

A systems approach to boost exports of table grapes from India

Timeframe: **2003 to date**

CASESTORY



LED BY

PUBLIC SECTOR

Agricultural and Processed Food Products
Export Development Authority (APEDA),
Ministry of Commerce

National Research Centre for Grapes
(NRCG)

Directorate of Marketing and Inspection,
Ministry of Agriculture

State Governments of Maharashtra,
Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh

PRIVATE SECTOR

Farmers, packing houses and exporters

Pesticide residue testing laboratories

Logicsoft International Pvt. Ltd.
(software company)



GOVERNANCE

Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs)
define the roles and responsibilities.

FUNDING

APEDA co-shared the costs of rolling
out this PPP with the private sector
partners involved. APEDA financed 25% of
investments in packing facilities and 50%
of lab equipment costs (under specific
ceilings), as well as the creation and running
of the NRCG's National Referral Laboratory
and the development of the GrapeNet
software. State Governments covered the
costs of training farmers. The NRL and
private laboratories funded lab monitoring
and training. Farmers and exporter
associations financed implementation
of Good Agricultural Practices (GAPs).
Exporters covered sampling, testing and
inspection costs linked to phytosanitary and
food safety certificates. Users contribute
to the costs of the GrapeNet, making it
financially sustainable.



PURPOSE

Table grapes are a vital source of income
for thousands of smallholder farmers in
India, but pesticide MRL export violations
were affecting their access to higher-value
markets, including the European Union.

This PPP brought together public and
private stakeholders in the value chain –
i.e. farmers, packing houses, exporters,
laboratories and inspectors – to set up a
systems-based approach and traceability
platform (GrapeNet) to address the
challenges faced.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

PUBLIC SECTOR

- Lead development of SOPs in consultation with stakeholders.
- Food safety and quality inspection and phytosanitary certification.
- Establish the National Referral Laboratory, deliver lab proficiency testing programmes, training on sampling and testing, and accreditation of eight labs to ISO 17025.
- Up-grade and monitor some 50 packing facilities.
- Registration of farms, delivery of training for farmers on pesticide use and pest management.
- Establish a GlobalGAP process for group certification of smallholder farmers.
- Establish an online traceability solution (GrapeNet) to integrate all SOP operations.

PRIVATE SECTOR

- Grading, sorting, packing and export of grapes.
- Implementation of GAPs at farm level.
- Sampling and testing for pesticide residues.
- Maintain farm and export traceability records based on SOPs and GAP requirements.
- Design and maintenance of the traceability solution.

LESSONS

- Clearly defined roles and transparency helped to build trust between public and private sector stakeholders, which was essential to the success and sustainability of the partnership.
- IT-based traceability tool facilitated transparency and improved operations across the value chain.
- GlobalGap group certification enabled smallholder farmers, unable to afford their own certification, to produce and export grapes in compliance with safety and quality standards.
- Actively engaging farmers and exporters increased their awareness of the importance of improved food safety to establish India as a reliable supplier of table grapes.

UP-SCALING OPPORTUNITIES

- Based on the success, the NRL was recognized as the reference laboratory of the Food Safety and Standards Authority of India. Its testing was expanded to cover other fruits and vegetables (e.g. pomegranate, mango, citrus, onions, vegetables).
- GrapeNet evolved to become HortiNet for the fresh produce sector, and was replicated for groundnuts (PeanutNet), basmati rice (BasmatiNet), organics (TraceNet) and meat (MeatNet).
- Opportunities exist to further replicate the GrapeNet model in value chains (like spices, tea and coffee) managed by other public authorities.

RESULTS

THE PPP ENABLED THE PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SECTOR TO ADDRESS PESTICIDE-RELATED CHALLENGES IN THE VALUE CHAIN AND FACILITATE SAFE TRADE.

THE TABLE GRAPE SECTOR EXPANDED, CREATING NEW JOBS AND BENEFITTING RURAL LIVELIHOODS.



EXPORTS OF GRAPES ROSE FROM
3,000 mt in **2003**
to **250,000** mt in **2019**

with reduced rejections due to pesticide residues.



FARMERS INCREASED
their earnings for a **5kg** pack of
grapes

from **€8.50** to **€11**