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*Full Length Research Paper*

## The dynamics of horticultural export value chains on the livelihood of small farm households in Southern Ghana

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### Abstract

Policy makers in developing countries have been concerned with the economic and political risks associated with heavy dependence on few specialized raw materials as main sources of government revenue and foreign exchange. Development partners and donor agencies have equally extolled the need for these countries to diversify their export base as a poverty reduction strategy. As a result, several African countries have tended to focus on non-traditional agricultural exports (NTEs) which reflect their comparative advantage and for many countries the export of horticultural crops has been favoured. This study focuses on a household survey undertaken in the forest and coastal savannah transition zones of Ghana, where the farming system has undergone a remarkable transition from an established system of food crop farming for sale to urban consumers to an intensive production of fruits and vegetable crops for export to European consumers. Econometric analysis shows that though export horticulture has a positive impact on the wellbeing of the majority of households, the chronically poor households are structurally impeded from seizing the available opportunities due to poor resource endowment and liquidity constraints.

**Key words.** Export horticulture, food security, household livelihood, non-traditional exports, export diversification, pro-poor growth.

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