

**EVALUATION OF MAIZE PRODUCTION AND MARKETING
PERFORMANCE: A CASE STUDY OF MBEYA RURAL DISTRICT,
MBEYA REGION, TANZANIA**

BY

JOSEPH JOHN MAGALI



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ABSTRACT

This study was conducted in Mbeya rural district to evaluate the production and marketing performance of maize produce. The specific objectives of the study were to determine the economic profitability of maize grown by small-scale farmers, identify existing maize marketing channels and the roles played by key market participants and to examine the pricing structure of maize at different levels of market channel. The Primary data was collected using structured questionnaire and data was analyzed by using SPSS computer programme. A sample size of 170 respondents being 125 farmers and 45 traders were interviewed. Secondary data were obtained from Mbeya region, Mbeya rural district agricultural offices and on the internet. The results from the study show that the gross margin per acre and the returns per shilling invested for farmers were Tshs 153 910 and 1.00 respectively. The gross margins per tin of 18 kg for retailers, wholesalers and travelling traders were Tshs 301.19, 203.63 and 1 462.80 respectively. The pricing structure of the marketing margins for farmers and traders ranged from Tshs 4 360 and 5 926.80 respectively. The marketing margin results revealed that farmers to retailers were Tshs 233.33 and wholesalers to transporters were Tshs 1 072.33. Moreover, the results show that ($r < 0.954$ $P = 0.01$) the market of maize was highly concentrated with the over all market concentration of 64.23%; which categorized market as oligopoly. The main production and marketing problems cited by farmers (84%) and traders (30%) were low prices of maize produce and high market levies for traders (29%). This study recommends that prices of maize should be increased so as to motive farmers to increase maize production.