

Green Leafy Vegetables' Self-Provisioning among Urban Consumers in Nakuru County: What is the Motive?

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Green leafy vegetables' self-provisioning is an informal means of vegetables production with the major part of it used for own-consumption. In Kenya, self-provisioning is taking place in both urban and peri-urban areas. However, the motives of engaging in this practice, and of the choice of commodities to focus in, are not clear. Existing studies have provided mixed reasons for engaging in self-provisioning such as; economic hardships, improving household food security, source of employment, cultural reasons or leisure/hobby. The study, therefore, aimed at determining the concrete reason for green leafy vegetables' self-provisioning in urban areas. Probit model was used to analyze data from a random sample of 387 households drawn from urban areas within Nakuru Municipality, Kenya. Results indicated that 45% of urban households were engaging in green leafy vegetables' self-provisioning. Out of those self-provisioning, 53.8% were driven by food safety and health concerns, 23.04% by food security reasons and 23.16% by economic reasons. Some of major challenges reported by those self-provisioning included: inadequate water supply (27.91%), pest and diseases (24.42%), lack of skills and knowledge about self-provisioning (22.67%), lack of enough space (11.63%), and lack of government support (2.91%). Factors significantly influencing green leafy vegetables self-provisioning were: perception towards safety of green leafy vegetables, access to green leafy vegetables safety information, household income, age of household head, perceived behavioral control, social norms, and the size of household. To improve green leafy vegetables self-provisioning in urban areas, there is need for policies that improve access to clean and adequate water, facilitate access to food safety information, and ensure consumers are trained on food self-provisioning practices.

Keywords: Green leafy Vegetables, Self-provisioning, Food safety concerns, Consumers