

Mango: production and quality control

The development of mango growing runs up against two constraints: fructification is uncertain and it is difficult to identify the optimal harvest stage for the fruits to achieve all their organoleptic qualities during storage. An INRA-CIRAD research project is aimed at developing crop management and storage techniques, with study of fruit development stage by stage from flower initiation to harvesting.

This work combines the skills of INRA—interception of solar radiation, analysis and modelling of plant carbon and water flows, modelling of fruit growth, crop management of ligneous fruit species—and those of CIRAD—knowledge of mango, analysis of plant architecture, fruit conservation techniques. Réunion has been chosen as the main research location for several reasons:

- the interest shown by the growers in the zone,
- the climatic diversity of the island,
- the favourable scientific environment: work at CIRAD on ecophysiology and crop protection and the existence of analytical facilities at Réunion University.

The two research institutes have different but complementary approaches. Focusing jointly on a common applied objective, they will attempt to adapt models and techniques developed for temperate fruits and transfer them to the tropical world •

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Research and Methods

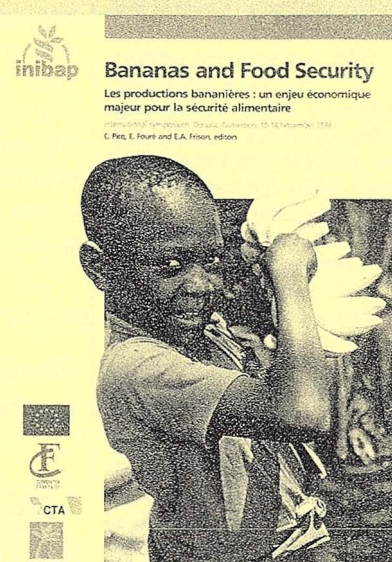
Bananas and Food Security

INIBAP has just published the proceedings of the symposium on the socio-economic aspects of banana production held in Douala (Cameroon) from 10 to 14 November 1998 and attended by researchers from all over the world. Organised jointly by INIBAP, CIRAD, the CRBP, French co-operation and the CTA, it consisted of four sessions according to the major production regions (Latin America and the Caribbean, Africa, Asia and the Pacific) covering the economic and food importance of banana, sector diversity and dynamics, market organisation and marketing, farming systems.

Bananas are among the most important food crops in most tropical countries. They play an essential role in everyday diets and their nutritional potential limits harm by malnutrition.

Bananas and plantains are also a major source of income for millions of small farmers. The importance of on-farm consumption of banana for food security in numerous southern countries merits more attention from decision makers and donors. Many households and small farmers depend on bananas and plantains for their staple diet and for their main and supplementary incomes. Increasing demand for bananas in towns would justify the development of production subsectors for the economic prosperity of periurban zones.

Support for the private sector and market-oriented activities is essential for switching from a supply logic to production based on demand. It would favour a pluridisciplinary approach involving all the stakeholders in the subsector •



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