

Abstract:

According to FAO statistics, Iran is the first or second largest producer of dates in the world. Iran produces about 900,000 metric tons of dates, which accounts for around 14 percent of global output. It has 214,000 hectares of palm trees under cultivation and 185,000 hectares harvested area that is about 17 percent of world date harvested area. A good opportunity for trade and export of this commodity exists. Due to marketing process constraints and lack of access to global markets only about 12 percent of dates produced in Iran are exported during 2001-2002 and large quantities were consumed domestically. Countries in Central Asia, Persian Gulf, Europe, East Asia and Northern America are among purchasers of Iranian dates. To support and reinforce its non-oil exporting position in global markets Iran should liberalize its economic programs to mitigate internal & external challenges of globalisation and take advantage of the global economic changes. In this paper cultivatable and exportable date varieties in Iran & rivals will be examined and main challenges concerning date marketing and exporting process will be analysed. Suggestions are provided for addressing the challenges.