

Title An overview of the world production and marketing of tropical and subtropical fruits
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Abstract

Tropical and subtropical fruits are important to many developing countries in their contribution towards export earnings and income and as a source of nutrition. During the period 2000–2004, global production of tropical and subtropical fruits increased by 19.2% to an estimated 270 million tonnes in 2004. Watermelon was the dominant fruit type, accounting for 35% of global tropical fruit production in 2004. The other major fruits produced are bananas, mangoes and pineapples. Asia with an output of 178 million tonnes is the largest producing region, contributing towards 66% of global production in 2004. Only about 13% of global production is exported as fresh fruits in the international market with an estimated value of US\$ 15 billion in 2004. The major fruits dominating export markets in 2004 are banana and pineapple. Although Asia is the largest producing region, it ranks second to the American region in terms of exports, particularly from South and Central America. The export value from the American region in 2004 was estimated at US\$ 6.1 bill. as compared to Asia's US\$ 2.5 bill. On the demand side, global imports of tropical and subtropical fruits have increased by 25% from 28 mill. ton in 2000 to 35 mill. ton in 2004 with an estimated value of US\$ 18 bill. The United States of America and the European Community are the largest import markets for tropical fruits. The major challenges confronting tropical and subtropical fruit exporting countries are issues related to smallholder production system, postharvest handling technologies, sanitary and phytosanitary (SPS) regulations, food safety assurance requirements and quality standards instituted by importing countries.