

# Why do farmers' potato production practices differ? insights from Chench, Ethiopia

Yenenesh Tadesse, Conny J.M. Almekinders, Rogier P.O. Schulte, and Paul C. Struik

[yeneshtadesse@gmail.com](mailto:yeneshtadesse@gmail.com) .

## 1. Rationale and research question

Agronomic research has paid limited attention to social differentiation as a factor to explain the adoption pattern of potato production technologies.

These include: new varieties, planting in ridges, synthetic fertilizers, frequent weeding and improved storages

- How do farmers cultivate potato?
- What is the rationale for the practices?

## 2. Methods

Methods used: Household survey + in-depth interviews + field observations (actual practices). N = 47 potato farmers

Analysis: point score analysis and descriptive statistics.

## 3. Results

Adoption of improved varieties and many of the introduced production practices was strongly related to wealth class.

## 4. Why do poor farmers reject technologies?

- The technology does not fit their socio-economic conditions
- They are too poor and their farms are too small
- Lack of awareness - they could not explain new practices such as planting in ridges, improved storage practices, crop rotation

## Why do (medium) wealthy farmers adopt technologies?

- First hand access to initial seed and support to improve storage;
- knowledge about technology and its usefulness
- They own inputs that make the technology work: land, labour, cash

## 5. Implications

- Conventional extension model of "Laggards will follow Adopters" is not working.
- Biased interventions and technologies towards wealthy farmers.
- Technology development needs to reconsider diversity of farm contexts.

## Further reading



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