

REDUCING POST HARVEST LOSSES IN CAMEROON: ROLE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF DSCHANG

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Florence Anyangwe FONTEH (Ph.D.)

Associate professor, Food Science

University of Dschang - Cameroon

Outline

1. Country overview
2. Main cross-cutting causes of PHL
3. Existing Infrastructure to curb PHL
4. Government efforts, policies and strategies
5. Role of the University of Dschang

1. Country overview



- Pop: 19.5 M
- Pop growth rate: 2.9%
- Literacy: 72%
- Life expectancy: 51yrs
- GDP growth rate: 2.6%
- Agriculture: >42% of GDP, 51% exports, 70% econ. active pop.
- Dschang: West Region

Figure 1: Map of Cameroon

Overview: Post Harvest Situation

- Very high post harvest losses (20 – 60%): reduced food security, reduced income generation, increased poverty
- Losses are caused by several factors including poor logistics and management systems along the entire production chain (farm to fork).
- Agro-industry sector remains underdeveloped (due to a prevailing unenabling environment for business operations).

Main Agric sub sectors

According to SRP document, strategic food crops:

- Cereals: maize, rice, sorghum
- Tubers: Cassava, yam
- Plantain
- Palm oil
- Livestock/fisheries
- Fruits: pineapple, banana
(cocoa, coffee)

2. Major cross-cutting causes of PHL

- Few & poorly maintained farm-to-market roads (only 11% in motorable conditions all year round)
- Low capacity for post harvest storage
- Poor mastering of preservation/processing techniques
- Numerous processing constraints (electricity, water, taxes, access to eqpmt,)
- Weak linkages btwn stakeholders

Causes of PHL (cont'd)

- Poor organization of marketing chain (poor info systems)
- Weak farmer organizations; esp. among small producers
- Poor market infrastructure (abattoirs, stalls, etc)
- Poor harvesting/handling/packaging techniques
- Limited cooling facilities during transportation and storage

3. Available infrastructure for post harvest usage

By public sector

- Many Gov't initiated agro-processing industries operated till 1990s but no longer exist (Soderim, sodeble, etc)
- Storage facilities: warehouses few & unevenly distributed (MINADER)
- 2 modern abattoirs for meat processing

Available infrastructure for post harvest usage (cont'd)

By private sector

- Warehouses: Sodecoton, NWDM, SWDA, UCCAO, major wholesalers, etc
- Large modern agro-food processing industries: Sotramilk, Chococam, Delmonte, CDC, etc

Available infrastructure for post harvest usage (cont'd)

By individual farmers:

- Earthen granaries
- Burying (pits)
- Piling in heaps (open air)
- Local dryers
- Cribs
- Roofs (veranda, kitchen, etc)
- Many small mini-processing facilities

Available infrastructure for post harvest usage (cont'd)

By Communities/cooperatives:

- Collective storage facilities: warehouses
- Medium size processing facilities

4. Gov't efforts to reduce PHL

- Created special ministry (MINPMEEESA): the PCAD project (creation & dev. of S/M agro firms; gender equity). Now, 37/150 firms operate (42% by women)
- Management of existing warehouses (MINADER)
- Creation/devpmt of industrial zones
- Increased access to basic infrastructure (roads, water, electricity)
- Construction of modern abattoirs/markets

4. Gov't policies to reduce PHL

- Promote creation of agro-processing firms: reduce institutional constraints to their dev. (increase energy/water supply, devp integrated low cost transportation system, reduce taxes/admin. bottleneck)
- Invest in development of the value chains, standardization and quality control
- Promote devpmt & access to technological innovation and strengthen protection of IPRs

Gov't policies to reduce PHL (cont'd)

- Promote access to Finance: encourage banks to give priority in financing private investments esp. S/M agri firms
- Re-inforce linkage between researchers and farmers (extension services)
- Facilitate access to new ICTs which will contribute to improving the market information system

5. The University of Dschang: Role in curbing PHL

- Faculty of Agriculture and Agricultural Sciences
 - Research activities with farmers/processing firms:
 - Dev/adapt technological innovations (preservation techniques/eqpmt)
 - Dvp standards and quality control procedures
 - Training specialists for mgmt of extension programs
- Sensitize univ. authorities for effective lobbying with policy makers

5. The University of Dschang: Role in curbing PHL

- Faculty of Agriculture and Agricultural Sciences (1600 students)

Dept. Crop production

Dept. Animal production

Dept. Agric economics

Dept. Rural Sociology

Dept. Forestry & wildlife

Dept. Agric engineering

The University of Dschang:

Role in curbing PHL

- Post graduate program in Norms and Quality Control:

Animal/fish products

Crop products

Forest products

Processed Foods