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“Towards shifting paradigms in agriculture
for a healthy and sustainable future”

Value Additions Opportunities for African Fruit and Vegetables Growers

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Abstract

Many food organisations like FAO mentioned a food crisis for next years, several innovations are shared in developed countries in order to sustain current natural resources and make food available for next generations. Africa, with a third of its population living in rural area and its dynamic growth, is really concerned and must adopt some innovations for food security. Nevertheless, African growers, especially small-scale farmers, faced some challenges decelerating the transition to a secure food system, like in fruits and vegetables production. In Europe, fruits and vegetable growers plan their operations from the production to the marketing phase. In conventional or biological way, cultivated seeds answer to particular climate situation, quantity or quality request. Fertilisation, water supply, sunbeams are calculated to offer only what is needed by plants, under greenhouses for example. The harvest is stored in cold chambers to preserve quality for market and reduce post-harvest losses. Fruits and vegetables are cleaned and sorted according to target customers standards. They may be dried or processed into paste, juice, jam, oil (some parts). Then, European growers ensure their product traceability as they want to penetrate international markets. African growers could adopt these innovations if there were not following difficulties. First, large-scale farmers face the low level of genetic research for efficient seeds, the high costs for imported machines and also, the habits of local population who consume some products only on the fresh form. Additionally, small-scale farmers face more challenges like land access especially for women, high costs of organic fertilisers compared to chemicals ones, low financial support. But we notice particularly a lack of knowledges and zero efforts to know about new practices, the ways to make them traditional and cheaper, the importance of a marketing strategy, the real importance of organic fertilisers beside their costs and their effectiveness manifested after several years and the advantages to be part of farmers organisations such as cooperatives. So, we will recommend African growers to meet in organisations and benefit from the advantages of training and financial support, especially in this context of population growth, and real need of responsible agriculture.

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