

Seeds for high yield, vitamin-rich crops not available to Africa's small farmers

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Africa's small farmers, more than half of whom buy their seeds from local informal markets, need access to improved seeds that can yield more food and cope with climate change, according to research published on [January 20].

Innovations in food science, including seeds that produce vitamin-rich food and crops that can withstand the hotter, drier conditions due to global warming, are not reaching many of Africa's small farmers as they are not available in local markets, researchers said.

The [study](#), published in the journal "Food Security", examined 10,000 seed transactions across five African countries and Haiti, and researchers said it shed light on how food production can be expanded. . .

Previously, many researchers assumed that small farmers relied on saving seeds from previous harvests, rather than purchasing them.

But the study showed that about 55 percent of small farmers in Kenya, Malawi, South Sudan, the Democratic Republic of Congo and Haiti bought their seeds from local markets, family or friends. . .

This means many growers would be open to buying better, climate-smart seeds, if they were readily available in small, rural markets and appropriately marketed, she said.

Large seed dealers generally focus on selling large volumes to institutional clients, such as big aid agencies or the United Nations, rather than small farmers, she said.

Companies should offer smaller seed packages to farmers, and should inform them of new kinds of seeds which might benefit them, she said.

Read full, original post: New seed varieties not reaching Africa's small farmers, study says