

## ABSTRACT

Dairy farming is a common income generating activity within Kieni east and west districts, Nyeri County. Majority of farmers alongside other farming activities have kept dairy cattle in this area. The milk produce gets to the market through various distribution channels. Hence a milk distribution channel is critical in that it determines the amount of profit that a farmer gets. These channels offer different economic benefits to their clients. The dilemma lies in the choice of the best milk distribution channel that will maximize profits for the dairy farmers. The study presents an evaluation of the various distribution channels available to the dairy farmers in Kieni east and west districts, Nyeri County. The objectives of the study were to assess how quantity of milk supplied, price of milk, access to credit facilities and collection procedures, influence the choice of distribution channels among dairy farmers within the County. The literature review focused on the above variables. The research design involved descriptive survey and focused on dairy farmers in Kieni east and west districts, Nyeri County which is divided into 10 zones as per administrative locations in the two districts. The data collection method used was self-administered questionnaires with both open and close ended questionnaires. Various quantitative and inferential statistical analysis techniques were used to analysis the data obtained from the field. The results indicated that quantity of milk supplied by farmers and the prices of milk were the major determinants in the choice of distribution channel. Access to credit facilities had also an influence on the choice of milk distribution channel with majority of respondents indicating that credit facilities were inaccessible. Majority of respondents indicated that they use formal distribution channel to distribute their milk. Formal distribution channels were rated highly as influencing choice in distribution channel. The study concluded that absorption of the quantity of milk supplied and offered price of milk per kilogram strongly influence the choice of a distribution channel while access to credit facilities and collection procedures moderately influenced the choice of a distribution channel. The study recommends that all the stakeholders involved during the milk distribution process should play an active role to ensure that dairy farming turns out to be a profitable venture.