Selected Factors Affecting Adoption of Improved Finger Millet Varieties among Small-Scale Farmers Inmogotio Sub-County, Baringo County, Kenya.

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ABSTRACT

Finger millet is one of the important traditional, nutritious and drought tolerant food crop grown by small scale farmers in most arid and semi-arid lands (ASALs) of the world. In the ASALs of Kenya, finger millet is grown by small scale farmers who mainly grow low yielding unimproved varieties. Improved high yielding and recommended varieties are available but the farmers’ adoption is very low contributing to persistent food insecurity in these areas. The purpose of this study was to establish selected factors affecting the adoption of improved finger millet varieties by small scale farmers in the ASAL MogotioSub-County of Baringo County. The factors studied were finger millet varieties technical attributes based on maturity period, yield, grain colour, grain usage in making of “ugali”, porridge, tradition brew, other grain uses (sale, baking, tradition gifts) and sources of Agricultural information on production of improved finger millet based on sources from neighbours, friends, farmer groups, Extension staff and Non-governmental Organisations. The study employed a survey research design and used a sample of 297 small scale farmers randomly selected from Mogotio and Emining Divisions in MogotioSub-County. The study interviewed the respondent using a structured questionnaire whose reliability was ascertained by a coefficient of 0.86 and validity verified by a panel of experts. The collected data was analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics and established that the studied factors considerably affected the adoption of improved finger millet varieties. The study recommends sensitization and training of the small scale farmers on the relative advantages of improved finger millet varieties over the unimproved to increase their adoption. The study finding is significant in that finger millet is a nutritious drought tolerant crop that can be used to reduce food insecurity, malnutrition and poverty dry areas of Kenya.
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