

Abstract

This project encompasses the factors influencing the implementation and adoption of Sustainable Agricultural Practices (SAPs) by farmers in selected communities in Trinidad and Tobago. It reviews and examines previous research completed on the topic matter by other students and lecturers before including the research at present. This study focuses on the St. Andrew County. Vegetables are mainly grown by small farmers; the size of the plots ranging between 0.25 and 2.0 hectares (ha.). Fruits are also cultivated, on a lesser scale. The majority of farmers cultivate small areas of less than 0.5 ha. with minimal levels of agro-technology.

Within this region, there exist several communities with many farmers cultivating vegetable produce such as celery, cabbages, cucumbers, melongene, bodi, ochroes, lettuce, pumpkin, patchoi, sweet peppers, tomatoes, cauliflower, chive, hot peppers, dasheen bush, and sorrel (especially during the Christmas season). These vegetable crops are used primarily for local consumption or for sale in the local market. In very few cases, the crops are used for export purposes primarily to the United States, Miami market.

Saint Andrew is a county in Trinidad and Tobago. It is located in northeastern Trinidad, east of Saint George County, south of Saint David County and north of Nariva County. To the east it is bounded by the Atlantic Ocean. The major town in the county is Sangre Grande.

The population studied included fifty-five vegetable/produce farmers, who were interviewed during the period of December 2008 to February 2009. This sample was obtained by using simple random sampling methods to reduce bias in the selection process. A questionnaire

was developed and pre-tested in Diego Martin by informally interviewing five farmers, to locate and correct errors prior to the actual survey.

The results disclose the lack of external support and extension services, as well as the cost involved to implement the infrastructure as major factors that affected the adoption of sustainable agricultural practices by farmers. Furthermore, it was discovered that many farmers utilize unsustainable agricultural practices, such as the overuse of agro-chemicals, improper irrigation and land clearing methods and continuous cropping.