

Optimal Arable Crop Plan and Child Farm Labour Reduction in Rural Households of Ogun State, Nigeria

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ABSTRACT The study was carried out to model an optimal arable crop plan that minimizes child farm labour use in Ogun State, Nigeria. A multistage sampling technique was used to select a total of 400 rural households from the State. The household survey involves an interview of 594 children, 400 household heads and a focus group discussion section in four locations. The data collected were analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistics in line with the study objectives. The linear programming model was used to develop an optimal arable crop farm that maximizes economic returns to the farmers while simultaneously allowing for maximum school attendance and involvement. The optimal farm model revealed that a restructuring of the crop enterprise plan could increase the annual farm income by about 15.3 percent, while at the same time minimizing the child farm labour involvement in the State. The study recommends that reducing child labour, will require facilitating access to credit to the resources-poor rural households. Also, that government should provide assistance to arable crop farmers in the areas of subsidizing the costs of production inputs (seeds, tractor hiring, fertilizers and other agrochemicals), and that research efforts should be geared towards developing simple, affordable, and adaptable machines/implements, and other farm labour-saving devises.