

## **Agricultural Produce Marketing in Semi-Urban Areas: The case of Plantain Marketing in Nsukka, Nigeria**

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**Abstract:**

To examine profitability and factors affecting plantain marketing in semi urban areas, this study adopted a modified 2-staged, purposive simple random sampling methodology to collect primary data from Nsukka, Nigeria, using a structured questionnaire. Descriptive statistics, net marketing income, marketing margin analysis, marketing efficiency index and multiple linear regression models were used to analyse data. Most plantain marketers were educated women of around 40 years old, who are married, living in homes of about 6 persons. With a net marketing return of ₦26,050.38 (US\$63.20), average marketing margin of 30.84% and a marketing efficiency of 35.06%, per month, plantain marketing is profitable and viable, but inefficient. Cost of plantain and marketing experience were positively significant relationship with net marketing returns of plantain. Plantain's high cost, seasonality, bulkiness, breakage and spoilage, as well as, financial inadequacy, fluctuating prices and high transportation costs were the primary factors constraining plantain marketing. To help mitigate against some of the challenges identified, marketers joining or forming cooperatives could bring about economies of scale that would avail them low interest funds. Basic infrastructures, such as adequate storage facilities and good road networks are also very essential in facilitating plantain marketing. Similarly, efficiency levels can be raised by encouraging programmes that facilitate good record keeping strategies, strategic marketing and funds generation.

**Keywords:** Marketing Efficiency, Marketing Margin, Net Marketing Income, Plantain, Profitability

**JEL Codes:** Q13