

RESPONSIBLE GLOBAL TROPICAL FRUIT VALUE CHAINS

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ABSTRACT

Production and trade of tropical fruits have expanded rapidly over the past three decades. These products have economic and social importance for developing countries, which produce up to 99 percent of all tropical fruits. Yet businesses in tropical fruits value chains are facing twin challenges around sustainability and resilience. To be sustainable, the industry has identified challenges with respect to workers, local communities, the environment and the long-term economic success of the sector itself. At the same time, the COVID-19 pandemic has been particularly disruptive in the tropical fruit industry due to the perishability of tropical fruits, their comparatively higher prices and their heavy reliance on labour.

Companies are already taking steps to address these issues in their operations. However, value chains are vulnerable to risks and shocks beyond the control of any single actor. More international and inter-sectoral cooperation and dialogue are needed.

In this context, FAO is leading the project “Building responsible global value chains for the sustainable production and trade of tropical fruits”, which will continue into mid-2024.

The project team works with companies and organizations in the avocado and pineapple value chains on a confidential basis. Building on consultation and research, the project has launched a demand-driven webinar series guided by peer learning and expert advice, to address technical concerns raised by the industry such as climate change mitigation and deforestation. The project has conducted a baseline survey on sustainability practices of approximately 40 companies in the avocado and pineapple value chains. The survey results deepen our understanding of the needs of companies and producer organizations in terms of capacity development and technical assistance. The aggregate findings will be presented later this year. The project is also seeking input on priority topics to develop technical guides, value chain guides, and learning programmes.

Further information on the benefits of joining the project and its activities will be presented.

Keywords: COVID-19, tropical fruit value chains