

**NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY**

**A SURVEY OF THE INFORMATION NEEDS OF A2 FARMERS IN THE MAKONDE  
DISTRICT, MASHONALAND WEST PROVINCE, ZIMBABWE.**

**BY**

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## **ABSTRACT**

The agricultural sector as a whole is a very important sector to Zimbabwe's economy as it is a major source of employment, food, foreign exchange and raw materials for other sectors of the economy. Modern agriculture is based on the constant search for new advanced technological innovations by research stations and diffusing these innovations to farmers through an information delivery system. Information is a powerful tool in identifying technical and practical solutions that can help boost agricultural productivity. This research sought to document what information was in demand, the sources that information was needed to be and the frequency that the information was wanted by a specific category of farmers in a specific district in Zimbabwe.

It was necessary to identify the specific category of farmers referred to above and these were the A2 farmers. The A2 farmers were a creation of the Fast Track Land Reform Programme in Zimbabwe and the research traced the history of land reform in Zimbabwe to properly contextualise the target group of the information needs assessment. The study briefly analysed the land reform in Zimbabwe with specific reference to the A2 scheme of the FTLRP. The major characteristic of the A2 scheme was that it created a new category of farmers who had neither agricultural qualifications nor expertise and needed a strong information dissemination system for them to increase productivity on their farm.

The research methodology employed was the descriptive survey method and qualitative and quantitative techniques were used to gather data from a selected sample of the research population. The sample technique used was simple random sampling where the researcher obtained the sampling frame of all A2 farmers in Makonde from relevant government offices

and used random numbers to select at least one third of the population. Questionnaires and interviews were then used to collect data from the identified respondents.

The results from the research indicated that the respondents needed information directly related to production on the farms. The respondents indicated that they needed information to assist them to improve productivity, access farming inputs and marketing information. The most popularly preferred format of information was printed information although electronic information and the mass media were shown to be alternative methods of disseminating agricultural information to A2 farmers in Makonde.