Choice and Voice: Learning from small holders in South Africa about constraints and prospects for GM maize adoption

A Templeton Foundation Project of University of Missouri and Kwanalu
Jere Gilles – Co Project Leader. Rural Sociologist
Willi Meyers – Project Leader. Agricultural Economist
Sandy La Marque – Co Project Investigator. CEO - Kwanalu
Bill Folk – Co Project Investigator. Biochemist
Ken Schneeberger – Co Project Investigator. Agricultural Economist
Mary Hendrickson – Co Project Investigator. Rural Sociologist

Minse Modi and Roy Dandala, Kwanalu

Other SA Collaborators:
Marnus Gouse – U of Pretoria
Erna Kruger – Mahlathini Organics
Jeremy Klaasen – U of W. Cape
Hester Vermeulen – BFAP
Faculty from U of KZN

University of Missouri
Contents

Review of our goals

Outputs and outcomes

What we see cooperators learning

What we learned

Challenges
Our Project Goals:

- To understand the social and economic aspects of food security in KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa.
- To share knowledge and experience from different perspectives – farmers, rural communities, research and development communities, private enterprise and policy makers – on GM crops.
- To develop knowledge systems around the production and consumption of GM crops that increase food security while providing opportunities for sustainable rural livelihoods.
Demonstration Fields – compare traditional, hybrid, B, R and BR with no-til

Workshops and training with Farmer Participants

Regional Conference
July 2013

National Conference
August 5-6, 2014

Outputs

Literature Review on Smallholder Experience with GM and participatory research

Analysis of Grain Samples for GM and stored maize for mycotoxins

Analysis of socioeconomic impact of GM

Lessons Learned

Literature Review on Smallholder Experience with GM and participatory research

Analysis of Grain Samples for GM and stored maize for mycotoxins

Analysis of socioeconomic impact of GM

Lessons Learned
Changes in Farmer Knowledge
First time use of No-Till
Compare BT, HT, and stacked
Learned about herbicides
PWP, soil test and seed spacing

Outcomes Second Year

New Relationships
Farmers → GRAIN SA, Seed companies, commercial farms
Kwanalu → Dept of Ag & Farm advisors
New networks are forming
# Rough measures of yield, 5/7 plots

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Changes in Knowledge

- ↑ Smallholder understanding of crop management & GM
- ↑ Researcher understanding of farmer capacity to use GM and how that affects livelihoods
- ↑ Knowledge among policy-makers and private businesses on how to support smallholder adoption of new technologies

Shared understanding

- A shared understanding among the participants of the ecological, social and economic aspects of food security in KwaZulu-Natal

The BIG CONSENSUS

- Every farmer, man or woman, said PWP-No Till was the most important new practice they learned. Saves labor for women, who do most of the weeding.
**Barriers & Challenges**

- More but still limited knowledge of improved maize practices
- Storage issues as well as access to markets
- Credit issues / Access to finance

**Future Directions**

- Include commercial farmers from Kwanalu in the CoP
- Incorporate the lessons learned from the two years into the future
Community of Practice works:

- Helped connect smallholders together
- Built relationships among farmers, organizations, researchers and government
- *Demonstration trial alone would not have built the relationships or encouraged the networking that we have seen*
- *Challenges remain*
Thank you!