

# Final summary report of SUSPER (Sustainable Development of Peri-Urban Agriculture in South-East Asia)

## *Rapport final de SUSPER*

Edited by  
Paule MOUSTIER

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**SUSPER**

**Sustainable Development of Peri-urban Agriculture  
in South-East Asia Project**  
(Cambodia, Lao PDR, Vietnam)

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For more information contact:

Dr. Paule Moustier  
Food Market Researcher  
CIRAD-Malica  
19 Han Thuyen, Hanoi  
Email: [paule.moustier@cirad.fr](mailto:paule.moustier@cirad.fr)  
Website: <http://www.cirad.fr> - <http://www.malica-asia.org> - <http://www.avrdc.org/susper>

Dr. Manuel Palada  
Head, Crop & Ecosystem Management Unit  
AVRDC-The World Vegetable Center  
P.O. Box 42, Shanhua, Tainan, Taiwan 74199  
Republic of China  
E-mail: [mpalada@avrdc.org](mailto:mpalada@avrdc.org)  
Web site: <http://www.avrdc.org>

## 2.5 Spatial and Institutional Organization of Vegetable Markets in Hanoi

Author(s): Hoang Bang An, Isabelle Vagneron, Le Nhu Thinh, Dang Dinh Dam, Ngo Van Nam, Le Thuy Hang, Trinh Quang Thoai, Paule Moustier

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Thanks to improving living standards, Vietnamese have been consuming increasing amounts of fresh vegetables over the past ten years. Yet, the market for fresh vegetables seems quite chaotic and disorganized. This research links together seasonality, the organization of supply/transportation, the origin of the vegetables sold, the identity of the vegetable sellers, the marketing chain and the overall level of activity in the markets. Moreover, it highlights the major role played by peri-urban farmers in the supply of food to the city. Also covered is the importance of off-season production, through the extension of hot season cultivation of temperate vegetables (tomatoes, cabbages) near Hanoi and through the diversification of production away from some of these crops (cabbages) during the cold season. Lastly, the data gathered by the study shows the number of farmers present at the markets and the atomized nature of the vegetable trade.

The main results of the survey indicate that almost all leafy vegetables sold in Hanoi are grown close to the city. Although leafy vegetables can be grown throughout the year, their yield may decrease during the cold season. Yet, these vegetables never come from outside the Red River Delta. Leafy vegetables are mainly sold by the producers themselves, yet traders are present in higher numbers at some times of the year. This is due to the economics and labour demands producers experience.

Most temperate vegetables come from the Red River Delta during the cold season. Eighty-one percent are sold by producers who quit selling in the hot wet season because they do not have enough products to sell (84%) or because they are busy on their farms (40%). A change in the origin of the temperate vegetables occurs at this time, with vegetables coming from as far as China. Most vegetables are transported to the market with two-wheeled vehicles (bicycles and motorcycles). Trucks transport a very small share.

Seasonality was also studied through the analysis of vegetables retail prices gathered at two urban and two peri-urban markets of Hanoi over a five-year period (1996-2001). The data shows firstly that vegetable prices grew faster than that of the overall price index. This may be explained by the increasing demand for vegetables. Secondly, that vegetable prices experience very strong seasonal variations, especially temperate vegetables that must be brought from distant provinces (or China) during the summer. Seasonal price variations match the results of the origin of fruity vegetables and changes in the activity of the markets over the year.

By linking together the origin, distribution, marketing, seasonality and identities of participants, the report helps accentuate the need for improved information flows about prices, volumes and areas of production throughout the year.