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The Impact of Socio-Political Factors and Pineapple Farming on Pineapple Trade in East African Region. A Case Study of Luwero District, Uganda.

Pineapple is one of the fruits that are commonly grown in many parts of East Africa and Uganda in particular. This study was done to ascertain the impact of socio-political factors and pineapple farming on pineapple trade in Uganda with specific objectives that included; determining the socio-political factors, the relationship between socio-political factors and pineapple trade, challenges in pineapple trade as well as finding out the solutions to pineapple trade. The primary data were collected among 150 pineapple farmers and traders using the purposive sampling technique in the sub-counties of Kikyusa, Ziobwe, Kamira and Bamunanika of Luwero district. Data were entered using Epi Data and analysed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). Different levels of analysis were performed, that is, at univariate level one variable was analysed while at bivariate level two variables were analysed. The hypothesis was tested with Pearson Chi-Square test to establish the relationship between socio-political factors and growth in pineapple farming and trade in Uganda.

The major findings indicated that socio-political factors were paramount in boosting pineapple farming and trade. It was found out that interventions of market construction, road networks, security and reduction in taxes were significant in boosting farmers' activities. It was also found out that Luwero district had a comparative advantage in pineapple farming and trade unlike other districts in Uganda because of fertile soils and her proximity to major markets of Southern Sudan. In conclusion, the study noted that pineapple farming and trade is very instrumental in improving the incomes of farmers in Luwero district hence it is recommended that pineapple farmer groups be established to strengthen their marketing opportunities as well as benefiting from government subsidies and programmes especially with the East African Community protocol in place.

Key Words: Socio-Political, Pineapple Farming, Trade, East African Region, Luwero District