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Factors enhancing market participation: A case of small holder farmers in Zululand district, KwaZulu Natal in South Africa

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This paper highlighted factors affecting agricultural market participation and the promotion of the establishment of vegetable markets, fruit markets and nurseries in the Zululand district, KwaZulu Natal, South Africa. This entailed taking a representative sample consisting of 50 agricultural projects with 418 beneficiaries participating in the research. The following 5 local municipalities were visited: Mahlabathini, Nongoma, Pongola, Dumbe and Abaqulusi. Quantitative and qualitative design was used as a detailed questionnaire written in English with a focus group discussion, a stakeholder's discussion and field observations as part of the data collection. A purposive sampling technique was used to select 50 projects, in order to cover uniformity and homogenous characteristics such as infrastructure requirements, skills availability, production challenges, agricultural training needs, water source needs, educational level and others. Data was coded, captured and analyzed with a software package for social sciences (SPSS version 20). Descriptive and Univariate Regression analysis was conducted. The results showed a significant association among the following variables: age, educational level, farming experience, land acquisition, crops planted, water source, farming fulltime, land size, production inputs, agricultural training and market participation. It is recommended that fruit and vegetable markets be established as well as the creation of a complete, viable agro value chain that will expand community driven agricultural production and processing.

Biography

Phokele Maponya has completed his PhD from University of South Africa and Post-doctoral Fellowship from University of Johannesburg. He has more than 12 years of Teaching, Research and Project Management experience. He acted as a Reviewer for *Development Southern Africa*; *International Journal on Bio deterioration & Biodegradation*; *Journal of Agricultural Biotechnology and Sustainable Development*; *African Journal of Agricultural Research*; *Herald Journal of Geography and Regional Planning*; *Journal of Agricultural Science*, *Asian Journal of Agricultural Extension, Economics and Sociology*, *South African Journal of Plant and Soil*, *Journal of Global Agriculture and Ecology* and *British Journal of Applied Science and Technology*. He also serves as a Board Member of the *Wudpecker Journal of Educational Research*; *Global Advance Journal of Arts and Humanities*; *International Journal of Advance Agricultural Research*; *World Journal of Agricultural Science*; *Journal of Agricultural Science*; *Peak Journal of Agricultural Research* and *Unique Journal of Agricultural Research*. He has published globally in the field of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences and published more than 20 articles in different international peer reviewed journals; 5 peer reviewed conference proceedings and published 7 book chapters. He is currently employed at Agricultural Research Council as Project Manager and Leader.

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