
**CHALLENGES FACED BY FARMERS IN MARKETING THEIR AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS
IN UGANDA**

A CASE STUDY OF BWERA SUB-COUNTY, KASESE DISTRICT

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Abstract

The study aimed at challenges faced by farmers in marketing their agricultural products in Uganda and it was guided by the following objectives; to find out how farmers market their agricultural products, to find out the challenges faced by farmers in marketing agricultural products and to suggest possible solutions to the challenges faced by farmers in marketing of agricultural products. The study targeted the cooperatives organizations which deals in marketing of agricultural products, farmers, businessmen's, Agricultural Officer, village groups since they were the people with the information required. The number of samples used in the calculator determined that the study community was 100, the margin of error was 10%, the degree of assurance was 90%, and the percentage of respondents who responded distributions was 50%. From The findings, majority of the respondents 48.8% reported that the challenge facing farmers was financial constraint as a very serious problem ,24.2% reported the poor communication system as slight problem while 12% and 15% reported inadequate farm storage and lack of uniform measures and grading system respectively as the challenge. For landowners to overcome the difficulties they are facing and be able to address their difficulties as a single entity, they must form cooperatives that will aid them with advertising their agricultural goods, purchasing in large quantities of the goods they produce, transferring of the merchandise, and sharing of activities like weeding.

Key words: challenges, farmers, marketing and agricultural products

BACK GROUND

Agricultural advertisement, according to Joseph K. Mukiibi (2001), is a type of advertising that includes all products and services associated with the agricultural industry. All of these goods help to create and distribute agricultural goods from the farm to the customer, either directly or indirectly. A large portion of Uganda's financial system is dependent on agriculture. More than 73% of Uganda's approximately 18.8 million people reside in rural regions and depend primarily on agriculture. Rural areas are where most farming activities take place. Given this fact, it is only fair to say that Uganda's rural farmers are a significant part of the country's food manufacturing base. (1994, David.W. Gravens)

Due to the fact that most of the property in Uganda is owned by private persons in small plots, the people who live there decide what to do with their particular pieces of land. In order to feed their families until the next harvest, households who engage in agriculture for survival aim at growing enough food on their small plots of land. They frequently fail to reach their goal.

Based to the Annual Report (2008), Uganda has one of the greatest conditions for crop cultivation in sub-Saharan Africa thanks to its mild climate, large amount of arable land, and regular rainfall. Tea, coffee, cotton, horticulture, sweet potatoes, maize, fisheries, cattle and animal-based products, cereals, root crops, pulses, bananas, and cotton are only a few of the most significant products that agriculture produced. For many years, the farming industry has served as the foundation of Uganda's economy, accounting for over 37% of the country's GDP. The sector is nevertheless essential to the Ugandan economy for a number of reasons, including ensuring domestic and national nutrition, generating income, creating jobs, and earning foreign cash.

PROBLEM STATEMENT

Marketing is the practice of economic operations that control the flow of goods and services from the producer to the customer, according to Nisar Ahmed (1997). All the activities involved in moving food and raw materials from the point of production to the point of demand are referred to as marketing for agricultural products. A few features of agricultural products are their small-scale manufacturing, perishable nature, unorganized market, and distinctions between the marketing of industrialized goods and produce from agriculture.

The revenue growth of Uganda is mostly dependent on the cultivation of crops, which employs around 73% of the country's humanity, estimates David W. Gravens (1994). Nevertheless, producers are having trouble selling their produce on a local level and across the entire region. Cotton, coffee, maize, big nuts, beans, sweet potatoes, and soy beans are the fruits and vegetables that are most frequently farmed, and most people rely on these crops for their livelihood.

Due to this, the investigator was motivated to learn more about the difficulties farmers encounter while marketing their agricultural products and to consider potential solutions. Data was gathered using a variety of approaches, including surveys and interviews.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- 1. To find out how farmers market their agricultural products.*
- 2. To find out the challenges faced by farmers in marketing agricultural products.*
- 3. To suggest possible solutions to the challenges faced by farmers in marketing of agricultural products.*

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- 1. How are agricultural products marketed?*

2. *What are the challenges faced by farmers?*

3. *What are the solutions for the challenges experienced by farmers?*

Methodology

RESEARCH DESIGN

The study was across sectional design since there was need to examine the variables in the shortest time possible as well as the design would also adopt both quantitative and qualitative approaches.

STUDY POPULATION

The study was to target the cooperatives organizations which deals in marketing of agricultural products, farmers, businessmen's, Agricultural Officer, village groups since they were the people with the information required.

DATA COLLECTION METHODS

The data was collected using different methods in the study so the researchers used are the following methods.

Questionnaires

These were written questions in regards to the topic of study and its objectives. The researchers presented these questions to the respondents under strict confidence and secret. It was the primary data collected which had two important concepts in the design of measurement.

Interviewing

An interview is a conversation between two or more people where question are asked by the interviewer to elicit facts or statements from the interviewee. This method will be used to interview relevant people that deal with marketing of agricultural

products. Interviews will be conducted directly face to face so as to get their opinions about the problems faced and what changes they hope to make.

Sample size

In this section, simple random sampling and purposeful sampling were utilized, and each participant had an equal chance of being chosen at random. The number of samples used in the calculator determined that the study community was 100, the margin of error was 10%, the degree of assurance was 90%, and the percentage of respondents who responded distributions was 50%. 41 people were included in the study's sample size as a result (www.raosoft.com/sample_size.html).

DATA ANALYSIS

After collecting, the researchers coded data, edited to detect errors, and was checked for accuracy and consistency using SPSS.

RESULTS

Table 1: Source of agricultural information

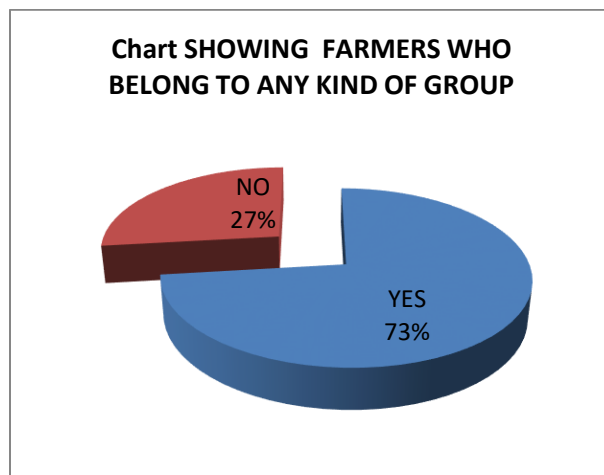
<i>Source of agric information</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percentage (%)</i>
<i>Extension</i>	<i>19</i>	<i>46</i>
<i>Neighbor</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>12</i>
<i>Radio</i>	<i>14</i>	<i>34</i>
<i>Others</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>8</i>
<i>TOTAL</i>	<i>41</i>	<i>100</i>

Source: Primary data 2014

Five respondents, or 12%, said they get agricultural information from family or neighbors, while fourteen participants, or 34%, said radio programs are their primary

knowledge source. Nineteen those surveyed (46%) said they get used for farming knowledge from an on-farm visit from extension within the year (either from the used for farming officer or veterinary office). The remaining 8% either rely on outside sources or do not acquire current knowledge or strategies for marketing.

Figure 1: Belonging to any form of group



Source: Primary data 2014

According to the graph above, out of the 41 individuals who were approached, 30 (or 73% of those interviewed) said they corresponded to some kind of cooperative system or group. However, some of these participants corresponded to more than one, such as the 12 participants who were categorized under credit, 5 who had been categorized under the consumer category, 11 who were also classified under the producer category, and 2 who corresponded to other categories.

Table 2: Benefits of groups or cooperatives to farmer and traders.

Benefits of groups	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Bulky purchasing	5	17
Transport	3	3
Marketing	16	53
Sharing	5	17
Joint project	2	6
total	30	100

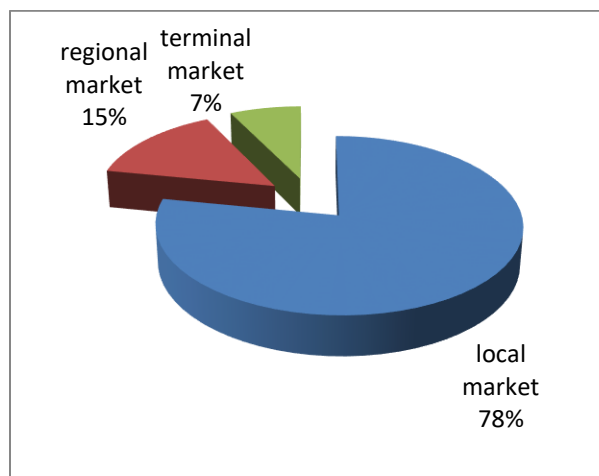
Source: Primary data 2014

The activities or purposes of the cooperative spanned a wide spectrum, from bulk purchasing, transportation of goods purchased, to labour sharing, marketing and joint

During the study I found many farmers who are in cooperatives or groups. Some groups were almost performing more than one task, for example one group had spent 5 years performing as bulky purchasing, transportation and marketing purposes.

Out of the 30 respondents who said that they belong to any form of group 17% of this said it was for sharing purposes.

Figure 2: Types of agricultural markets



Source: Primary data 2014

From the research findings showed that most of the farmers in Bwera sub county do sell their agricultural products in local market about 32 (78%) do assemble products from various individuals' sources, produce from individual farmers, collect and assemble into economic lots and later on transport to central markets. In this market, grading, and packaging are undertaken but only to a limited extent.

Challenge faced the farmers and traders in marketing their agricultural products

Farmers were asked their ideas whether they are facing some challenges in marketing their agricultural products out of 41 respondents (23)56% strongly agreed that they are facing challenges, (16) 38% agreed, (1)3% where undecided and (1) 3% also strongly disagreed. This indicated that farmers are facing some challenges in marketing their agricultural produces in Bwera Sub County.

The table 3 showing the challenges faced by farmers in marketing their agricultural products

Challenges	frequency	Percentages (%)
<i>Financial constraints</i>	20	48.8
<i>Poor communication system</i>	10	24.2
<i>In adequate farm storage</i>	5	12
<i>Lack of uniform measures and grading</i>	6	15
<i>total</i>	41	100

Source: Primary data 2014

Table above indicates that the majority of the respondents 48.8% reported that the challenge facing farmers is financial constraint as a very serious problem ,24.2% reported the poor communication system as slight problem while 12% and 15% reported inadequate farm storage and lack of uniform measures and grading system respectively as the challenge.

The table 4 showing the challenges faced by traders in marketing their agricultural products

Challenges	frequency	Percentages (%)
<i>High trade tax</i>	4	9.7
<i>Poor transport network</i>	16	39
<i>Inadequate hydro-electricity</i>	8	19.5
<i>Limited knowledge</i>	13	31.8
<i>total</i>	41	100

Source: Primary data 2014

Table above shows, majority of the traders are faced with the challenge of poor transport network (39%), also limited knowledge on business skills with 31.8% followed by inadequate hydroelectricity with 19.5% and 9.5% reported a problem high trade tax. This indicated that the majority of the traders are face with poor transport network.

The biggest challenge faced by farmers and traders in marketing their agricultural products.

Lack of standardization of the measurements and weights and consistent grading. Produce is frequently sold in heaps, baskets as well as and tins that may not accurately represent the quality or quantity of the goods being sold. In the absence of regular measurement and weighting and an identical grading system accessible to all market players, this frequently leads to intermediaries and traders taking advantages over both producers and consumers through providing prices that are not an accurate representation of the value of the number of pounds of commodities bought or sold.

The majority of the participants also mentioned that one obstacle encountered mostly by farmers was the short lifespan of crop products. They added that this issue results in losses being made on the products because there is no ready marketplace for agricultural products.

Possible strategies that can be put in place to improve on market access

Most of the respondents were asked whether there are possible strategies that can be put in place to cube down the challenges faced by farmers in marketing their agricultural products, 100% of the respondents agreed with the idea, where the respondents were giving the following strategies.

According to the respondents, response was based on the effort to be put in place by the individuals, and the nongovernmental organizations (NGO), co-operatives and farmers themselves in improving market for agricultural products, these are below

Conclusion:

Both the governmental and private industries have a role to play in modernizing Uganda's agriculture and so reducing poverty. Their functions must be synchronized and complimentary at the same time. Agriculture-related manufacturing, manufacturing, and marketing are all done by businesses of all kinds. By developing suitable policies, removing obstructions at all levels, enhancing infrastructures and establishing an adequate legal and administrative structure, the public sector should foster a favorable climate.

RECOMMENDATIONS

For landowners to overcome the difficulties they are facing and be able to address their difficulties as a single entity, they must form cooperatives that will aid them with advertising their agricultural goods, purchasing in large quantities of the goods they produce, transferring of the merchandise, and sharing of activities like weeding.

In particular, farmers who are able to transport their products to marketplaces other than their home or neighborhood market should discover ways to take advantage of and explore new market opportunities for their crops and livestock. This will enable them to access fresh markets where their goods are in high demand.

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