

An analysis of the supply chain for bulk-loaded bananas (*Musa sp.*) from Mindanao to Luzon

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Abstract

The postharvest handling system, commodity flow and key players in the supply chain for bulk-loaded bananas from the southern Philippines (Mindanao) to the domestic market in Luzon was documented and assessed through a formal survey, rapid appraisal and key informant interviews. Mixed varieties of local bananas were handled in bulk from collection in the production areas, loaded into non-ventilated container vans for inter-island shipment and then transferred to non-refrigerated vehicles for distribution to various markets. An assessment of the postharvest system revealed that fruit may be handled as many as 10 times before shipment and up to 20 times before it reached the final consumer. Some 5-8 layers in the commodity flow and 10 key players are identified in one supply chain. The shipper and consignee are the key players in the supply chain for they handle the biggest volume of bananas. The greatest risk occurred during sea transport for 2 days because of high transit temperatures and the bulk-loading practice. This can result in over ripening since a week has already elapsed since harvesting. To reduce the risk and to have a stable supply of bananas from Mindanao, the following are recommended: packing sheds or collection centres in the production areas; packing the fruit in containers during transport; use of appropriate vehicles; provision of shaded loading and unloading areas; as well as precooling and cold storage facilities in the port areas.