

## **ABSTRACT**

Increasing demand for safe food in developing countries entails meeting stringent food safety requirements. Food retailers and regulatory bodies impose food safety measures related to production and handling of farm produce. For smallholders to remain competitive in such a system, institutional arrangements are necessary. We examine the role of producer organizations (POs) in influencing safe food production behaviours among farmers. Using data from 11 expert interviews and a quantitative survey involving 595 smallholder dairy farmers in Kenya, a propensity score matching estimation is employed to assess membership effects. We show that membership in POs positively and significantly influences smallholders' adoption of food safety measures related to milk storage and the milking area. We highlight the importance of social incentives in improving food safety adoption among farmers even when price incentives are absent. Our recommendation is that PO policies that alleviate barriers to food safety adoption among farmers will be helpful in scaling up adoption.

### **Keywords**

Food safety  
Dairy  
Value chain  
Producer organization  
Cooperatives