

Can Small-scale Tomato Farmers Flourish in Benue State, Nigeria?

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ABSTRACT This study employed Cobb-Douglas stochastic frontier analysis to examine the ability of small-scale tomato farmers to flourish in Benue state, Nigeria from technical efficiency point of view. Evidence shows that tomato output was significantly influenced by farm size, labour, seeds, and quantity of fertilizer used. Technical efficiency among the tomato farmers varied considerably ranging between 0.20 and 0.99 with a mean technical efficiency of 0.58, implying that an estimated 42 percent of tomato output is lost due to inefficiency. Thus, suggesting the presence of considerable inefficiency among the tomato farmers in the state. In order words, if current resources available to the farmers were used efficiently, tomato output would increase by about 42 percent, resulting in an increase large enough to meet the demand of the state as well as neighbouring states. Consequently, going by this result, there is a huge potential for tomato farmers in the state to flourish. Furthermore, education, experience and extension were found to impact significantly on tomato output.