A European Market for Malian Mangoes

In 2001 a pilot operation to export mangoes from Mali was set up as part of the new operation plan of the Agro-Processing Trading Project (Projet d’Appui à la Valorisation et Commercialisation des Produits Agricoles – PAVCOPA), financed by the World Bank. The objective of the project was to provide technical support to the Agricultural Trading and Processing Promotion Agency (Agence pour la Promotion des Filières Agricoles – APROFA), a non-profit, government-funded agency responsible for providing marketing opportunities for smallholders’ agricultural products. The pilot operation set an unprecedented experience in establishing a multi-modal shipment system connecting the Malian Southern town of Sikasso to Abidjan and improving every step of the supply-chain (from production to packaging) in order to export mangoes grown by Malian smallholders to Northern Europe. The operation was highly successful and led to its expansion in the subsequent years.

Production and marketing results

• Shipping delays between Sikasso (production center in the South of Mali) and Northern Europe divided were halved (from 25 to 12 days)
• Grower unit prices increased by 25%, and employment in the pack-houses reached 150 persons (60% are women with adequate working conditions and pay above national labour benchmarks).
• 26 million FCFA, approximately US$ 44,600, of net profit, securing an Internal Rate of Return of 70%.
• APROFA’s own financial sustainability secured by net revenues from its services, through a “royalty” payment per kilo exported from the pack-house to APROFA
• Exportation with the brand Société Nouvelle Tropical Expressions™, marketed in the Netherlands, Germany, and Scandinavia.
• High quality levels, no loss in terms of repacking or discarded produce (none of the 56,000 boxes that arrived in Rotterdam was rejected by the importer).
• Excellent customer response to the Malian produce (taste, general aspect).
• Good performance of the Malian pack-house personnel and field-men: improved quality levels from 60 to 80% export yield on incoming produce
• Optimal inventory control, with all produce and packaging inventory movements accounted for.
• Efficient fund flow between importer and exporter resulting in reliable and timely payment of growers and field-men, and consequent decrease in working capital requirements.
• Access to new markets since the mangoes were exported mainly to Northern non-French speaking countries (including the most demanding British market), a major challenge for a Malian-Ivorian joint-venture.

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These results encouraged the Ivorian importer to reinvest the gains and additional resources into a more important operation for 2002, aiming for 1000 tons. Over time, the objective is to develop a 5,000 tons activity with a range of different products with a revenue target of US $3 million.

**Benefits: Impact on rural poverty**

*On-farm impacts*
- Increased mango growers’ revenues through increased farm-gate prices (from 50 to 125 CFA francs per kg, due to higher quality fruits) as a result of intensified production and exportation
- Increased investment in orchard production
- Improved financial sustainability of growers through crop diversification: (spreading the risks by having multiple forms of cash crops and revenues).
- More efficient farming practices with technological applications, in particular through alternative irrigation methods (promoted by APROFA programs)
- Organization of the producers: producers’ associations became direct partners with the commercial operators, independently negotiating the prices of the commercial services.
- Availability of credit schemes to the farmers (supply of quality seed stock).
- Gradually, the operation is contributing to the creation of an out-grower model between the growers and the pack-house.

*Off-farm impacts*
- Creation of employment in diversified sectors of the mango supply-chain: supervising personnel (young trained individuals) and pack-house personnel (mainly women).
- Technology development: development and dissemination of conservation and warehousing methods, which can be particularly complex when it comes to horticultural fresh exports. The newly-acquired know-how will find applications for the development of similar linkages for other fresh products (sweet potato, green beans), in other regions, and with new partners

**Lessons learned**
- **Paying attention to every segment of the supply-chain:** The effective linkage between farmers and markets was made possible by planned intervention at every step of the production and marketing stages, analyzing and disentangling the supply processes. This led to full market acceptance because the supply-chain then managed to address the requirements of the market.
- **Overcoming constraints and finding innovative solutions:** Some of the principal actors identify good management as the key to success. Through the restructuring of PAVCOPA and the establishment of APROFA, and with hands-on technical assistance, the new team in place was the engine to the success of the operation by promoting local know-how which resulted in more effective management and operational practices.

*This Infobrief is an extract of a full text document: Danielou Morgane, Labaste Patrick, Voisard Jean-Michel, “Linking Farmers to Markets, Exporting Malian Mangoes to Europe”, Africa Region Working Paper Series, N. 60. http://www.worldbank.org/afr/wps/. For more information, please contact: Patrick Labaste, plabaste@worldbank.org; Morgane Danielou, mdanielou@worldbank.org*