EVALUATING THE PROFITABILITY OF SMALL AND MEDIUM SCALE AQUACULTURE ENTERPRISES IN UGANDA: A CASE STUDY OF WAKISO DISTRICT

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ABSTRACT

Fish farming is a newly established business venture in Uganda. The goal of this study was to investigate the growth and sustainability of fish farming business in Uganda together, its challenges and ways to combat them in order to improve the performance of the sector. Data was collected from 31 small and medium scale fish farms in Wakiso district. Wakiso was picked as a case study area because it had the most fish farmers in the region. Only active fish farmers were included in the sample, identified by the help of the District Fisheries Officer for Wakiso and a trusted field assistant. Both qualitative and quantitative data was collected using a questionnaire. Data was analyzed with SPSS to obtain frequencies and presented in form of tables and graphs. The findings showed that fish farming was a profitable and sustainable business venture with over 90% of interviewed fish farmers in agreement. Over 70% of the respondents stated that there was ready market for the farmed fish produce both within and outside Uganda while more than 80% acknowledged a steady growth in capacity produced by their farms. This study also identified pressing barriers to fish farming that included; high cost of commercial fish feed, lack of access to affordable credit and lack of regular quality extension services. Respondents suggested strategies to resolve these problems which included; provision of affordable long-term loans and grants, establishing feed manufacturing centres per region, government subsidizing in puts, provision of regular extension services and setting up regional demonstration farms to promote better farm practices.