

Factors influencing marketing distribution channels of tomato produce decisions and farmers' sales in Lushoto district, Tanga region

Mpinga Lilian

Master of Business Administration

University of Dar es Salaam, Business School, 2014

This study assessed influence of distribution channels on marketing of horticultural produce using tomatoes produced in Lushoto District. The study examined the extent to which vegetable growers and vegetable growers' representatives managed to exploit the market through marketing channels, the role played by value added resellers of vegetables in improving market access and the role played by vegetable distributors in facilitating access to marketing of horticultural produce. A qualitative research approach using sample of sixty respondents through in-depth interviews, questionnaires and, Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) provided data. Purposive and convenient sampling techniques were used to select the sample because of the nature of this research. Statistical analysis and content analysis were employed. Findings show that tomato growers exploited the market through available marketing channels (wholesale markets, tightly-knit supply chains, retailers, super market chains and commission agents). The only problem discovered was withholding information on farmers' product by not giving them clear information on price and location of the markets. That made farmers earn less than others. Middlepersons, traders, farmers' organisations, and processor institutions played a big role in getting markets for farm produce. Value-adding institutions got a competitive edge because they sold very expensive tomato products. Results have implication to policy and practices. The study recommends that the government should avail information to all stakeholders so as to develop a tomato marketing system for horticulture produce, not only in Tanga region, but also to the whole country at large. The measure will enable production, marketing, distribution and sales of tomatoes by farmers so as to earn better and increase value of horticulture products.