

Fruits and Vegetables Handling and Transportation in Nigeria

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A b s t r a c t

An appraisal of the current practices used in the transportation of fresh fruits and vegetables in Nigeria was conducted to identify the inherent problems involved. This is with the view to generate useful information necessary to curtail the losses. The Investigative Survey Research Approach (ISRA) was used, thus structured questionnaire were administered to the handlers and transporters in ten major markets across the country through personal interviews. Measurements of the dimensions and weights of some handling devices were also taken in addition to loss assessment in one of the markets. The results showed that the current system is bedeviled with a lot of problems. Virtually all the transporters interviewed do not own the vehicles they use. One major problem is the non-availability of the desired vehicles when needed, which usually caused delay, and subsequent decay of the product. An average of 13.89% of the consignment of fresh tomato delivered in Ipata market was damaged. The packaging containers being used are unsuitable to the modern transport system. The results of the study can be utilized to conceptualize appropriate handling devices that will minimize the current losses being encountered.

Keywords: fruits, vegetables, handling, transportation.