

Country Brief

International Workshop on IPM and Marketing

Country: P. R. China

IPM Programme active since: 1989

Estimated number of farmers trained: 150,000

Estimated number of trainers currently active: 1,170 (trained facilitators rice IPM 673+cotton IPM 245+Vegetable IPM in Yunnan 203+Guangxi :38)

Main crops involved: Rice, cotton, vegetables, fruits trees and tea etc..

Main issues/problems encountered with respect to marketing of IPM produce:

- IPM produce/brand is not well known by consumers and the general public. The term IPM is mostly known as a technical term used by plant protection professionals. The general public usually does not know what IPM stands for;
- IPM Produce/safe produce selling network needs to be developed and expanded;
- The supply chain from farmers to supermarkets is too long;
- Hard for individual small-scale farmers to get accredited by various Safe Food certification schemes. Middlemen, such as farmer cooperatives or contracted companies, are needed.

Brief description of marketing initiatives or strategies for IPM crops that have been developed and introduced (if any):

Case study 1: Marketing scheme for IPM-FFS fresh vegetable produce in Beijing

Model: FFS IPM produce - farmer cooperatives -middleman-supermarket (Carrefour)-consumers
The cooperative has registered a brand for IPM produce. The cooperative sells the IPM produce to an agency who then supplies the produce to supermarkets.

How long has the above marketing initiative/strategy been operational: 3 years

How many farmers participate: 300

How successful has it been: Better and stable, guaranteed farm-gate prices, better market linkages resulting into higher and more stable profits for farmers.

What were the main obstacles, if any:

It is hard for small-scale farmers to contact supermarkets directly because small-scale farmers have limited farmland and can provide limited quantities and varieties of produce at restricted times during the year. Intermediary collectors/middlemen are thus needed to gather produce from many smallholder farmers to be distributed to supermarkets. In doing so, facilitators play a role in helping farmers build the linkages to reach the goal of selling agrifood to the supermarkets.

Case study 2: Marketing scheme for IPM-FFS fresh vegetables in Kunming, Yunnan

Model: FFS IPM produce-tourists (consumers)

FFS IPM produce has an "IPM Produce" logo. The produce is mainly sold in connection with agricultural tourism. People buy IPM produce when they visit those tourist villages.

How long has the above marketing initiative/strategy been operational: 3 years

How many farmers participate: 300

How successful has it been: Farmers get higher incomes due to higher price of the produce with locally certified IPM logo.

What were the main obstacles, if any:

The tourists/consumers do not know what IPM produce stands for. Need to explain to the consumers what IPM produce means, i.e. ecologically produced, high quality and safe products, with pesticide residues below MRLs.

Case study 3: Marketing scheme for IPM-FFS produce in Sichuan

Model: FFS IPM produce-IPM/non-pesticide pollution produce shops-consumers

FFS IPM produce from IPM demonstration area was sold at IPM/safe produce shops distributed in the province.

How long has the above marketing initiative/strategy been operational: 5 years

How many farmers participate: 15,000

How successful has it been: Farmers got higher incomes because their produce was certified and sold to IPM/non-pesticide pollution produce shops with better prices.

What were the main obstacles, if any:

Compared to national Green Food certification system, Provincial IPM produce certification/brand was not publicly recognized. Public awareness raising campaigns on IPM produce are needed.

Case study 4: Contract farming Tonghai County in Yunnan Province, based on common model found elsewhere in China

Model: companies-production bases- contracted farmers

How many farmers participate: 3,000

How successful has it been: Farmers have stable market access and receive guarantees/contract by the companies for the lowest farm-gate prices.

What were the main obstacles, if any:

Sometimes, lack of compliance by contracted farmers or companies. The enforcement of the contracts needs more attention from both farmers and private sector contractors and more regulatory work by the government.

Lessons learned from the marketing initiative/strategy and points that need further improvement:

- Public awareness raising campaigns on IPM produce are needed;
- Link IPM produce to national mainstreamed certification and safe good marketing schemes;
- Help FFS farmers to form associations/cooperatives so that small-scale farmers can take collective actions to apply for certification and build linkages with traders or supermarkets;
- Facilitators should assist farmers in development of basic market knowledge and skills and could help farmer associations/cooperatives build linkages with supermarkets/agro processors/exporters;
- Introduction to the importance and procedures of agricultural produce certification should be part of FFS curriculum
- Pesticide residues instant test laboratories (field test kits) could be used to demonstrate to FFS farmers and consumers the quality difference between IPM produce and FP produce
- Need to help farmer associations/cooperatives develop and register their own brands.
- Need to set up more IPM/safe produce shops to expand the marketing network.