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Factors Affecting Rural Household Farm Labour Supply in Farming Communities of South Africa

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ABSTRACT This study investigated the socio-economic factors affecting the supply of labour for resource-poor rural household farmers of South Africa. Results indicate that rural household level variables that contribute positively to farm labour supply are farm operators' years of farming experience, gender of farm operator, farming type, cultivated land size, organizational structure of the farm, stock of farm machinery, extension services, and availability of farm inputs. Other household level variables that have significant but negative effects on the supply of farm labour are educational levels of households, whether the farm operator was raised on the farm or not, number of household members working off-farm, number of elderly people in the household, real wage rate, attitude towards technology, distance of the farm from the nearest town, and the location of the farm. It was recommended that further studies would be necessary to identify other macro as well as micro conditions such as national unemployment rates, land tenure issues, agro-ecological zones as well as the existence of micro climates for specific crops that need intensive labour during the peak seasons in some farming areas.