



Report on the 17th (Virtual) National Mango Roundtable

Wednesday 9th September, 2020

ZOOM Meeting hosted at GIZ MOAP Conference Room – Accra

1.0 Introduction and conference framework

Major stakeholders within the mango sector convene during the National Mango Roundtable to discuss sector-specific issues. The National Mango Roundtable is convened by FAGE and funded by GIZ-MOAP. The roundtable forms $\frac{3}{4}$ of mango programs hosted by FAGE within a calendar year with the 4th being the Ghana Mango Week. Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, the roundtable which was held quarterly could not be realized within the first two in 2020. Also, unlike past roundtables, the 17th was held virtually via ZOOM Conferencing. Participants had an open discussion on the challenges faced throughout the period of the pandemic. Presentations that formed part of the agenda for the roundtable included: List of Registered Chemicals for Mangoes; Procedures Input Importers Need to Follow; The Green Label and the Mango Industry; and the Relevance/Role of the Roundtable.

Participants were drawn from the various mango-producing associations in Ghana - Dangme West Mango Farmers' Association (DAMFA), Manya Krobo Mango Farmers' Association (MKMFA), Wenchi & Kintampo Mango Farmers Association, Sunyani Greenfields Association, Yilo Krobo Mango Farmers' Association (YKMFA), VVCCU, and PAMPEAG. Government representatives from Ministry of Trade and Industry (MOTI) and PPRSD-MOFA, attended alongside input dealers, exporters, financial institutions (ADB), academia (UG) and processors (HPW) among others. Also, Development partners like GIZ-MOAP and ADRA were represented.

2.0 Opening Remarks

Madam Marjorie Quist Abdin, the 1st Vice President of FAGE, commended GIZ for offering their facility to host the event. With the unstable internet connection at the current FAGE office and without knowing the actual participation turn up for the event, it was important to have a good connection, she said.

On reasons why the roundtable took a virtual turn, the Convener enlisted the 25-man social gathering rule as well as the new online way of doing things as basis. Meanwhile, aside the COVID-19 pandemic, Mrs. Abdin informed the meeting that the relocation of the FAGE office from the Trade Fair to the Hall of Technology (formerly FAO), as part of the reasons for the delay in having the roundtable.



3.0 Open Discussion – Challenges Under COVID-19

3.1 Yilo Krobo Mango Farmers Association (Producers)

3.1.1 Inability to market fruits produced in major season as processors (Blue Skies and HPW) could not absorb their entire production

3.1.2 Restriction in movement also affected their work

3.2 Sunyani Greenfields Mango Farmers Association (Producers)

3.2.1 Lost over 70% of their fruits since processors could not take their produce

3.2.2 Considering exports and will appreciate some direction from FAGE

3.3 Upper West Cooperative Mango Farmers Association (Producers)

3.3.1 The pandemic occurred just at the harvesting period, where number of work force increases significantly. As a result, farms had to adhere to laid down COVID-19 precautionary protocols such as social distancing, wearing of face masks and the use of hand sanitizers among others.

3.3.2 GIZ supplied them with some nose masks, sanitizers and handwashing facilities during the period.

3.3.3 Processors could not make payments to them as timely as previously.

3.4 Kobs Farms Ghana Limited (Producer & Exporter)

3.4.1 Without movement of flights, the cargo flights that were in operation then enjoyed monopoly hence increased their freight rates. This made it highly impossible to do air freight. The resolve was to engage in sea freighting – an area where the country's experience with mangoes is lacking.

3.4.2 Additional cost of PPEs for workers increased their overall cost. Moreover, loading containers took about two days more than it used to leading to delay.

3.4.3 During the lockdown period, the local market women could not travel to Accra which led to a drastic decrease in the buying price at the farm gate.

3.4.4 The two main processors, HPW and Blue Skies, for the first time bought at the same price per kilo. They could not frequent the farms as usual probably due to issues they encountered with freighting as well.

3.5 Plant Pest and Diseases Control Company Limited

Spraying / pruning gangs could not cover enough farms as they normally do due to social distancing and the fact that they had few motor-kings. Work plan on farms could not be followed as planned



3.6 PAMPEAG (Exporter)

3.6.1 International market demand for mangoes dropped drastically to about 50%. Although this started to change as the days went by, it was not able to peak to its previous state.

3.6.2 Some steps taken to improve the situation included: better negotiations with clients by formulating new contracts with terms based on the (COVID-19) situation; Adapting to exporting as and when the client demanded as against the normal daily or weekly exports; Finding alternatives such as cold storage for produce longevity or selling to the local market.

3.6.3 Best solution is to diversify markets as much as possible.

3.7 Matrix Innovations (Producer & Input Dealer)

3.7.1 Usual training programs for farmers had to be put on hold

3.7.2 Closure of borders meant products from their manufacturers did not arrive on time eg. Products ordered in February only arrived at the end of August.

3.7.3 Reaching farmers in the different regions with their products became difficult during lockdown. Technique employed was to receive the request of product from the farmer and sending the product to the farmer by bus (public transport) – this prevented tactile meetings with their clients.

3.7.4 Additional costs due to PPE purchases

3.8 Hyperlink Agro (Producer & Input Dealer)

Repackaging mangoes in export boxes and supplying to the local market (including the Ministries and Shoprite) was one way he dealt with the sales challenges that came with COVID-19. Selling to the middle and above classes on the local market could be good business.

3.9 Summary: The COVID-19 Pandemic and Mango Farming – Mr. Victor Avah (GAPs Consulting)

3.9.1 Diversifying markets: Russia proved to be an interesting under-utilized market for mangoes during the pandemic. Although they wanted more mangoes after the trial shipment, high quality mangoes could not be found afterwards. Protocols on handling fruits for exports need to be revisited.

3.9.2 Trials on a microorganism found to enhance flowering and control BBS is ongoing in Somanya, Ada, Akpese, and Dodze. Looks promising however results can only be shared after next season's trial (at the end of the mango season in the South – January 2021).

3.9.3 Study on investment opportunities in the Ghana Mango Sector is underway for ITC. Other countries involved are Burkina Faso, Senegal, Mali and Niger.

3.9.4 It is very important to follow all the quality protocols regardless of the intended market

4.0 Presentations

4.1 Regulations Guiding the Use of Pesticides - Presentation by Richard Agbewu (PPRSD)

Key Highlights

4.1.1 A pesticide is a chemical used to kill, control or manage insects, mites, weeds, fungal and bacterial diseases. Act 490 defines pesticide broadly as any substance or mixture of substances intended for preventing, destroying, repelling, or mitigating, any pest as well as any substance - growth regulatory, defoliant, desiccant or wood preservative.

4.1.2 Humans are at the forefront of chemical use therefore responsible use of a pesticide protects human health and builds consumer confidence in agricultural and food products. Environmental protection should also be considered when using chemicals.

4.1.3 Responsible use of a chemical opens trade opportunities by demonstrating that agricultural and food exports are safe

4.1.4 Factors to consider when selecting a pesticide include: efficacy, legality (compliance), safety, specificity, persistence, speed of action and resistance status, availability as well as cost.

4.1.5 The higher the active ingredient in the pesticide, the higher the toxicity. It is very important to apply the correct dosage as recommended on the label.

4.1.6 Overdosing will be add an unnecessary cost and lead to high residue levels in the produce.

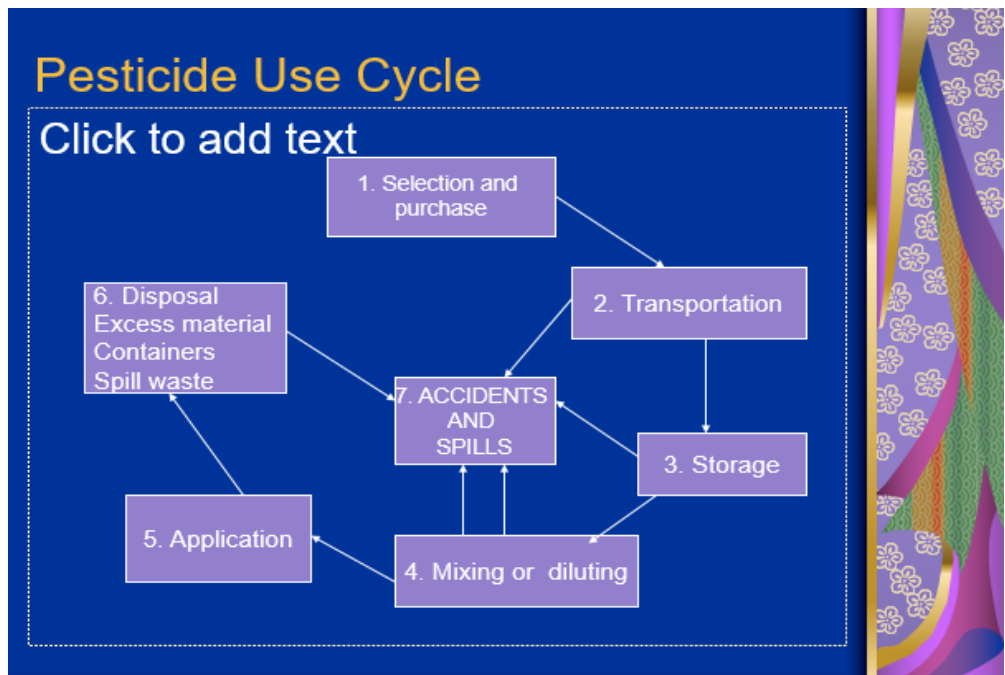


Fig 1.0 Pesticide use cycle



4.1.7 Comments

- PPRSD highly recommends Integrated Pest Management - where chemical use will be the final option. An agroecosystem analysis is sometimes conducted to assess the biologically beneficial insects present on the farm and whether the ratio to pest ratio demands the use of chemicals.
- It is very important for exporters to use chemicals that have been tested and approved by the EPA and PPRSD.
- According to the WHO and FAO classification of chemicals, Category 1a and 1b are very hazardous, mutagenous and carcinogenous

4.2 The Green Label and the Mango Industry - Presentation by Anthony Tamakloe

Key Highlights

4.2.1 The Green Label concept was birthed in 2012 at the Ministry of Food and Agriculture as a result of key issues and concerns from the market - high alerts on pests and MRLs; commingling of exported and local produce; food safety issues on the local market.

4.2.2 The Green Label is therefore system for local consumers to use in identifying safe produce from unsafe ones

4.2.3 TRAQUE supported the Green Label to develop a standard (front lined by Ghana Standard Authority) on the principles of Integrated Pest Management system, which allows the use of agrochemicals as the last resort. TRAQUE also supported the development of the Farmers' Manual (an infographic of the Green Label standard).

4.2.4 Scope of the Green Label Standard

- Production: Food Safety, Quality, Environmental Sustainability and Workers Health (GAPs)
- Processing: Traceability and systems in the pack house to check comingling
- Retail: GDP

4.2.5 The Green Label was registered as a legal entity in February 2017. It currently has 9 directors from both public and private sector as well as donor agencies and a secretary.

4.2.6 How to Get the Green Label Certificate

- Apply for certification
- Request a conformity training
- Get Audit (by SGS Ghana, Control Union & Smart Cert)



- Certification Decision
- Market linkage established

4.2.7 Current Impact

- 15 individual farmers certified (one mango farmer - Marley Farms)
- 8 farmer groups certified (representing over 250 individual farmers)
- 4 Processing Facilities packaging certified products
- 45,000 labels traded
- 8 Supermarkets retailing certified produce (MaxMart, Palace, Lara, Game & Fresh Market)

4.2.8 The Green Label certification to gain competitive advantage and product integrity in the AfCFTA

4.2.9 Comments

- The entire certification process could take a maximum of one month depending on already existing conformity systems on the farm.
- With an already existing Global GAP certification, it should be very easy to get a Green Label certificate. Auditors only have to examine control points that the farm has to pass it for Green Label certification if they tally.
- Global GAP suggested a Local GAP to be implemented by all countries. It was communicated then to them that the Green Label is Ghana's version of that. However, there is the need after completion for publicity on such international websites to educate the entire world that Ghana is implementing a Local GAP called the GREEN LABEL. It needs a worldwide recognition.
- The National Interpretation Guidelines (NIG) of the generic Global GAP, which explained the Global GAP standard in a more understandable 'language' for the farmer was approved and published. Hence any auditor who comes to Ghana needs to use the country's NIG and not the generic one.
- A massive marketing campaign is required to sensitize the general public on the Green Label for certified safe produce. It is important to target local markets like Kantamanto etc.
- Cost of certification is dependent on individual or group certification. Individual certification will be between 1,500.00 GHC - 3,000.00 GHC. A group of between 60 - 100 should be between 200.00 -300.00 GHC per farmer.



3.2 Results from the Roundtable Satisfaction Survey - Presentation by Isaac Donkor (GIZ - MOAP)

Key Highlights

3.2.1 During the 16th Mango Roundtable on the 26th of November 2019, MOAP conducted a brief survey to assess the satisfaction of the members with the roundtable. A total of 23 questionnaires was considered for this survey.

3.2.2 **Participation:** 11 participants stated that they are participating very often/almost all times in the mango roundtable, 6 participants stated that they have participated 3 - 9 times, and 6 are relatively new to the mango roundtable and have participated only once or twice before. Hence, the mango roundtable counts on a big stock of regular and long-standing participants.

3.2.3 **Mango Week:** 17 participants made mention of the Mango Week directly and stated that they participated. Hence, over 2/3 of the participants know and visited this event. It is clearly the most known public event of FAGE.

3.2.4 The Roundtable is mainly seen as a forum to share knowledge and learn, especially for mango producers. The participants see the main benefit of participating in the Mango Roundtable in increasing their knowledge and contact to other actors. The participation of the downstream VC actors (i.e. processors) is nevertheless sometimes limited and might also impact on the opportunities of marketing.

3.2.5 The participants expressed the wish that the platform engages more into training/demonstration and marketing as additional services.

Rating	Total figures	Percentage
very unsatisfied	0	0%
unsatisfied	0	0%
partially unsatisfied	1	4%
partially satisfied	3	13%
satisfied	11	48%
very satisfied	8	35%

Fig 2. Rating of participants' satisfaction with the mango roundtable

3.2.6 Comments

- It is very important to focus on the internal (local) market which is the biggest market available to producers.
- A technical committee must be established to handle proper testing and demonstration on chemicals that are put on the market.



- Even after COVID-19, the online deliberation should continue
- Farmers wish to engage in small scale processing however require some funding

4.0 Closing Remarks

To close the meeting, the Convener congratulated members for their immense effort in adapting to the new normal of participating in virtual meetings. She proceeded to commend the resource persons, GIZ - MOAP, and FAGE staff for the good work done.