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## Value Adding through Standards? Chances for Small Farmers Groups Producing Organic and Conventional Mangoes for Export Markets — A Comparative Analysis

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### Abstract

Do standards add value to the produce and who will reap the benefits from standard implementation in the value chain? Will standards help increase incomes of small farmers in developing countries or are they so expensive to implement that small producers risk to be excluded from export markets?

These key questions are examined in an exemplary way for organic and conventional mangoes delivered to the same type of retail outlet. Considerable differences can be observed regarding actors, their relationships and the basic rules which define the conditions for participation in the two chains. On top of quality, price and delivery reliability compliance to internationally agreed standards is increasingly required. In the conventional mango chain, the EurepGAP standard and the International Food Standard (IFS) are defining good agricultural respectively manufacturing practices. Organic production and processing are regulated in EU regulation 2092/91.

Producers need knowledge and practical skills regarding the requirements of the standards, their implementation and conformity assessment procedures. In general, groups of growers have advantages in managing the know-how transfer and certification process in a cost-effective way. For both conventional and organic mangoes, there is a large variety of schemes such as cooperatives, contract farming or outgrower schemes that are making certification viable and affordable but simultaneously often increase the dependence of suppliers on their customers.

Organic certification offers opportunities for small farmers on both export and domestic markets if technical assistance is provided. Many studies state positive income effects for organic farmers. In contrast, supplying certified conventional produce will not result in producers receiving premium prices in their target markets. It may help a minority of growers to obtain more business due to enhanced quality and business management capabilities but is not a realistic option for the majority of small farmers in developing countries.

**Keywords:** Developing countries, EurepGAP, group certification, international food standard (IFS), mangoes, organic farming, outgrower schemes