seven Slow Food Earth Markets. Word size represents frequency of product mentions across market observations (n=204).

References:

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CONCLUSION

- Earth Markets provide a viable market-access channel for small-scale producers, generating sales and revenues for participating vendors.
- High demand-matching: 88% average sell-through rate.
- Vendor satisfaction relatively high compared with findings from US studies.²

Contact

Iris Maria Scherer, Justus-Liebig University Gießen,
Department of Nutritional Science
iris.maria.scherer@tm.uni-giessen.de