

ABSTRACT

Pakistan is 5th largest date palm producer in the world and has always remained in top 6 exporters of date palms, bringing back around US\$ 67.49 million in earning from international exports. Every year almost 650 metric/tons of date palms are produced; unfortunately, a major chunk of date palm production observed to be around one-third portion is wasted due to not having proper utilization of post harvesting technologies. Agriculture plays a major role in National Gross Domestic Product (GDP), by contributing 24% to total GDP of Pakistan and 44% population is directly employed in the agriculture sector. This study aims to observe the contribution of post-harvest technologies in the date palm cluster in district Khairpur Sindh, Pakistan and identify the hurdles faced by date palm growers in post-harvest management of date palm and challenges for adoption of modern methods in date palm cluster.

For this study, qualitative approach was to used and convenient sampling techniques was used for data collected from district Khairpur, Sindh. The demographics of date palm growers and problems faced during harvesting are discussed. Furthermore, this study investigates the usage of post harvesting technology i.e. solar tunnel dryer and solar-cum-gas-fired date palm dryers and observed reasons to not being properly utilized and optimized to receive a maximum benefit of increasing quality standard of date palm production. The results show that reasons for lower contribution of date palm cluster are manifold, ranging from no awareness on increasing yield output of date palms, in-appropriate post-harvest management, lack of food quality and safety measures and underestimating the probable worth of output by date palm producers.