

Emerging Global Trends and Their Implications for Post-Harvest Development in Developing Countries

Rosa S. Rolle

Agricultural and Food Engineering Technologies Service, Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations, Viale delle Terme di Caracalla, 00100 Rome, Italy

E-mail: Rosa.Rolle@fao.org

The post-harvest sector is pivotal to agricultural growth and economic and social development in developing countries in that it contributes to food security, food safety, nutrition and poverty alleviation, as well as to the generation of foreign exchange earnings.

A number of current and emerging global trends present both opportunities and challenges for the sector. Urbanisation and changing consumer demands present niche market opportunities as well as considerable opportunities for growth in the area of value addition. Developments in information technologies broaden access to business and trade opportunities. Globalisation, food safety and quality concerns of consumers and new players in the market place, on the other hand call for increased efficiency within the sector, as well as for maintaining competitiveness in the areas of cost, quality, safety, volume of supply and timeliness of supply and delivery.

Improving productivity, developing institutional and physical post-harvest infrastructure as well as policies which stimulate growth within the sector will be critical to overcoming the challenges and realising the opportunities presented to the sector by these trends.