

Issues and Challenges of Implementing GAP at the Farmers Level



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**APO e-Learning Course on
Good Agriculture Practices and GLOBALGAP for
Greater Market Access for Agrifood Products**

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The GAP Program was developed as a private sector initiative, out of need to change Carambola cultivation practices because of changing market conditions and requirements

where small and rural farmers on their own, have limited resources to achieve the quality and food safety standards to access competitive markets

and where these farmers will always be caught in the vicious cycles of ineffective cultivation techniques, low productivity, low income and disabled information connection.

Conditions of smallholder Carambola farmers

- Farmers mostly elderly and not literate
- Work with traditional cultivation practices
- Limited financial resources
- Confused about modern horticulture technology
 - Achieve quality produce by applying more chemicals
 - Meeting demands of the export market
- Rely on the chemical retailer for technical information
- Multiple market intermediaries between producers and consumers



Changing market conditions and requirements

- Very large supermarkets dominating the market
- Increasing demand for food safety assurance and traceability
- Demand for quality
- Certification of quality & safety have become basic requirements
- Demand for consistent supply
- Work only with preferred supplier
 - Supply direct from farm – shortening the supply chain
 - Create opportunity for niche marketing



Developing K-Farm GAP Program - 1

- Problem:** Non compliance of production safety standards of Carambola for the EU markets
- Scale:** Work with contracted existing small holder Carambola farmers
- Solutions:** Adoption of GlobalGAP Protocol into current farm practices
- Objective:** Seek GlobalGAP certification for the farms
- Immediate action:** Ensure that MRL pesticide residue of Carambola is not breached

Developing K-Farm GAP Program - 2

Plan of work: Develop incentives and Contractual commitments for the farmers to participate in the program
Replace toxic pesticides with lower toxicity or biological pesticides
Review fertilizer application regime
Introduce IPM, ICM and K-Farm GAP QMS practices
Develop production schedules to match export demands

Technical Support: In-house agriculture expert
National Research Institute
Department of Agriculture
Agriculture chemical companies



GAP Training Program

1. A full time TM (horticulturist) was hired. The TM was re-trained in K-Farm GAP QMS, GlobalGAP protocol, IPM and marketing techniques.
2. An information profile of farmers was made - current farm practices, production costs and their signed commitment towards change.
3. The Training Program was developed along current practice routines but fundamental changes were made for pest control, harvest and post harvest handling practices.
4. The GlobalGAP protocols and the principles of IPM were used as references and benchmark.
5. Production schedules are formulated for each farmer in accordance to the size and age of the trees.

Results of the K-Farm GAP Program

Program Action

- Direct regular close contact
- Feasible production protocol
- Specific training
- Accurate input application
- Developed production tools
- Conserved farm ecology
- Exposure of farmers to the supply chain
- Trading the produce in high end markets consistently



Impacts and Output

- Greater P&D control
- Lower input costs
- Increased % of quality fruits
- Increased yield
- No production waste
- Increased income
- Gained access EU market
- Master growers
- Agriculture extension teams

Financial sustainability of the Program

1. No financial contribution needed to participate
2. Low cost maintenance program
3. Financial gains at early stages of participation
4. New & high end markets opened to the high quality produce

Sustainability of the GAP Program

1. The profitable trade will continue to drive farmers' competitiveness
2. Stakeholders in the program leverage on each other – this will demand and derive higher productivity in the chain

Conclusion

Horticulture is a science and a business, and farmers need to access this knowledge and information basin in order to produce a crop of quality values that they can sell for a profit.

Many Asian farmers are isolated from access to this production technology and marketing information.

The K-Farm GAP Program has empowered its farmers to bridge this connection and sell to a dedicated market through a farm extension program to produce a high quality and high priced produce.

Lessons from the K-Farm GAP Program

- It is possible to reach out to small farmers
- It is essential to exert monitoring and control of farms
- The Contract between K-Farm and the Farmers is binding
- Financial returns for practicing GAP is not from higher farm gate prices – it is through increase in productivity
- Farm extension training for farmers is essential
- Need to develop inclusive connectivity with the farmers:
 - Bring farmers to the market

Proposed GAP Agenda for Asia

- Agenda** - Promote Food Safety & Environment Conservation Practices in Farms & PH processes.
- Approach** - Disseminate awareness in importance of food safety and benefits of quality to farmers and consumers.
- Train-the-Trainers Program, of extension officers to better understand the concepts of Sustainable Agriculture, Food Safety and Marketing.
- Rationale** - The fundamentals and guiding principles of GAP and Sustainable Agriculture are currently missing. GAP is not just a Standard –

Thank you



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