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Patterns of Smallholder Farmers' Choice of Value Addition in Gauteng Province, South Africa

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ABSTRACT Value addition in agriculture is the process of improving a commodity to increase its value. A growing number of smallholder farmers sell their products to low-value markets, as they have limited access to markets of high value, which is attributed to their low output and not the quality of the products. In this study patterns of value adding choice have been studied. This paper utilises data collected from 102 smallholder farmers which were randomly sampled in four districts of Gauteng Province to determine patterns of value addition performed by the smallholder farmers. The sampled smallholder farmers were producing livestock, grains and crops. Factor analysis has been carried out on 15 indicators of value addition, and the results reveal that the most performed value addition was washing and abattoir, while the least performed was fortification, labelling, drying and canning. The factor analysis extracted five factors, particularly post-harvest, food preservation, milling, post-slaughter and fortification. This paper implies that it is crucial for policymakers to know that smallholder farmers are currently adding value to their products in these patterns to promote rural and agricultural growth. It is therefore, recommended that the current patterns of value adding to various products practised by farmers be retained.