

# Impact of agriculture input support programme on economic benefit in Zimbabwe

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## ABSTRACT

In Zimbabwe smallholder farmers face several challenges including minimal use of necessary inputs for intensification such as fertilizer, herbicides, inadequate availability of quality seed and unstable prices. This situation leads to a dilemma where to improve on yields. If they maintain the status where little or no pesticides and fertilisers are applied some farms get little or no yields. In response, the Government of Zimbabwe, through the Ministry of Agriculture, Mechanization and Irrigation Development and its partners introduced agriculture input support programme in 2011. The objective of the study was to assess the impact of the agriculture input support programme on economic welfare of the society. Both primary and secondary data were used in this study. Primary data were collected through administration of structured questionnaire to estimate production cost per hectare. The sampling frame was provided by Ministry of Agriculture. A sample size of 120 farmers was interviewed. The economic surplus method was employed to evaluate the impact of the agriculture input support programme. The results showed that tomato production had increased from an average of 18700 kg per hectare to 23700 kg per hectare. Change in quantity due to the input programme was approximately 5.8 per cent of the observed quantity. The estimated total surplus for the pivotal supply shift was about \$1418.31 while \$2925.51 was the approximated amount for a parallel shift. This shows that the programme has the potential to enable graduation of smallholder farmers from one socio-economic group to the next better group. The Government of Zimbabwe can intensify training and raising awareness of the programme among beneficiaries to increase the productivity. It is therefore vital that more funds should be allocated to the programme.

**KEY WORDS :** Economic benefit, Impact, Tomatoes, Input support programme

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