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Determinants of food security status among rural arable crop farming households in Ondo State, Nigeria

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Food security is a great concern in Nigeria going by its very poor ranking in the current global food security index. This is the motivation for this study which analyzed food security status among rural arable crop farming households in Ondo State, Nigeria. Multistage sampling procedure was used to select 150 respondents for the study. Descriptive statistics, food security index, probit regression model and coping strategy use index (CSUI) were used to analyze the collected data. The result revealed that (54%) of rural arable crop farming households in the study area were food secure. This was determined by using the recommended minimum calorie of 2260 Kcal. Furthermore, the empirical analysis revealed that gender of the household head, household size, farm size and farm income of the household head had significant influence on the household food security status. The most widely employed coping strategy was withdrawal from personal savings as indicated by 14.82% of household and while reliance on less expensive food and purchasing food on credit were ranked second and third respectively with 13.66 and 12.85% by the food insecure households. The study concluded that gender of the household head, farm size and farm income increase the probability of rural arable crop farming households being food secure while household size increases the odds of the farming households being food insecure. In order to ensure sustainable food security among the households, the study recommended effective household size management and enlightenment programmes on family planning in the study area. Farmers should increase their farm sizes. Farmers should use more inputs and technologies to increase the output. Farmers should also be encouraged to have additional source of income towards attaining food security in the study area.

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