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TRAINING CHALLENGES ENCOUNTERED BY CASHEW FARMERS IN SURULERE LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA

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ABSTRACT:

Poor Farmers' training has threatened bumper production of cashew in Nigeria. This study therefore examined training challenges encountered by cashew farmers in Surulere Local Government Area. Multistage sampling technique was used to select 100 cashew Farmers in the study area. Data were collected using interview schedule. Descriptive statistical tools were used. Training deficiencies of respondent in the cashew production were; inefficient local processing tools [strongly disagree (5%), disagree (16%), neutral (0%), agree (21%) and strongly agree (58%)], less availability of equipment and machine for processing tools [strongly disagree (16%), disagree (5%), neutral (11%), agree (11%) and strongly agree (57%)], proper drying of cashew nut [strongly disagree (22%), disagree (5%), neutral (0%), agree (26%) and strongly agree (47%)] and so on. Constraints to cashew production were inadequate capital [severe constraint (30%), mild constraint (60%) and not a constraint (10%)], inadequate farm training [severe constraint (60%), mild constraint (15%) and not a constraint (25%)], inefficient extension services [severe constraint (81%), mild constraint (9%) and not a constraint (10%), etc. It was concluded that most prominent training deficiencies was inefficient local processing tools. Moreover, inefficient extension services was the most prominent constraints to cashew production. It was recommended that government and non -governmental organization should employ more extension agents. The extension agents should also, be re-engineered towards efficient service delivery to the Farmers.

KEYWORDS:

CASHEW, EXTENSION AGENTS, EXTENSION SERVICES, PROCESSING TOOLS AND TRAINING

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1. INTRODUCTION

Cashew (*Anacardium occidentale*) farming is crucial to Nigeria's agricultural sector, making a significant economic contribution and supporting the livelihoods of numerous farmers (Eze et al., 2023). For many farming households, cashews have grown to be a very important agricultural product. The importance of cashews, particularly the nut, in Nigeria cannot be overstated, as their yield has a substantial impact on the nation's GDP, public revenues, and foreign trade. Cashew is grown in several parts of Nigeria, while the Kogi, Oyo, Enugu, Osun, and Anambra are the major producing states (Agboola Adedoja et al., 2022). Aside from being the main source of revenue for many farmers, it is also a major export sector of the country. Cashew exports contribute about 8% of Nigeria's non-oil export revenue (Esan et al., 2018). This fact is further corroborated by Ogunwolu et al. (2020), who find that cashews contributed between 25 million to 35 million USD from 2010 to 2014. This fact has been rose to 342 million USD in 2017, but declined to 119 million USD in 2019. The value of cashew nuts exported from Nigeria is gradually appreciating recently, as it rose to 156 million USD in 2021 (Statista, 2023). This makes cashew nut export to be the leading agricultural export product in Nigeria, as of the second quarter of 2022 (NBS, 2022).

More so, according to Adeigbe et al. (2015), Nigeria is a leading producer of good quality cashew nuts, second only to Vietnam and closely followed by India, Cote d Ivoire, and the Philippines. Therefore, this crop needs to be given high priority, given its importance as a raw material for the local industries, as well as an export commodity.

Cashew remains one of the most important export crops in the Western region of Africa (Ricau, 2019). With a

consistent market share of 45%, since 2015, the region has emerged as a significant player in the global cashew market (Monteiro et al., 2017). As demonstrated by the enormous increase in cashew production from 400,000 MT to approximately 1,800,000 MT between 1961 and 2016, West Africa is dominating both the existing and emerging cashew markets. Cashew is seen as an auspicious weapon for poverty reduction in Africa, and a source of hope for many people due to its critical role in supporting the livelihoods of numerous small-scale farmers, while contributing to national income (Sanyang, Kuyateh, 2018).

It is quite pitiful that in a country like Nigeria where production of cashew is possible because of the suitability of our climate for its cultivation, our industries which are in need of some products from cashew are going abroad for raw materials and this in turn has effects on their production cost and consequently the price of the finished products from the industries are high.

The specific objectives are to:

1. Ascertain training deficiencies of respondent in the cashew production in the study area
2. Examine the constraints to cashew production in the study area.

2. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study was conducted in in Surulere Local Government Area, Oyo-State, Nigeria. Its headquarters is in the town of Iresa-Adu. It has an area of 23 km^2 and a population of 142,070 at the 2006 census (NPC, 2006). The annual growth rate of 3.4% was estimated (National bureau of Statistics, 2018). Therefore, in 2024 the State's population is 229, 016. Some of the towns in the local government are Iresa-Adu, Igbon and Iresa-Apa. The main economic activities of the residents of the towns that make up Surulere local government is farming. The main produce from there farming activity is: Yam, Cocoa, Palm oil, Maize and Tobacco.

The population for this study consisted of all cashew farmers in Surulere Local Government Area of Oyo State.

Multistage sampling technique was used to select the respondents. The first stage was the purposive sampling of four (4) villages. The second stage was the proportionate sampling of 10% of registered cashew famers. Thus, a total of 100 respondents were interviewed.

Descriptive Statistical Tools that were used include frequency counts, percentages and means. These were used to describe training deficiencies of respondent in the cashew production and constraints to cashew production.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Training deficiencies of respondent in the cashew production

In Table 1, training deficiencies of respondent in the cashew production were presented. Inefficient local processing tools includes; strongly disagree (5%), disagree (16%), neutral (0%), agree (21%) and strongly agree (58%). Less availability of equipment and machine for processing tools includes; strongly disagree (16%), disagree (5%), neutral (11%), agree (11%) and strongly agree (57%). Lack of money to acquire new technology includes; strongly disagree (21%), disagree (5%), neutral (10%), agree (16%) and strongly agree (47%). Inadequate transportation facilities includes; strongly disagree (16%), disagree (5%), neutral (0%), agree (26%) and strongly agree (53%). Lack of working capital includes; strongly disagree (20%), disagree (5%), neutral (0%), agree (20%) and strongly agree (55%). Lack of training about cashew includes; strongly disagree (26%), disagree (5%), neutral (10%), agree (21%) and strongly agree (38%). Proper drying of cashew nut includes; strongly disagree (22%), disagree (5%), neutral (0%), agree (26%) and strongly agree (47%). Moreover, the most prominent training deficiencies was inefficient local processing tools. This implies that farmers could have been experiencing losses of cashew nuts and economic losses due to inefficient local processing tools The results of Mgonja and Shausi (2022) was consistent with the findings of this study. They reported that inefficient local processing tools rank first among the challenges facing cashew nut processors in Ruangwa district, Tanzania.

TABLE 1: TRAINING DEFICIENCIES OF RESPONDENT IN THE CASHEW PRODUCTION

Training deficiencies	Frequency	Percentage
Inefficient local processing tools		
Strongly disagree	5	5.00
Disagree	16	16.00
Neutral agree	0	0.00
Agree	21	21.00
Strongly agree	58	58.00
Less availability of equipment and machine for processing		
Strongly disagree	16	16.00

Disagree	5	5.00
Neutral agree	11	11.00
Agree	11	11.00
Strongly agree	57	57.00
Lack of money to acquire new technology		
Strongly disagree	21	21.00
Disagree	5	5.00
Neutral agree	11	10.00
Agree	16	16.00
Strongly agree	47	47.00

Source: Field survey, 2023.

TABLE 1: TRAINING DEFICIENCIES OF RESPONDENT IN THE CASHEW PRODUCTION (CONT.)

Training deficiencies	Frequency	Percentage
Inadequate transportation facilities		
Strongly disagree	16	16.00
Disagree	5	5.00
Neutral agree	0	0.00
Agree	26	26.00
Strongly agree	53	53.00
Lack of working capital		
Strongly disagree	20	20.00
Disagree	5	5.00
Neutral agree	0	0.00
Agree	20	20.00
Strongly agree	55	55.00
Lack of training about cashew		
Strongly disagree	26	26.00
Disagree	3	5.00
Neutral agree	10	10.00
Agree	21	21.00
Strongly agree	38	38.00

Source: Field survey, 2023.

TABLE 1: TRAINING DEFICIENCIES OF RESPONDENT IN THE CASHEW PRODUCTION (CONT.)

Training deficiencies	Frequency	Percentage
Proper drying of cashew nut		
Strongly disagree	22	22.00
Disagree	5	5.00

Neutral agree	0	0.00
Agree	26	26.00
Strongly agree	47	47.00

Source: Field survey, 2023.

CONSTRAINTS TO CASHEW PRODUCTION

Table 2, presented constraints to cashew production. Inadequate capital includes; severe constraint (30%), mild constraint (60%) and not a constraint (10%). Inadequate farm training includes; severe constraint (60%), mild constraint (15%) and not a constraint (25%). Inefficient extension services includes; severe constraint (81%), mild constraint (9%) and not a constraint (10%). Poor pricing of cashew nuts includes; severe constraint (90%), mild constraint (8%) and not a constraint (2%). Lack of proper policy intervention nuts includes; severe constraint (60%), mild constraint (35%) and not a constraint (5%). Underutilization of cashew nuts includes; severe constraint (56%), mild constraint (20%) and not a constraint (24%). Diseases affecting cashew nuts includes; severe constraint (45%), mild constraint (25%) and not a constraint (30%). Lack of government incentives includes; severe constraint (66%), mild constraint (15%) and not a constraint (19%).

Moreover, inefficient extension services was the most prominent constraints to cashew production. This implies that the activities of agricultural extension agents has been very poor.

The results of Uwagboe (2017) was consistent with the findings of this study. They reported that poor market was among the most prominent constraint facing cashew Farmers in Kogi –State, Nigeria.

TABLE 2: CONSTRAINTS TO CASHEW PRODUCTION

Constraints	Frequency	Percentage
Inadequate capital		
Severe constraint	30	30.00
Mild constraint	60	60.00
Not a constraint	10	10.00
Inadequate farm training		
Severe constraint	60	60.00
Mild constraint	15	15.00
Not a constraint	25	25.00
Inefficient extension services		
Severe constraint	81	81.00
Mild constraint	9	9.00
Not a constraint	10	10.00
Poor pricing of cashew nuts		
Severe constraint	90	90.00
Mild constraint	8	8.00
Not a constraint	2	2.00

Source: Field survey, 2023.

TABLE 2: CONSTRAINTS TO CASHEW PRODUCTION (CONT.)

Constraints	Frequency	Percentage
Lack of proper policy intervention		
Severe constraint	60	60.00

Mild constraint	35	35.00
Not a constraint	5	5.00
Underutilization of cashew nuts		
Severe constraint	56	56.00
Mild constraint	20	20.00
Not a constraint	24	24.00
Diseases affecting cashew		
Severe constraint	45	45.00
Mild constraint	25	25.00
Not a constraint	30	30.00
Lack of government incentives		
Severe constraint	66	66.00
Mild constraint	15	15.00
Not a constraint	19	19.00

Source: Field survey, 2023.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

It was concluded that most prominent training deficiencies was inefficient local processing tools. Moreover, inefficient extension services was the most prominent constraints to cashew production. It was recommended that government and non -governmental organization should employ more extension agents. They should ensure efficient extension service delivery to the Farmers.

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