

PROCINORTE's Tropical and Subtropical Fruits Task Force: a tri-national effort to improve fruit quality and trade

R. Goenaga¹, S. Salazar-García², G. Doyon³, J.A. Osuna-García², I.J.L. González-Durán² and J.A. Landry⁴. ¹USDA-ARS, Tropical Agriculture Research Station, 2200 P. A. Campos Ave., Suite 201, Mayagüez, Puerto Rico 00680-5470 (Ricardo.Goenaga@ars.usda.gov); ²INIFAP-Campo Experimental Santiago Ixcuintla, Apdo. Postal 100, Santiago Ixcuintla, Nayarit, Mexico 63300; ³Food Research and Development Centre, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, 3600 Casavant Blvd. West, St. Hyacinthe, Québec, Canada J2S 8E3; ⁴University of Québec, 1100 Notre Dame W. St., Québec, Canada H3C 1K3



ABSTRACT

Canada, Mexico and United States are countries that share many interests in agricultural affairs. The three countries have been commercial partners for many years, and most recently they have been working under the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) umbrella. The three countries are natural commercial partners sharing several common problems in agriculture. Some of these problems are related to food safety and quality, control of pests and diseases, and other issues concerning food exports and imports. One very important mechanism to facilitate the institutional and technical integration of Canada, United States and Mexico is PROCINORTE, under the umbrella of the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture (IICA), Northern Regional Center. PROCINORTE is a cooperative Program in Research and Technology for the Northern Region, with an Umbrella Task Force that determines common research priorities. Within PROCINORTE, several initiatives or task forces have been formed. The Tropical and Subtropical Fruits Task Force was established in 2002. The main goal of this task force is to improve production, consumption and trade of tropical and subtropical fruits in the entire PROCINORTE region. Specific objectives are to: 1) encourage the communications and collaboration among scientists working in quality, safety, and production of tropical and subtropical fruits; and 2) identification of common problems and opportunities associated with tropical fruit production and quality and work jointly in research projects to solve these. A summary of activities carried out by the Tropical and Subtropical Fruits Task Force is presented here.

WHAT IS PROCINORTE?

PROCINORTE is a cooperative program in agricultural research and technology under the auspices of the Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture. It is a vehicle to facilitate cooperative actions of mutual interest to IICA's Northern Region (Canada, Mexico, and U.S.).

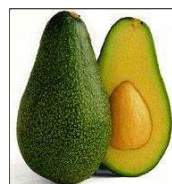
PROCINORTE is organized as an Umbrella Task Force (Steering Committee), composed of official representatives of Canada, Mexico, the United States, an IICA representative and an Executive Secretariat. This group identifies areas of mutual interest, defines priorities and oversees development.

PROCINORTE has four specialized Task Forces – Library and Information Services; Genetic Resources; Tropical and Subtropical Fruits; Animal and Plant Health.

PROCINORTE'S OBJECTIVES

- To promote dialogue to identify priority research issues common to the three countries and to influence the regional, hemispheric and global agendas.
- To facilitate the exchange of experiences, information and training through the building of linkages among public and private country institutions of the Northern Region (PROCINORTE) and between the major research and technology transfer actors in the region, hemisphere and the world.
- To carry out joint activities among participating institutions in solving problems of mutual interest.

TASK FORCE CROPS OF INTEREST



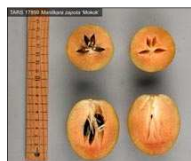
AVOCADO



MANGO



MAMEY SAPOTE



SAPODILLA



PAPAYA



RAMBUTAN



CARAMBOLA



Task force visiting food warehouses and distribution facilities, Canada



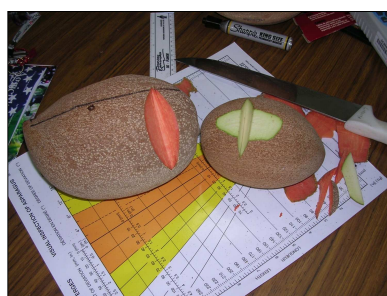
Modern avocado packinghouse facilities, Mexico



Task force work session in Mexico and United States



Task force research on fruit quality of mamey sapote



Research on fruit quality traits of 'Hass' Avocado



Task Force on Tropical and Subtropical Fruits

PROCINORTE's Tropical and Subtropical Task Force was created in 1999 to improve links between Mexico, Canada and the United States for research issues related to quality, safety and traceability of tropical/subtropical fruits.

As part of PROCINORTE, our organization has the objective of facilitating the exchange of experiences, information and training through the building of linkages among public and private country institutions in the North American region, and between the mayor research and technology transfer actors in the region, hemisphere and the world.

Task Force Research Projects

- Effect of post-harvest handling at the packinghouse on mango / avocado shelf-life.
- Machine vision for avocado and mango quality assessment.
- A centralized database for the rapid integration of data with regard to quality and food safety in mango and avocado supply chain.
- Development of anthracnose resistant mango germplasm.
- Develop parameters to determine quality of tropical/subtropical fruits.

Country Representatives

Mexico

Dr. Samuel Salazar-García
Tropical Fruit Crops National Research Leader
INIFAP-Campo Experimental Santiago Ixcuintla
Santiago Ixc. NAY 63300, México
E-mail: samuelsalazar@inifap.gob.mx
Website: <http://www.inifap.gob.mx>

Canada

Dr. Gilles Doyon
Research Scientist
Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada
Food Research and Development Centre
Saint-Hyacinthe, Quebec, Canada J2S 8E3
E-mail: Doyong@agr.gc.ca
Website: <http://www.agr.gc.ca/science/frdc>

United States

Dr. Ricardo Goenaga
Research Leader / Location Coordinator
USDA-Agricultural Research Service
Tropical Agriculture Research Station
Mayaguez, PR 00680-5470
E-mail: Ricardo.Goenaga@ars.usda.gov
Website: <http://www.ars.usda.gov/saa/tars>

Task Force Collaborators

Dr. Jorge A. Osuna-García
Post Harvest Physiologist
Email: josunaga@tec.megared.net.mx

Dr. José Luis González-Durán
Production Systems Researcher
Email: ijg@cornell.edu

Dr. Jacques A. Landry
Imagery and Vision Engineering
Email: jacques.landry@etsmtl.ca