

**Title** Rootcrop value chain development in the Philippines  
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### **Abstract**

This paper explores the different waves of thinking and initiatives in terms of value chain development for roots and tubers in the Philippines. The method used is that of retrospective assessment along historical timeline of research and development efforts, and rootcrop development initiated outside the research institutions.

A decade of rootcrop research that started in mid-1970s had produced a number of high yielding varieties of cassava, sweetpotato, taro and yam with different traits that are fit for various food and non-food industry uses. The opportunities offered by this diversity in varietal improvements coupled with low average per capita consumption of roots and tubers, the increasing cassava and yam industry markets, and the thrust towards rootcrop contribution to poverty alleviation have triggered value chain development in various spheres.

In the past rootcrop R and D initiatives, value chain as a concept has not been explicit. Adopting the value chain framework is a relatively recent mindset, which can be used deductively to put in context the historical progression of rootcrop technology development and transfer. Thus, the different value chain pathways may be understood to include: value adding R and D to increase utilization and expand markets; methodologies testing to understand and introduce innovations in value chains; apply value chain innovations in action research; and more recently, documenting the nature and processes of rootcrop value chains for further improvements and policy change.

The value chain perspective and analysis are expected to provide a major mode of inquiry as basis for RDE directions and action to provide support for industry development in the food and non-food sectors. This is because of the increasing recognition of the role of rootcrops in food security of an increasing population, and the increasing demand of rootcrops in micro, small and large industries particularly amidst the challenges of climate change and sustainable agriculture.