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Topic: Community health and nutrition programs

Title: Effect of an integrated agriculture-nutrition education program on nutrition knowledge and dietary diversity in rural farming households of Central Uganda.

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Introduction: The relationship between agriculture-nutrition education and the utilization level of food value chains is not clear. The study set out to assess the effect of an agriculture-nutrition program on nutrition knowledge and dietary diversity in farming households; and find out determinants of nutrition knowledge and dietary diversity.

Methods: A cross-sectional survey. We interviewed six key informants, and 206 rural farmers to generate data on the program, nutrition and diets. We used independent t-tests to compare mean differences in knowledge and HDD, and multiple linear regression models to determine factors influencing nutrition knowledge and HDD.

Results: Respondents in intervention area had more nutrition knowledge than their counterparts in non-intervention area; and their households consumed more diversified diets. Men and respondents who perceived training materials as attractive were more likely to attain higher knowledge, while older respondents and individuals from bigger households were less likely to attain higher knowledge scores. Households with members of different life stage groups were also more likely to consume diverse diets. Dietary diversity was limited among households where males received training, controlled cash allocated for food and households that had multiple sources of nutrition information.

Conclusion: The agricultural-nutrition program influenced nutrition knowledge and dietary diversity, and training men improved their nutrition knowledge, but not HDD. Trainers should make materials appealing, and target men and women for training within their gender roles. Uganda's Directorate of extension should also map agricultural

programs offering nutrition education; and assess the messages to identify areas of conflict and ensure consistent messaging.