



Improving market opportunities for mangoes in Pakistan

A cooperative approach between ACIAR, AusAID and the European Union is proving fruitful for Pakistan, producing new market opportunities for Pakistan mangoes.

Mangoes, the “king of fruits”, are one of Pakistan’s most important fruit crops. Pakistan is currently one of the world’s largest mango producers, with over 300,000 smallholder mango growers making up the vast majority in the mango sector. Pakistan’s mango varieties are attractive to consumers around the world, but the industry is currently unable to reliably deliver the required quality and quantity of fruit. There is huge potential to improve and develop the mango industry to benefit all the players involved.

What’s the problem?

The main challenges to be overcome are low yields and poor fruit quality at harvest, due largely to poor management of the tree canopy, inappropriate use of fertilisers and irrigation, poor management of pests and diseases and harvesting practices that focus on volume and low cost rather than on maintaining fruit quality. Postharvest treatment further reduces fruit quality through a lack of grading, handling and storage infrastructure. On-farm and postharvest losses can result in as much as 70% of the fruit in the supply chain being unsaleable because it is over-ripe, immature, damaged or diseased. To compound the problem, of the remaining fruit that is available for retail markets, much is not compliant with quality and safety requirements.

What’s being done?

The Australian Government (through AusAID and ACIAR) and the European Union (EU) have joined forces to help address these issues, by developing a standardised Code of Practice for the Pakistani mango industry. The Australia–Pakistan Agricultural Sector Linkages Program (ASLP2) and the EU’s Trade Related Technical Assistance (TRTA II) Program (implemented by the United Nations Industrial Development Organisation) are working together through a team of in-country partners who share a common mission to improve the industry.



Harvesting mangoes in Pakistan

ACIAR provides the research that underpins the TRTA II Program’s commercially-focused activities. This research provides best-practice recommendations on farm management, mango production, postharvest management and processing. These recommendations are jointly developed into codes of practice for the complete mango value chain, then documented, published, distributed and scaled out by the TRTA II Program. ACIAR researchers also provide hands-on support to mango value chains by helping chain members adopt best practices in harvesting, processing, packing and exporting trial shipments to target markets such as China and Europe. Follow-up research is carried out in export markets to document the responses of importers, wholesalers and retailers to high-quality Pakistan mangoes.



FURTHER INFORMATION

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What are the results?

Farmers have received training in the recommended practices, including in sanitation methods such as heat treating mangoes to comply with the phytosanitary (plant health) requirements imposed by overseas markets. Involving local researchers in these programs has built capacity in both biophysical and social sciences within Pakistan universities and government agencies.

Good agricultural practices combined with improved market linkages have led to overseas market opportunities. Late last year, several trial mango shipments were sent to China, successfully meeting China's requirements for phytosanitary compliance and quality. As a direct result, a new market for Pakistani mango developed: buyers from China and Korea have approached the exporters for sustained exports of mangoes. This offers a real chance to increase prosperity in Pakistan's mango industry through higher returns to all members of the value chain.

What's next?

The Australian Government has committed funding for a second phase of the ASLP2 through to 2016. This research will further examine pro-poor value chains, industry policy, and agricultural capability. ACIAR will continue its cooperation with other donors to improve the efficiency, effectiveness and competitiveness of Pakistan's mango supply chains.

More information

Video on [Pakistani Mangoes Exported to China through TRTA II Programme and ASLP collaboration](http://trtapakistan.org/components/pakistani-mango-export/)
<<http://trtapakistan.org/components/pakistani-mango-export/>>

The [Trade Related Technical Assistance \(TRTA II\) Programme](http://trtapakistan.org/background/) aims to strengthen Pakistan's capacity to participate in international trade. <<http://trtapakistan.org/background/>>

Under the [Australia–Pakistan Agricultural Sector Linkages Program](http://aciar.gov.au/aslp/mango/) (ASLP <<http://aciar.gov.au/aslp/mango/>>) there are currently two complementary mango projects: one focuses on cultivation and preharvest management ([HORT/2010/001](http://aciar.gov.au/project/HORT/2010/001) <<http://aciar.gov.au/project/HORT/2010/001>>) and the other on postharvest management ([HORT/2010/006](http://aciar.gov.au/project/HORT/2010/006) <<http://aciar.gov.au/project/HORT/2010/006>>).

Blog on ASLP social research *A picture's worth a thousand words – using photos in social research in Pakistan*
<<http://aciarblog.blogspot.com.au/2013/07/a-pictures-worth-thousand-words-using.html>>



Traditional methods of packing mangoes for market