

Global certification opens export market to Malian mango farmers



Mango farmers in Mali underwent training for the GLOBALG.A.P. certification.. Photo Credit: NAADS

By GLOBALG.A.P.

THE mango fruit is one of the most abundant crops in Mali due to the optimal climate in the country. But mango exports to other African and European markets are still hindered by aging orchards with low yields, challenges of fruit fly control, a focus on volume over quality and a lack of knowledge of international supply chains.

In 2017, the Bayer development programme BayG.A.P. and Greenyard entered into an integrated development partnership (iEPW) with GIZ, to support local farmers with training and tackle these challenges.

This enabled further development of the local industry and expanded the existing certified grower base. More than 1,200 smallholder farmers in Mali have been trained on

G.A.P. out of which more than 700 have achieved GLOBALG.A.P. IFA certification needed to gain access to international export markets.

BayG.A.P. provided the farmers with both theoretical and practical coaching in technical, environmental, and ethical aspects of mango farming. Adapted according to local infrastructure challenges, training was held in the local Bambara language in the very mango orchards themselves. Assessments of each local producer's current production processes also took place, with personalised follow-ups by local consultants included.

Global Food Chain Partnership Lead Gerhard Adam says that BayG.A.P. was founded to support and train smallholders worldwide on practices that can bring them closer to certifying their produce.

The results have been impressive, with productivity increasing 30 percent on average and improved quality leading to 50 percent higher gross profit. Additional jobs have also been created within the mango processing industry.

More importantly, says GIZ consultant for BayG.A.P. field coordination Drissa Sanogo, producers have a better understanding of what good agricultural practices mean for themselves and the impact on their business.

Berthe Keletigui, a mango producer in the Sikasso region, says that the BayG.A.P. training and the orchard register, which collects all relevant information about operations on the farms, gives him a more precise idea of the gains made in his field operation.

For Ignace Sacko in Bougouni, his understanding of farm management practices and the safe use of plant protection products have improved. He says pruning techniques learnt from the training programme have significantly helped to improve yields of the orchards.

Dr Ursula Wermund, Lead Sustainability and Quality Project Manager at Greenyard Fresh Services, said that GLOBALG.A.P. is a base requirement to open the doors for the European market. Since the beginning of their partnership project in 2018, they have been able to facilitate certification for a substantial amount of mango farmers in Mali.

The training and assessment opportunities from BayG.A.P., Greenyard and GIZ led to 717 smallholders being able to achieve GLOBALG.A.P. IFA certification.