

**FACTORS AFFECTING ADOPTION OF ORGANIC FOOD PRODUCTION  
SYSTEM AMONGST SMALLHOLDER FARMERS IN MURANG'A  
COUNTY, KENYA**

By

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Reg.No.: N50/CE/20291/2010

A Research Project Submitted in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Degree  
of Master of Environmental Studies and Community Development in the School of  
Agriculture and Environmental Sciences of Kenyatta University

**MAY 2023**

## DECLARATION

This Research Project Report is my original work and it has not been presented for award of a degree to any other university.

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Signature.....

Date.....31/05/2023.....

### Declaration by the Supervisor:

I confirm that this research project report has been submitted for examination with my approval as a university supervisor.

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## ABSTRACT

Organic farming is among the identified sustainable farming systems as it puts into account social, economic and environmental concerns. However, while many countries across the world including Australia, United States, Tanzania and Uganda have shown great interest in organic farming, Kenya still lags behind with approximately 1% of the total farm land using organic farming. The general objective of this study was to investigate factors affecting adoption of organic farming amongst smallholder farmers in Murang'a south region, Murang'a County, Kenya. The specific objectives were (i) to assess the effect of household characteristics on the adoption of organic farming, (ii) to examine institutional support factors which influence the adoption of organic farming and to examine farmers' perceptions towards organic farming in the study area. The target population were 361 organic and conventional farmers obtained from the list of farmers targeted and working with pro-organic farming organisations namely KOAN, ICIPE and OACK from Gatanga, Kandara and Kigumo sub-counties. Proportionate sampling yielded a total of 189 farmers, both organic and conventional, who participated in the survey as respondents. The research employed household surveys and key informant interviews methods. The research used structured questionnaires and interview schedules to collect information from the farmers and key informants respectively. Key informants included representatives from the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries, the Department of Agriculture, local NGOs, organic goods stockists, and organic products marketing companies. Questionnaire responses were successfully collected from 152 participants yielding an overall response rate of 80.4%. Data was coded and analysed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences. Quantitative data was analysed descriptively and was presented using percentages and frequency distribution tables. For objective one and two, a logistic regression model was fitted to determine the probabilities and the odds of a farmer adopting not adopting organic farming. Qualitative data was organized into coherent categories in line with research objectives. Farm size ( $P=0.0$ ,  $-1.602$ ), experience of the farmer ( $P=0.017$ ,  $0.009$ ), the variety of crops grown ( $P=0.009$ ,  $0.069$ ), were found have a positive effect on farmers' decision to adopt organic farming or not. Organic farming techniques trained, number of organisations training and of training duration ( $P=0.000$ ,  $3.553$ ) have a positive effect on whether to adopt organic farming. The study found higher adoption in techniques where more training was offered. Variety of trainings, variety of training organisations and training duration ( $P$ -value is  $0.000$ ) were found to influence the extent (partial or whole farm) to which an organic farmer adopts organic farming. Training was also found to be the most effective way of disseminating organic farming information. While majority of the respondents portrayed a positive perception on sustainable benefits of organic farming, they also had a perception that organic farming is labour intensive, does not improve overall crop yields and market value and it's difficult to manage pest. The study recommends that pro-organic organizations should give more focus to farmers with smaller farm sizes and greater farming experience to enhance adoption of organic farming (OF). The pro-organic farming organizations should intensify training on OF, providing accurate information on OF transition period, certification, and markets. The perceptions can be positively influenced if pro-organic NGOs and the government can make improvements in availing adequate information. This can be done by intensifying training and advisory services on organic farm management and markets in order to improve the organic farming adoption.