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How Do GAP Standards from Different Public and Private Sectors Influence Horticultural Value Chains?

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Abstract

A wide range of private standard and certification schemes evolved in the global horticultural value chain during the last decades. Thailand as one of the leading exporters of tropical horticultural products has started to actively promote a set of “Good Agricultural Practices” (GAP) standards for on-farm and post-farm activities aiming to enhance food quality and safety levels, and to increase the competitiveness of its horticultural sector. The Q-GAP standard issued by the Thai government is currently the most important standard for export-oriented producers. On the other hand, Thai authorities and horticultural stakeholders have increasingly paid attention to comply with international private standards such as GLOBALG.A.P. As a consequence, the presented study aims to analyse how GAP standards from different public and private sectors influence Thai horticultural value chains. Taking the example of 408 certified and non-certified orchid and mango producers as well as expert interviews with key informants, the study revealed that large differences exist with respect to the type of horticultural products. In contrast to the orchid sector, the value chain of mangoes has been successfully upgraded by different kinds of certification schemes. Certified and non-certified orchid producers can either sell their products to export or domestic markets. Most certified Q-GAP mango producers sell their products to producer groups and/or cooperatives that have contracts with exporters or high-value domestic retail chains. Certified private GLOBALG.A.P. producers are directly linked to exporters solely on the basis of contract farming. They receive a purchase price and a sales volume with a floor price (based on market price) guaranteed by the export company. Furthermore, the company supports certified and new GLOBALG.A.P. producer candidates by providing training related to certification procedures, record keeping and covers the costs of certification. Based on these results, GAP standards offer added value for horticultural products and can serve as an upgrading strategy for the value chain of horticultural products as a whole.

Keywords: GLOBALG.A.P., Good Agricultural Practices (GAP), horticultural value chain, Thailand