

## **Factors Affecting Smallholder Farmers' Perception Regarding Their Use of Soil Conservation Practices: Evidence from Farming at Qamata Irrigation Scheme, South Africa**

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**ABSTRACT** Using a case study research design, this paper evaluated factors determining smallholder farmers' perceptions on the use of soil conservation technologies at Qamata Irrigation Scheme, Eastern Cape in South Africa. According to the empirical results, perception is highly relevant in adoption decision-making, interacting significantly positively with age, marriage, farmers' education, incomes, awareness and participation in extension services. The indication is that older, more educated, married farmers with increased income have more likelihood of improved perception. Further, farmers who are aware of the soil technologies introduced by extension services are also those who participate in their use, thus affirming the significance of perception in the adoption process. The suggestion therefore is that encouraging farmers' education and incomes, awareness and participation in extension programs, as well as encouraging more youth to take up farming, will increase positive perceptions, consequently leading to improved adoption by farmers.