

Title Postharvest curriculum and research extension in the universities in Malaysia
Author Chandran Somasundram
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Abstract

The aim of the postharvest courses in Malaysian universities are generally geared towards increasing practical skills of both undergraduate and postgraduate students on the postharvest technology of horticultural crops, including fresh-cut fruits and flowers. These courses are designed to expose students to the importance of postharvest biotechnology in understanding horticulture in general. The curriculum is expected to churn out graduates who should be able to understand the importance of postharvest studies and have the knowledge to recognise the various steps and processes involved from harvest to consumption. It is also hoped that the knowledge gained will be put to good use for the successful exploitation of commercially important crops with aid of biotechnological tools. The extension of postharvest research in Malaysia is largely dictated by the policy of the Malaysian Plan which evolves according to the needs of the country. It has moved from the development of conventional methods to extend shelf life to the use of modern biotechnology for the production of transgenic crops. The recent introduction of the National Biotechnology Policy in 2005 and the formulation of the Biosafety Laws is expected to accelerate development in postharvest research within the next ten years.