



**RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN AGRICULTURAL PRACTICES
AND INCIDENCE OF MALARIA IN SMALL-SCALE FARMING
SECTOR**

CASE STUDY OF MERU CENTRAL DISTRICT, KENYA

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Relationship between Agricultural Practices and Incidence of Malaria in Small-Scale Farming Sector

Abstract.

A field study was carried out to investigate the relationship between incidence of malaria and agricultural practices in small-scale sector in three ecological zones of Meru Central District. Ninety farmers were interviewed on how they perceive malaria incidence in relation to agricultural activities.

The perceived time of high incidence of malaria affects various farming activities. According to the farmers, the most affected activities were weeding and harvesting. Other affected activities were land preparation and planting. Significant associations were observed between incidence of malaria and irrigation, livestock grazing system, planting of bananas and proximity of crops and weeds to the house. In addition farmers associated malaria with consumption of some foods.

The farm family was found to be affected by malaria illness in various other ways. These include high expenditure on medical bills, loss of productive time in sickness, sale of food and livestock to meet medical expenses, purchase of nets and other protective measures, social beliefs against some food products and absenteeism for school going children.

It was concluded that malaria has a great impact on farming and that some farming practices influence incidence of the disease. The effects of irrigation, livestock system and bananas on incidence of malaria as well as the association with some foods should be investigated further to determine the nature and extent of the association.