

Title Post harvest handling, marketing and assessment of losses in papaya
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Abstract

Papaya cv. Taiwan 786 was introduced in Andhra Pradesh, India some 10 years ago which is now spread to different parts of the country. Most of the papaya produced from this region is marketed at Bangalore and during this process, heavy post harvest loss occurs. Lack of information on post harvest handling and marketing practices; associated losses occurring at different stages of handling and their implications on marketing efficiency and availability necessitated the genesis of this study. The results revealed that the total post harvest loss (PHL) in papaya produced in Ananthpur district of Andhra Pradesh and marketed in Bangalore of Karnataka state worked out to 25.49% consisting of 1.66% at field level, transit loss of 4.12% and ripening loss of 8.22% at the market level and 11.49% at the retail level. At the field level, the losses were mainly due to immature and small size of fruits, malformation and harvesting injury. At the market level, bruises and pressing injury caused transit loss. Anthracnose and fruit rot due to *Alternaria* and *Phytophthora* were the main causes of loss during ripening. Rotting of fruits was the main reason for loss during retailing. Marketing system for papaya was not found to be efficient as the efficiency index was less than 1.00. The producer's share was as low as 26% and the inclusion of PHL as another component of marketing cost would add to inefficiency of the marketing system as it reduced the efficiency index further and the price spread would have been just 57% without the PHL. There is a need to reduce the PHL and improve the availability through the recommended pre and post harvest treatments and better handling and storage to improve the marketing efficiency in papaya.