

ABSTRACT

Investigation of the Production Risks Faced by Farmers in Northeastern Area of Central Trinidad and the Explanation of their Risk Mitigation Behaviour

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Caribbean farmers are frequently bombarded by numerous production risks that not only negatively affect agricultural production, but agricultural development. Since these risks reduce agricultural production, it is imperative that risk mitigation measures be employed to lessen the impact of risk on agricultural production. Production risks are considered by farmers to be some of the most important risks that significantly impact their livelihoods. There appears to be limited research done on the subject areas of production risks and risk behaviour of farmers in Trinidad and by extension, the Caribbean. Therefore, this study seeks to identify and better understand the production risks and the risk behaviours of farmers in Trinidad.

The study was conducted in six districts of County Caroni and two districts of St. George West County, which span the northeastern area of central Trinidad. Data was collected from 227 farmers via the use of a questionnaire and field visits. Data analyses used were frequency distributions, chi-square tests and, logistic and sample selection regression models. The binary logistic regression technique was used to test the hypothesis that there is a relationship between the

socioeconomic and risk factors of farmers and the risk mitigation behaviour of farmers. The sample selection technique was used to investigate the effects of various socioeconomic and risk factors of farmers on the success of the risk mitigation measures practiced by the farmers.

The results identified the following six significant socioeconomic and risk factors that determined the probability of the farmer practicing any risk mitigation measures: the farm size and whether the farmer: reared livestock; owned land; experienced drought; believed that disasters have worsened over time and was the head of the household. The study has also revealed the following four significant socioeconomic and risk factors that determined the probability of the farmer using successful risk mitigation measures: whether the farmer experienced drought; reared livestock; owned land; and was the head of the household.

Keywords: Risk; mitigation behaviour; socioeconomic characteristics; farmers; logistic regression; sample selection analysis