

Postharvest handling system of agricultural produce in Myanmar

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Abstract

Myanmar is a predominantly agricultural country and is in need of comprehensive and appropriate postharvest handling system to minimize product losses throughout the postproduction chain. The study was conducted during the year 2007 to 2009 to document postharvest practices for horticultural produce. Various local farms and markets in lower and upper Myanmar were covered as study sites. All horticultural crops are still harvested manually. Postharvest handling practices for horticultural crops greatly varied with commodity, farm size and market. To enhance fruit ripening, ethylene treatment is carried out for some fruits such as banana, mango, papaya and mandarin according to market demand. No postharvest chemical treatment to control disease and pest is employed. Special packaging of vegetables is not practiced except using indigenous materials such as banana leaf, bamboo basket, and wooden box. Polyethylene net bag, cushion net sack, styrofoam tray with cellophane wrappers are currently used for some fruits. In handling of cut flowers, only traditional methods are employed. While waiting for transport and sale, the flowers are kept dry as dewatering, covering with plastic sheet, air drying by switching on the fan and kept wet as spraying water, covering with wet clothes, placing in the water bucket. Refrigerated transport or cooling truck is not employed.