



## **ANALYSIS OF SMALL-SCALE FARMER'S INCOME IN MELON PRODUCTION IN DELTA STATE, NIGERIA**

<sup>1</sup>**Onyemekonwu, R.C.,** <sup>2</sup>**Belonwu, E. N. and** <sup>1</sup>**Ehiwario, F. A.**

<sup>1</sup>Department of Agricultural Economics and Extension, Ambrose Alli University, Ekpoma, Delta State, Nigeria

<sup>2</sup> Department of Agricultural Science Education, College of Education, Agbor, Delta State, Nigeria

**Corresponding Authors' E-mail:** [chukwukaraymond@gmail.com](mailto:chukwukaraymond@gmail.com) **Tel.:** 08036282769

### **ABSTRACT**

The study analyzed the small-scale farmers' income in melon production in Delta State, Nigeria. Specific issues examined were the socio-economic characteristics of melon farmers in the study area, identified the farmers' major sources of information in melon production and identified the possible constraints faced by respondents in melon production in the study area. Multi-stage sampling technique comprising of purposive and random sampling was used to select 110 respondents. Data collected were analyzed using frequency count, mean and percentage while the Chi-square and Friedman test were used to test the hypotheses. The result showed that majority (69.1%) fell into the model class of 41 years and above having a mean of 47.2 years, 50.0% had a melon farming experience of 6 -10 years with the mean farming experience being 9.4, 52.7% had 6-10 members with a men household size of 9.7 members. The respondents mean annual income from melon farming was ₦28,640.90 and majority (74.5%) of the melon farmers studied do not belong to any farmers' association. 100% of the respondents' source information on melon farming from fellow farmers. Poor capital (mean = 3.50), inadequate extension services (mean = 3.50) pest and disease problem (mean = 3.41) and lack of improved seeds (mean=3.32) were the serious constraints faced by respondents in melon production. Significant relationship existed between respondents between respondents' age ( $x^2 = 44.569$ ;  $P < 0.05$ ), level of education ( $x^2 = 15.721$ ;  $P < 0.05$ ), melon farming experience ( $x^2 = 4.842$ ;  $P < 0.05$ ), household size ( $x^2 = 9.430$ ;  $P < 0.05$ ), association membership ( $x^2 = 20.621$ ;  $P < 0.05$ ) and the farmers income derived from melon farming. It was concluded that melon production in the study area was constrained by several factors such as poor capital, inadequate extension, problem of pest and diseases, lack of improved varieties that are capable of reducing the farmers production output and make farmers reduce their interest in the production of the crop. It was recommended that agricultural extension agencies in the state should target melon farmers in the study area should target melon farmers in the study area with special training programmes.

**Keyword:** Delta State, Farmers, Income, Melon production, Small-scale.