

Abstract

The aim of this research paper is to explore the sources of market information available to small farmers in Trinidad and Tobago. Accessing marketing information is very crucial to any business. The radical changes worldwide in the market place are due to the increasing use of technology and other factors. It has been increasingly difficult to get products noticed and thus creativity becomes a key factor on the part of the marketer.

After several meetings, a questionnaire was formulated after a number of drafts were done by the student researchers. Then target areas were selected by each researcher in which they wanted to start their study. On reaching the targeted area the researcher used a method of random selection in order to choose which farms to go to and in what direction to start from. The researcher visited the farms in the hours after lunch as this was the most suitable time in which they thought the farmers would be most cooperative.

When the interviews were done the results were taken to the computer lab in the University of the West Indies for analysis. The SPSS program was used to analyze data and Chi-Squared and Cross Tabulations were done to see if any relationships existed between the different variables. Graphs were then formulated and conclusions were made.

Even though the Chi-Squared analysis showed that no direct relationships existed, the researcher found that the results showed that conclusions and recommendations could be made about the different variables. The results showed that the largest age group of farmers belonged to the respondents that were more than fifty (>50) and that there were a greater amount of males than females that were present in the agriculture sector. It was recommended that improvement should be made by the Ministry of Agriculture and they should put operations in place to

encourage more young adults and women to join the agriculture sector. This could in turn increase productivity and in doing so increase domestic production and further stimulate the economy.

In looking technology it was found that more respondents had access to the internet than those who did not have any access. In one area however this was not the case. In St Joseph more respondents did not have access to the internet than those who had access. It was recommended that the government make a greater effort to provide these rural areas with technologies and the internet for them to be able to have a competitive advantage over others. Also programs should be put in place to teach the respondents that are more senior in an effort to educate them on how to use the internet properly in order to gain information on agriculture. This too would give them a competitive edge as they would be able to explore avenues and gain knowledge and information that they previously did not have access to.