Abstract

A study was conducted in 5 districts in Kenya (Muranga, Thika and Maragua in Central Province, and Makueni and Embu in Eastern Province) to determine the factors linked to the acquisition of integrated pest management (IPM) knowledge and sharing among the two different group-based farmers, as well as among farmers operating individually (the control group). Data were collected from May to July 2008 focusing on active smallholder vegetable and fruit producers grouped in three categories: farmer field schools (FFS) members, common interest groups (CIG) members, and control farmers. The control farmers were not members of the two group-based training approaches, but they were sampled from the same villages as the FFS and CIG farmers. According to the marginal effect result, FFS and CIG membership, the number of groups to which farmers belonged (excluding FFS and CIG), farmer household memberś literacy and locality positively and significantly affected IPM knowledge acquisition, whereas household size, land size, permanent labour, casual labour, access to horticulture production information, distance to extension services, farmer visitors, frequency of listening to horticulture production information on the radio, and frequency of reading newspaper articles on horticulture production negatively and significantly affected IPM knowledge acquisition. Knowledge sharing was significantly and positively associated with the number of casual labourers employed, IPM knowledge acquisition, and the number of visitors received, whereas membership in FFS, gender and locality significantly and negatively affected IPM knowledge sharing.