

FACTORS AFFECTING SMALLHOLDER FARMERS' POTATO PRODUCTION IN KOFELE DISTRICT, OROMIA REGION, ETHIOPIA

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ABSTRACT

Potato is a potential food security crop in Ethiopia, in which the tuber provides high energy, quality protein, a substantial amount of vitamins and minerals. This study investigated the factors affecting smallholder farmers' potato production in Kofele district, Ethiopia with the objective of identifying and analyzing factors affecting potato production. A multi-stage sampling procedure was used to select sample households for data collection. A total of 120 potato producer households were randomly selected from the district using probability proportional to size. Semi-structured questionnaires were used to collect data from potato producer households. The descriptive statistics and linear regression model were used to analyze factors affecting smallholder farmer's potato production. The findings demonstrate that education level, the land allocated for potato production, fertilizer application and participation in the non - farm activity is positively and significantly affects potato production in the study area. The study suggested that potato productions are affected by the above mentioned factors and, thus, policies addressing these factors are required to improve smallholder farmer's potato production.

KEYWORDS: Kofele District, Potato Production, Regression Model, Smallholder Farmers