

Surname: MUTIMA
Other Names: GORDON KAPPA
Reg.No: 10/A/MAPAM/043/PG
Gender: MALE
Programme: MAPAM
Academic Unit: DEVELOPMENT STUDIES
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Supervisor: ADALBERT AINE-OMUCUNGUZI
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ABSTRACT

The study was carried out in Ruhama sub-county, Ntungamo district in South western Uganda with the aim of assessing the contribution of small scale dairy farming in improving household welfare. The specific objectives of the study were; firstly to assess the methods used in milk handling by dairy farmers in Ruhama sub county; secondary, to examine the contribution of small-scale dairy farming to the socio-economic household welfare; thirdly , to determine the constraints facing small scale dairy farming in Ruhama sub-county; and lastly to identify possible interventions of improving small scale dairy farming in Ruhama sub-county. The data for this study was collected through a cross –section survey which involved both dairy and non-dairy farming households. In-depth interviews were carried out to gather the data. Data were analyzed using statistic packages for social sciences (SPSS 11.0) Results from this study indicated that the majority of the dairy farmers used plastic utensils in milk handling. The study also revealed that the milk produced in the area was below the local demand and as a result, most of it was bought directly from the farmers by neighboring households for domestic consumption. Further, the study results indicated that small scale dairy farming contributed substantially to household welfare. Income from dairy farming was spent in education, health services and general household improvement. Dairy farming household were having more meals par day than non-dairy farming households which implied that dairy farming households were more food secure than non-dairy farming households. Ticks, diseases and scarcity of artificial insemination services were the major constraints of small –scale dairy farming in the area. Bring veterinary services closer to farmers, sensitizing farmers and formation of milk cooperative unions were the major interventions that could be taken to improve small scale dairy farming in the study area.

Due to its contribution to household poverty, this study recommends that dairy farming should be promoted as a poverty reduction strategy in rural areas.