

**Title** Production and marketing of African indigenous vegetables in the Arumeru district of Tanzania: assessing postharvest loss and processing potential

**Authors** I.N. Barry, H. Jaenicke, G.N. Pichop, D. Virchow

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### **Abstract**

African Indigenous Vegetables (AIVs) are increasingly consumed among the African urban population; however, they sometimes require intensive processing before cooking. A collaborative pilot study was conducted in the urban and peri-urban setting of Arusha to better understand the value chain for *Solanum aethiopicum*, *Amaranthus* spp., *Brassica carinata*, and *Solanum villosum*, particularly in assessing the extent of postharvest loss and the potential for processing these crops for local markets. A livelihood analysis was conducted to determine growers' constraints and opportunities. A market supply chain analysis was carried out to establish a preliminary estimate of potential postharvest loss. The results show that the majority of growers relied on AIVs as primary source of income, although virtually all owned their own farmland. The main constraints to AIV activities were price fluctuations, weak bargaining power, and barriers to market entry. In general, loss after harvest (postharvest loss) was quite high along the chain, with farmers experiencing higher losses on average. Although most actors were aware of a variety of processing techniques, these techniques were not widely used because high and constant availability of fresh produce reduced the demand for processed ones. Processing AIVs for local market potential could therefore be limited to washing, cutting/slicing, and bagging AIVs to reduce processing time before cooking.