

PRESS RELEASE

EXPORT OF TAMIL NADU BANANA TO EUROPEAN COUNTRIES

Tamil Nadu is one of the leading Banana producing States in India. The banana growers were making revenue of about Rs.50,000/- per acre by following the traditional methods of cultivation. With the advent of technological interventions and effective dissemination to banana growers by the scientists of Tamil Nadu Agricultural University, National Research Centre for Banana, Department of Horticulture, Government of Tamil Nadu. Banana farmers have taken up modern scientific cultivation viz. pre-harvest activities, planting of Tissue Culture seedlings, adopting drip irrigation and fertigation and post-harvest management to improve the keeping quality of fruits, utilizing the pack-house, pre-cooling and ripening chambers and have started to export banana to the Middle East countries. Due to scientific farming, the farmers farm income has progressively increased by 6 times from Rs.50,000/- to over Rs.3,00,000/- per acre.

In continuation of the success of quality banana production, with financial support by Port of Trieste, Italy, a unique Post harvest handling system called "Cable Way Conveyor" was developed by Tamil Nadu Agricultural University, Coimbatore in collaboration with Tamil Nadu Banana Growers Federation. The 'Cable way conveyor' facilitates to reduce the post harvest loss in handling the banana bunches from the

farm to pack-house and also avoids human handling and physical drudgery. It is suitable to be used in large farms and also for the collective small holdings in transporting the farm inputs as well as the produce. It paves way for opening up Professional banana Export from Tamil Nadu and explores the business opportunities for India Grown banana varieties like Grand Naine, Red banana, Ney Poovan and Nendran to European Continent.

As a part of this pioneering attempt, a 'Cable Way Conveyor' was fabricated and erected in an identified farm at Kudalore of Theni district and banana bunches were harvested and transported by the conveyor to farm laid pack-house and about 400 kg of samples were sent by Air shipment to University of Udine, Italy on experimental basis and positive results got of superior shelf life comparing to the conventional harvest.

In continuation of this, during the month of September 2018 to learn the essential practice of pre and post harvest requirement for long duration sea voyage, a Static Inland Simulation Trial was conducted at Chennai by keeping a container fully stuffed with banana packed pallets under climate controlled atmosphere for three weeks, under the supervision of National Research Centre for Banana, partnering with shipping liner "MAERSK" and Tamil Nadu Banana Growers Federation.

Subsequently, the first trial shipment for Italy has been now kept ready along with the needed 'post harvest protocol', for transshipping **'Grand Naine' variety of banana harvested from Theni district.** This

container is to depart from Cochin port by 1st November on a sea voyage of 24 days to reach Port of Trieste, Italy. **This attempt is the first of its kind from India to Europe for banana crop.** The flagging off for the export of Banana to Italy by container through ship was done by the Hon'ble Minister for Agriculture Thiru.R.Duraikannu in the presence of Thiru.Gagandeep Singh Bedi, IAS, Agricultural Production Commissioner and Principal Secretary, Department of Agriculture, Government of Tamil Nadu and Director of Horticulture and Plantation Crops, Dr.Subbaiyan, IAS, by video conferencing from Chennai on 31.10.2018. The program was held at Tamil Nadu Agricultural University campus wherein Commissioner of Agricultural Marketing and Agri Business, Thiru S.J.Chiru, IAS, Registrar (i/c), Tamil Nadu Agricultural University, Prof. Dr.D. Sudhakar, Deputy Director General, Indian Council of Agricultural Research, Dr.A.K.Singh, Director, NRCB Trichy, Dr.Uma, Tamil Nadu Banana Growers Federation President, Thiru A.P.Karuppiah, Secretary, Thiru Ajithan, Treasurer, Thiru Subramanian, Facilitator, Thiru Ezhilan, officials and farmers participated and graced the occasion.

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