

Information Needs of Cassava Processors on Small-Scale Cassava Processing in Oyo State, Nigeria

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Abstract : Cassava is an important food crop in rural households of Nigeria. It has a high potential for product diversification, because it can be processed into various products forms for human consumption and can be made into chips for farm animals, and also starch and starch derivatives. However, cassava roots are highly perishable and contain potentially toxic cyanogenic glycosides which necessitate its processing. Therefore, this study was carried out to assess information needs of cassava processors on food safety practices in Oyo State, Nigeria. Simple random sampling technique was used in the selection of 110 respondents for this study. Descriptive statistics and chi-square were used to analyze the data collected. Results of this study showed that the mean age of the respondents was 39.4 years, majority (78.7%) of the respondents was married, 51.9% had secondary education; 45.8% of the respondents have spent more than 12 years in cassava processing. The mean income realized was ₦26,347.50/month from cassava processing. Information on cassava processing got to the respondents through friends, family and relations (73.6%) and fellow cassava processors (58.6%). Serious constraints identified were ineffective extension agents (93.9%), food safety regulatory agencies (88.1%) and inadequate processing and storage facilities (67.8%). Chi-square results showed that significant relationship existed between socio-economic characteristics of the respondents ($\chi^2 = 29.80$, $df = 2$), knowledge level ($\chi^2 = 9.26$, $df = 4$), constraints ($\chi^2 = 13.11$, $df = 2$) and information needs at $p < 0.05$ level of significance. The study recommends that there should be regular training on improved cassava processing methods for the cassava processors in the study area.

Keywords : information, needs, cassava, Oyo State, processing

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