

Title Postharvest training tutorials development: Computer assisted learning for fresh produce-APEC project experience

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Abstract

Computer-assisted learning (CAL) combines elements of computer technology with traditional learning methods. CAL is using the full potential of multimedia techniques and includes pictorial materials such as graphs, still photographs, videos and also accommodates animations, sound and computer simulations. The training tutorials can be recorded on CDs or DVDs at a lower cost than that of printed materials. A comprehensive set of tutorials related to postharvest of fresh produce was developed by a group of scientists from Australia, China, Indonesia, Thailand and Vietnam. The selection of topics was based on consultations with researchers, educators, government regulators and representatives of industries dealing with postharvest operations, international and domestic trade with fresh produce and retail. Some tutorials are based on studies conducted in the collaborating countries over several years and on the industrial practice. Tutorials include: overview of physiology, maturity and ripening, temperature management, control of water loss, packaging, pathology and disinfestation, management of food safety and quality, transport and principles of refrigeration and storage. The tutorials, originally developed in English, were translated into Bahasa Indonesia, Chinese mandarin, Thai and Vietnamese. Training courses were conducted in collaboration with research and extension organisations and postharvest industry in China, Indonesia, Thailand and Vietnam. The paper describes the lessons learnt from the use of CAL as a training tool aiming at improving fresh produce quality after harvest. The project was responding to the APECs goal to develop an APEC Food System focusing on dissemination of technological advances in food production including postharvest handling of fresh produce.