

ABSTRACT

Limited access to accurate and timely market information continues to be a major impediment in the marketing of farm produce by farmers in Manga Sub-County, Nyamira County, Kenya. This limited access to market information has led to high cost of marketing and emergence of middlemen. Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) have the potential to assist in addressing this problem by creating awareness, linking and distributing information on marketing. It is evident that farmers in Kenya have focused their attention in acquisition of ICT resources because of widespread coverage of mobile telephony, low call rates, affordable data bundles, increasing internet connectivity and other forms of ICTs applications for example the M-pesa services and use of ICTs in marketing farm produce. This study aimed to determine the relationship between socio economic factors and the use of ICTs in marketing of farm produce by farmers in Manga Sub-County in Nyamira County, Kenya. The purpose of the study was to examine the relationship between socio economic factors and the use of ICTs in marketing farm produce by farmers in Manga Sub-County. Descriptive research design was adopted in the study. The target population of the study was 11,040 farmers in Manga Sub-County, from whom a sample size of 109 farmers was selected using stratified random sampling technique. A questionnaire administered to farmers in the Sub-County was used to collect data. Validity of the instrument was enhanced by subjecting the instrument to examination by three experts in the Department of Agricultural Education and Extension of Egerton University. Analysis of piloting results using Cronbach's coefficient alpha method yielded a reliability index of 0.896, indicating the instrument was reliable. The collected data were analysed using both descriptive and inferential statistics. The descriptive statistics used were the frequency and percentages. Pearson's correlation coefficient was used to test the hypotheses. Statistical Package for the Social Sciences was used in data analysis. The hypotheses were tested at a significance level of 0.05. Findings of the study identified that the farmer's level of education influences the use of ICTs in marketing farm produce, training of farmers in ICTs increases the use of ICTs in marketing of farm produce, access to ICT resources had a significant influence on the use of ICTs in marketing of farm produce and access to extension services had a significant influence on the use of ICTs in marketing of farm produce by farmers in Manga Sub-County. This study recommends that The County Directorate of Agriculture should organise training programmes on use of ICTs in marketing. It, also, recommends that The county Government should set up tele-centres with information on agricultural marketing.