

Thai Mango Export: A Slow-but-Sustainable Development

Narong Chomchalow^{1/} and Prem Na Songkhla^{2/}

Office of the President, Assumption University,
Bangkok, Thailand

<narongchc@au.edu; prempree@asianet.co.th>

Abstract

Mango is an indigenous crop of Thailand. It has been grown since the early history of the Kingdom, but mostly for domestic consumption. From 1975 onwards, development towards exportation started to develop, first by developing suitable cultivars, followed by adoption of production and post-harvest technologies, especially pruning technique to obtain low-stature plants, off-season production through the use of paclobutazol soil drench, vapor heat treatment to kill fruit fly larvae, and the use of specially-made paper bags to cover the fruits. The most significant development, however, was the adoption of cluster strategy in which mango growers join hands among themselves with supports from DOA, DOAE, the exporters, and several agro-chemical companies in producing quality fruits almost all year round from different areas of the Kingdom for export markets. The present mango export markets from Thailand include Japan, Malaysia, Laos PDR, South Korea, Indonesia, Hong Kong, Singapore, China, and the USA for fresh fruits, and Japan, the Netherlands, Australia, the USA, New Zealand, Russia, and South Korea for processed products. Many new markets have also been explored.

In 2006, the total amount of mangoes exported was 29,600 tons, valued at 1,147 million Baht - still negligible as compared to major agricultural commodities exported from Thailand. However, all mango exported across the border was not included in the official statistics. Yet the growth rates of 347.8 % in volume and 94.7 % in value in exporting fresh mango in 2005 as compared to 2004 were very impressive. This was mainly due to the clustering strategy of the mango growers' groups. With the signing of FTA with many countries, coupling with the setting up of the "One Stop Service Center" by the Department of Agriculture to facilitate the export procedure, the volume and value of mango exported from Thailand are expected to increase at a much higher rate in the near future. This should be supplemented with the setting up of an organization solely responsible for the long-term national strategic plan of mango production, marketing and export.

Keywords: Pruning, off-season production, fruit bagging, One Stop Service Center, VHT, FTA, GAP, MRL.

1. Introduction

1.1 Mango is a Native Crop of Thailand

Mango (*Mangifera indica* Linn.) is native to Indo-Myanmar region and has been cultivated for over 4,000 years. Indo-China, including Thailand, is believed to be the diverse places of mango. As many as 172 cultivars have been recorded in Thailand and about ten have been grown commercially.

^{1/} Chairman, Thailand Network for the Conservation and Enhancement of Landraces of Cultivated Plants, Bangkok, Thailand, Email: <narongchc@au.edu>

^{2/} Editor, Kehakaset (House Agriculture Magazine), Bangkok, Thailand, Email: <kehakaset@gmail.com>