

**FARMERS' AND AGRICULTURAL ADVISERS'
PERCEPTIONS ON THE ROLE OF EDUCATION IN
SWEET POTATO (*Ipomoea batatas L.*) PRODUCTION
IN TESO, UGANDA**

BY

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A THESIS

**Submitted to the Board of Postgraduate Studies in Partial Fulfilment of the
Requirements for the Degree
of Doctor of Philosophy in Agricultural Education
of Egerton University**

**EGERTON UNIVERSITY
NJORO, KENYA**

AUGUST 2003

APPROVAL BY SUPERVISORS

This thesis has been submitted to the Board of Postgraduate Studies of Egerton University with our approval as University Supervisors.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Success in one's studies can never be the candidate's sole effort. Usually, there are several actors, namely: the sponsors, academic advisers, teachers, colleagues, friends and relatives. In recognition of all these persons, I wish to thank them for their teamwork with me. Thank you. Thanks to the Lord for keeping me and enabling me to do my studies.

Among the sponsors, I wish to heartily thank Professor A.J. Lutalo-Bosa, Vice-Chancellor, Kyambogo University and all his colleagues for granting me study leave and financial support for the course. Let me also thank Mr. Ian Wallace and Mr. Andrew Jones, Director, Kulika from UK for their support to me. I live to remember their decisions to support my studies. Thanks to Dr. B. Lemaga, Dr. B. Odongo, and the District Agricultural Officers of Teso Region, Uganda with all the enumerators especially Mr. F. Anyumel and Mr. J. R. Okwi. It is important to thank the Teso farmers and their agricultural advisers for responding positively to the study.

At Egerton University, I wish to thank my three University supervisors, namely: Professor J.G. Mwangi, Professor N.J. Kathuri, and Dr. J.M. Githeko for their time in reading my work and guiding me. Thanks to Professor Dankit Nassiuma, Director, Graduate School, for being an excellent student counsellor, data analyst and for helping me meet my needs for accommodation and availing a computer for my use. Special thanks to Dr. Ali S. Islam, Chairman, Department of Mathematics and all his colleagues for allowing me to use their computers and office facilities during the preparation of my thesis. All Staff of Egerton University especially from Agricultural Education and Extension Department, colleagues and all Kenyan friends, I say, *Asante sana*.

ABSTRACT

Poor husbandry, low use of improved inputs and limited access to technical advice are likely to be related to a farmer's education. Forty-six percent of Teso farmers are literate, but the literacy rate of men (66%) is higher than of women (34%). The study investigated the role of education in sweet potato production. Using an *ex post facto* research design, 24 out of 51 sub-counties were randomly selected based on district-county strata and used to determine the perceptions of sweet potato farmers and their agricultural advisers. Through interviews, observations and questionnaires, the survey covered 288 farmers and 33 agricultural advisers, while 329 community leaders and farmers were engaged in focus group discussions. Qualitative and quantitative data were collected and analysed qualitatively using open and axial coding; and quantitatively using means, frequencies, percentages, t-test, ANOVA, and multiple regression at a confidence level of 0.05 alpha. Six sweet potato productivity indicators (output per ha, output per person, output per shilling spent, income per ha, income per person, and income per shilling spent) and their levels were established. Indigenous technical knowledge was the chief source of the farmers' knowledge and skills used in growing sweet potatoes. Farmers with 1-4 years of primary schooling excelled in output per person, output per shilling and income per shilling. Farmers with 13-18 years of formal education and those who had contact with agricultural extension excelled in output per ha, income per ha and income per person. Primary schooling, secondary and college training facilitated in crop production and business management while agricultural extension and university facilitated better soil management. Farmers without formal education achieved lower productivity. Therefore, stakeholders should invest more in relevant farmers' education.