

Abstract

This thesis presents a report on a study of resource productivity and profitability of cassava production in selected areas of Jamaica. Data were obtained by a survey of forty-three farmers carried out as part of the study. These forty-three farmers were stratified by parishes and by acreage of cassava grown. The parishes of Clarendon, Manchester and St. Elizabeth were chosen as the study area, primarily because they represent a significant percentage of the total cassava acreage in Jamaica. The data received from the survey were used to estimate production functions. From the production function, estimates of the marginal value product of the different resource inputs were determined.

The results of this analysis showed that several of the resource inputs had low productivities while some had high productivities. A profitability analysis was also done by fitting a total cost function by means of regression method. The results of this analysis indicate that the current level of cassava production is significantly below the optimum level. It was also observed that the level of production where farmers would maximise profits was above the point of lowest output cost. However, as this position is not attainable, a position of compromise is suggested.

Several conclusions are drawn from the study. They included, inter alia, the need for more land to be made available for cassava production or the introduction of higher yielding varieties of planting material; the desirability of examining the profitability

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of other crops relative to cassava and the need for a study to
examine the profitability of cassava processing.

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