

AWARENESS OF IMPROVED PRACTICES OF TEFF BY SMALLHOLDER FARMERS IN CHALIYADISTRICT, WEST SHOA ZONE, ETHIOPIA

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ABSTRACT

Ethiopia's major staple crop is Teff (Eragrostisteff). Teff is one of the most important crops for farm income and food security in Ethiopia. Despite the importance of teff in Ethiopia, yields are remarkably low. Low yield due to low adoption of improved agricultural technologies is believed to be the main factor. Awareness is endogenous to the decision to adopt; thus, awareness and adoption are modelled jointly to allow us to interpret awareness as a potential policy variable which can be used to influence the probability of adoption. Therefore, this study was carried out to assess the awareness of improved cultivation and post-harvest management practices of teff by smallholder teff farmers. The study used both quantitative and qualitative research approaches. Cross sectional survey research design was employed to collect data. Among the 19 districts in the West Shoa zone, Chaliyadistrict was purposively selected because this district has 6815 ha of land under teff under cultivation, out of which only 46 ha are under improved practices. The number of respondents to be selected from each randomly selected eight villages was determined based on Probability Proportional to Size (PPS). The respondents (239) were selected from the eight villages by using random sampling technique. The data were collected using semi-structured interview schedule, key informant interviews and focus group discussions. The collected data were coded, tabulated and analysed using descriptive statistical tests. In this research, it was found that the awareness on mechanical thresher, line sowing, less seed rate and transplanting was less among the respondents, which was a major constraint in adoption. The awareness about the benefits of row planting, transplanting and use of mechanical thresher was low among the respondents. Therefore, the extension agency should put forth more efforts to create awareness on these technologies and its benefits by employing effective and suitable communication methods as the awareness was low on these technologies.

KEYWORDS: Awareness, Teff, Ethiopia