

International Conference on

Food Production and Preservation

October 17-18, 2018 Ottawa, Canada

The current status of small and medium enterprises in food manufacturing in Kenya

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The paper examined the chemical method of preserving cowpea grains during marketing in Ikole Local Government Area of Ekiti State. The specific objectives of the study are to identify chemicals used by marketers to preserve grains during marketing, determine marketer's compliances to correct dosage and the effect of wrong dosage and the residual effect of preservative chemicals on cowpea grain consumers. Primary data were used to accomplish the objectives of the study. At first, ten villages were sampled out of total number of villages in Ikole Local Government areas; one cowpea market was sampled per village giving a total of ten markets and ten respondents were sampled from each market with a total sample size of hundred yam marketers in the study areas. Questionnaire was the principal tool of data collection supplemented with visitation and focus group discussion. Data collected were analysed using both inferential and descriptive statistics. Results indicated that the bulk of marketers applied various chemicals such as phostoxin, DD4, CODO but more than 670% of marketers who adopted the use of chemicals to preserve grains used wrong dosage which indicated that consumers of grains in the study areas were exposed to the likelihood of health challenges from wrong usage of preservatives that were poisonous to man. The chemicals were applied to kill pest and to stop perforation of grains by weevils thereby increasing the shelf life. The chemicals were effective to kill pest and preserve grains. The study concluded that chemicals were effective way of extending storage period of grains thereby extending the shelf life during marketing but the use of chemicals had negative effect of health challenges such as stomach pain, purging, excessive stooling after consumption and constipation among consumers of chemical treated grains or outright death of consumer of cowpea grains usually known as killer beans. There was poor inspection and presence of regulatory officers in the market and the consumers were left at the mercy of moral status of food grains marketers. The study established that there is possibility of food poison arising from the use of pesticide as means of extending storage period of grains during marketing in the study areas.

Biography

Dr.M.O. Abiola is an experienced Agricultural Economist. He is a graduate of reputable University of Benin and Obfemi Awolowo University in Nigeria. He was a former Lecturer in The Department of Agricultural Economics and Extension Services; University of Benin before joining Federal University, Oye as pioneering staff in 2013. He is a consultant to various organisations and is currently a Senior Lecturer in the Department of Agricultural Economics and Extension, Faculty of Agriculture, Federal University Oye, Ekiti State. He has published in both local and reputable international journals. He is a Christian with good sense of humour Dr.M.O.Abiola is happily married with children.

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