

Title Sustainable horticulture: an ‘off-shoot’ of sustainable agriculture with unique challenges and opportunities

Author Ernesto Brovelli, Rhona Applebaum and Kevin Ogorzalek

Citation Abstracts Book, 6th International Postharvest symposium, 8-12 April 2009, Antalya, Turkey. 256 pages.

Keyword Horticulture; sustainable; agriculture

Abstract

Sustainable Agriculture has as its core a triple helix involving people, planet, and profit. Sustainable Horticulture (SH) also conforms to this triple helix. However, as a result of the crops, cultivation philosophy and production and postharvest practices embraced by horticulture, SH must address several unique challenges and opportunities both now and in the future:

1-Horticultural products are usually input-intensive and the fate of all inputs requires careful and strict accountability:

2- Horticultural products must deal with significant postharvest losses since they are typically very perishable. Consequently, special consideration must be given to established, as well as innovative, postharvest practices used to maintain quantity and quality; and

3-The nutritional properties of fruits and vegetables are increasingly valued for their contribution to health and well-being, and thus are closely integrated to the three core pillars of sustainability—society (people), environment (planet) and economics (profit).

An analysis of these unique features of horticultural products and production must be conducted in light of the principles underpinning SH.