

Department of Agricultural Economics Postgraduate Students Presentations

Title: Assessment of the Effectiveness of Communication Channels in Dissemination of Fall Armyworm Information in Maize Production in Kenya

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Effective communication channels have played an imperative role in the dissemination of critical information to farmers. There are modern information sources and media channels disseminating information on farming activities and practices in Kenya, however, dismal attention has been given to the effectiveness of such information communication channels in disseminating information to farmers, especially on Fall Armyworms (FAW). This study, therefore sought to assess the effectiveness of information communication channels used in information dissemination on fall armyworms in maize production amongst farmers in Lugari-Kakamega County, Kenya. The study employed a descriptive research design guided by the diffusion theory by Rodgers (1995). The study targeted a population of 1200 maize farmers out of which 155 were systematically sampled for the study. Qualitative and quantitative data was collected through key informant interviews, household questionnaires and focused group discussions. It was established that majority of the maize farmers had acquired basic knowledge on FAW infestation via radio which was rated as the most effective channel of information dissemination among farmers. Further, the key informants indicated that public gatherings *barazas* effectively enhanced mass media information dissemination on FAW attack. The study also established that extension agents were easily accessible and facilitated essential and reliable information to farmers. The study established a strong relationship between occupation and phone, television ownership with employment providing necessary income for acquisition of technologies. There was also a positive relationship between age and computer/laptop ownership with majority of the youth acquires FAW information on computers because of their techno-savvy abilities. The study therefore recommends the County government to enhance future dissemination of FAW information via radio in both local and Kiswahili languages. Further, there is need for re-tooling of extension agents, lead farmers and Agro- dealers on modern methods of FAW control methods.