

**Irrigated Urban Vegetable
Production in Ghana:
Characteristics, Benefits and
Risks**

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Foreword

Exotic vegetables, like lettuce, are not part of the traditional Ghanaian diet. However, more than 200,000 urban dwellers eat them daily on Accra's streets, and in canteens and restaurants. About 90% of the perishable vegetables are produced in closest market proximity due to their fragile nature and the common lack of cold transport and storage. These vegetables are a preferred cash crop, which can lift poor farmers out of poverty. On the other hand, farmers have huge problems finding in and around the cities unpolluted water sources for irrigation. This dilemma is directly linked to uncontrolled urbanization and poor sanitation. Ghana is in this regard a representative example for sub-Saharan Africa.

Over the last five years, IWMI's research in Ghana has had a major thrust in **urban and peri-urban agriculture** in general and irrigated (open-space) vegetable farming in particular. This book summarizes results from a large number of students' theses and research reports. It gives a comprehensive overview of urban and peri-urban vegetable farming in Ghana's major cities, and highlights besides economic impacts, consequences and perceptions related to the use of wastewater. The book ends with recommendations on how in a low-income country like Ghana health risks for consumers could be effectively reduced, while simultaneously supporting the important contribution of open-space urban and peri-urban agriculture. The book will certainly serve students, the academia and policy makers as an invaluable resource.

Akiça Bahri
Director for Africa
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Pay Drechsel
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RUAF: Resource Centres on Urban Agriculture and Food Security: www.ruaf.org

IDRC: International Development Research Centre: www.idrc.ca

CPWF: Challenge Program on Water & Food: www.waterandfood.org

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