



PYRETHRUM PRODUCTION NICHES - SOCIO-ECONOMICS



Introduction

Pyrethrum is grown in various parts of the country with majority of pyrethrum growers being small scale growers with less than 5 acres of land. In most cases, the area occupied by pyrethrum averages a quarter of an acre to three acres.

Alongside the agro-ecological conditions of a given area commonly known to impact on crop production, there are social and economic factors that impact on any production or development activities. Social and economic factors include all other

issues that affect the daily lives in a society. They include: infrastructure, education, policy frameworks, markets and marketing, capital accumulation/ income differentials and human workforce.

a) Infrastructure

This entails all the business enabling environment factors such as facilities transport and communication systems. The government (national and county) may also chip in to support farmers in constructing facilities such as modern driers closer to their farms. This help in drying produce regardless of the weather conditions.



Kavirondo mat drier for drying pyrethrum at farm level

The government through the relevant department may build more buying centres close to the farmers. This may help ease the marketing of farmers produce.

Also, there is need for public and private research institutes and agribusiness firms to venture into pyrethrum research in the following areas:



Modern pyrethrum drier in Subukia Kenya. (Source- Good people international)

b) Education, research and capacity buildings

These comprise of training farmers in good agricultural practices, backstopping and conducting the impact assessment on training.

Training sessions could be organized at the county, constituency, ward and location grassroot levels with extension service providers being on the forefront.

- (i) Technologies and innovations for scaling up production in various parts of the country.
- (ii) Breeding approaches to improve pyrethrin content in pyrethrum varieties.
- (iii) Alternative value addition strategies
- (iv) Estimation of export potentials in current and emerging markets



Pyrethrum farmers field training session. (Source R. Lagat)

c) Policy framework

To cope with problems facing the pyrethrum sub-sector, regulation or implementation of agricultural policies is needed. These include agricultural policies emanate from the set of laws relating to agriculture production.

Government bodies mandated with policy formulation to govern agricultural operations include Agriculture and Food Authority, Kenya Plant Health Inspectorate Service and National Biosafety Authority. Relevant policies should be strictly adhered to since they ensure orderliness in each of the sector they regulate.

Objectives of agricultural policy formulation include:

- Increasing the performance of research to develop high yielding varieties, fertilizers, pesticides and irrigation technologies.
- Modernization of agriculture through introduction and invention of modern scientific technologies in agricultural operation.
- Protecting the interests of small/marginal farmers by providing finance to support to farmer operations.
- Removing bureaucratic obstacles on the farmers-

cooperative societies and self-help groups to work independently.

d) Markets and marketing

Marketing entails product promotion which is the process of explaining the value of a product to potential and existing customers to educate, generate interest, and spur purchase.

The government can intervene the dwindled pyrethrum situation in Kenya through product promotion locally and internationally.

This is achievable through solicitation of external markets for raw and the value-added products.

The general public may also be advised on the advantages derived from pyrethrum-based products over synthetic products. Consequently, when demand for pyrethrum-based products rise in tandem with demand for raw materials more farmers can be contracted into pyrethrum farming.

Other methods that can be used in marketing of pyrethrum products include:

- Social media platforms
- Exhibitions and shows
- Display in processing companies websites



Farmers queue to dispatch their dry pyrethrum flowers to a buyer. (Source Kentegra)

e) Capital accumulation

Capital is any financial asset that is used for any production process. Capital investment must be expedited in order to finance operations. Farmers need financial empowerment to support their daily farm operations. This can be done through registration of individual farmers or farmer groups with Cooperatives and Sacco's for ease of obtaining financial services. Additionally, the government should streamline legal formalities that hindering financial processes in agriculture.

f) Human work force

This refer to the economic value of a worker's experience and skills. Currently, the larger percentage of pyrethrum farmers is the old population hence there is a need for youth empowerment. The youthful population need motivation and sensitization on the profitability of the pyrethrum value chain.

Additionally, the National and the county governments need to employ young, vibrant persons for roles in extension services provision.



Pyrethrum nursery bed preparation



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