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Compliance with GlobalGAP Standards and Access to Agricultural Products Export Markets among Fruit and Vegetable Producers in Luwero and Wakiso Districts, Uganda

The purpose of this study was to investigate the effect of GlobalGAP standards on access to agricultural products export markets among fruit and vegetable producers in Luwero and Wakiso districts, Uganda. Its objectives included: finding out the level of awareness about GlobalGAP requirements, assessing the level of compliance with GlobalGAP requirements, determining the relationship between the level of compliance with GlobalGAP standards and access to the export markets, and establishing the factors hindering compliance with GlobalGAP standards for effective access to agricultural products export markets among fruit and vegetable producers in Luwero and Wakiso districts. The study was based on a cross-sectional survey in which data were collected through structured questionnaires and interview guides from a sample of 191 individuals including fruit and vegetable farmers, managers of export firms, and supervisors of fruit and vegetable farmers selected using random and purposive sampling techniques. The data were analysed using frequencies, percentages, and correlation and regression techniques. The findings revealed that the level of awareness about GlobalGAP standards among the producers was high, but the level of compliance with GlobalGAP standards among the producers was low mainly because of high compliance costs that are highly restrictive. There was a positive relationship between the level of compliance with GlobalGAP standards and access to the export markets. The major factors that were found to hinder compliance with GlobalGAP standards for effective access to agricultural products export markets included: Lack of finances in constructing the required buildings and facilities, complexity of the standards, unrealistic requirements, lack of training time, high cost of paying involved labour, low prices of produce, high cost of recommended inputs, low production hence little returns and high rate of pests and disease attacks. The study concludes that if fruit and vegetable producers in Luwero and Wakiso districts are to effectively access the lucrative agricultural products export markets, they must increase their level of compliance with the GlobalGAP standards. The study recommends that the government and private sector stakeholders should intensify campaigns aimed at creating more awareness about the standards, and support efforts aimed at reducing cost of compliance with the standards.

Key words: Standards, Compliance, Market, Fruit, Vegetable