

Title Facilitating market access through private quality assurance programs in the Vietnamese horticultural sector

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Abstract

Food quality and safety are receiving increasing attention in the food sector nationally and internationally. Emerging private sector regulations are increasingly perceived as market entrance barriers within this development. In this paper, we analyze quality assurance programs in the horticultural sector in Vietnam and their effect on access to international markets. A representative sample of registered fruit and vegetable processing firms provide the basis for our analyses. Results of different logistic regression models show that quality assurance programs are market specific. Processors with already implemented international private quality assurance programs have a higher probability of accessing OECD markets. For exports to non-OECD countries, national quality assurance programs facilitate international market participation. Small firms particularly profit from the adoption of private international quality assurance programs. For this reason, firms must be encouraged to implement such programs if they want to become internationally competitive. As substantial numbers of labourers in the processing enterprises and primary producers are closely linked to the success of processors in international markets, our findings have implications for employment and the farm sector within rural development strategies.