



Food and Agriculture  
Organization of the  
United Nations

BUILDING RESPONSIBLE  
GLOBAL VALUE CHAINS  
**FOR SUSTAINABLE  
TROPICAL FRUITS**

November 2022

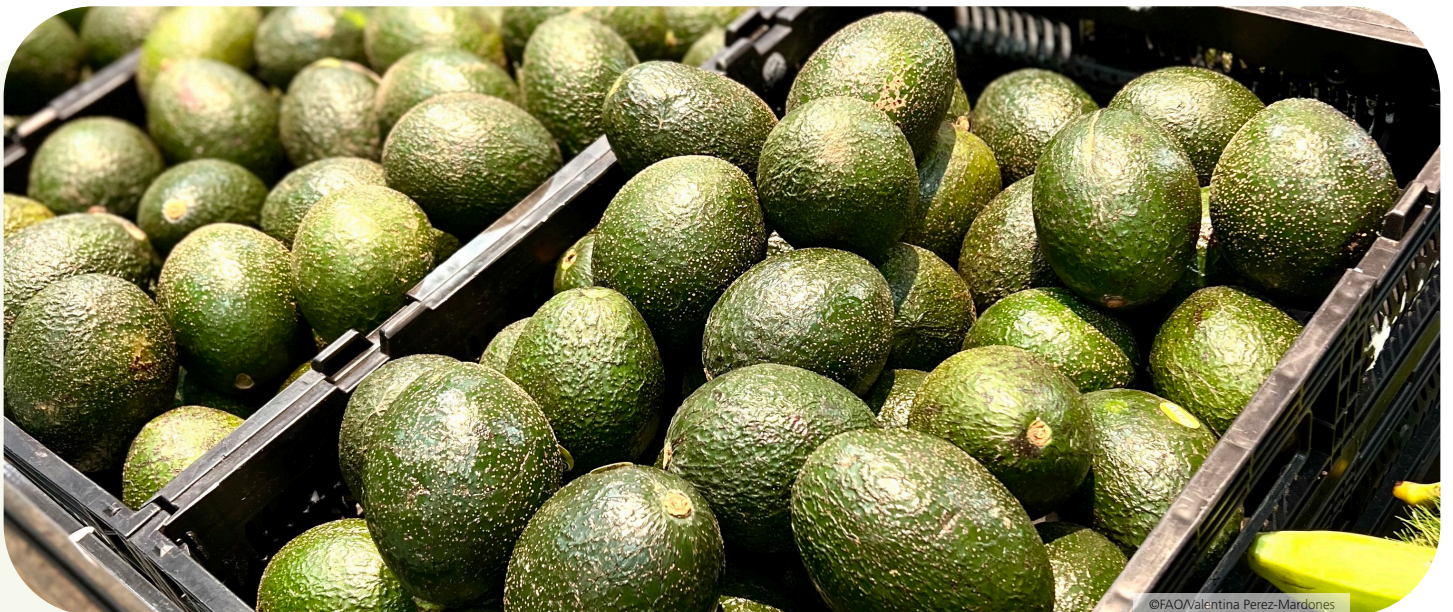
## **ACTION REPORT**

### **WELCOME!**

The FAO led project “Building responsible global value chains for the sustainable production and trade of tropical fruits”, also known as the Responsible Fruits Project, works with businesses, farmer organizations and other actors in the avocado and pineapple value chains. Our goal is to improve business performance by helping these two value chains be more sustainable and resilient.

**The project team has now reached over 175 organizations, which have been participating in different activities including peer learning, working group sessions and technical discussions.**

The project team continues to support the private sector in the avocado and pineapple industries to address sustainability and resilience challenges, with a focus on those prioritized by project participants. Following is an update on selected activities in the second half of 2022.



## WHAT PARTICIPANTS ARE SAYING ABOUT THE PROJECT

*“The project provides guidance on what the international market is requiring in order to have more sustainable, responsible production (...) and helps us to pass over this information to our members. The topics treated, guides and events produced are very important and interesting to us”.*

Maria Isabel Larragoiti, Manager of the Sustainability Department of the Association of Exporting Producers and Packers of Mexico (APEAM).

*“The project includes stakeholders from all sectors of the supply chain, allowing for important collaboration that is representative of the industry as a whole. As an importer, the ability to work alongside both the production and market ends to create impactful systems for a more resilient and sustainable avocado industry has been an invaluable experience”.*

Ravdeep Jaidka, Vice President and Sourcing Manager, Fresh Produce at Equal Exchange, United States.

*“The FAO Responsible Fruits program, focused on the pineapple and avocado agro-chains, has been very useful in being able to meet and share experiences with other producers and/or participants in these value chains. The experience of the actors and their contribution has been extremely enriching and the coordination and moderation of the issues by the FAO staff has been very important”.*

Jorge Sanchez, General Manager at Nicoverde. Pineapple producer in Costa Rica.



## PROJECT ACTIONS

### New resilience component and activities

The project has officially started activities under a new component focused on strengthening the resilience of avocado and pineapple value chains. On 4 October 2022, a launch session was organized with private sector companies to introduce this new component and start discussions to identify the main issues businesses face vis-à-vis external shocks and stressors.

In October and November, the project is conducting a detailed study to identify and understand the main resilience challenges faced by value chain actors. The study builds on the results gathered from the Baseline Survey conducted in 2021 and includes findings from new consultations with avocado and pineapple stakeholders participating in the project. The resilience study results will be presented and validated by the project participants at a workshop to be held in the first week of December. The study and workshop will also shape the next steps regarding the development of technical guidance to strengthen the resilience of value chain actors. This new component is closely aligned with the ongoing work on sustainability, including the preparation of the Technical Guide on Climate Change Adaptation.

### Capacity development

Due diligence: On 26 September 2022, the project team organized an event with the Tropical Fruits Network ([TFNet](#)) for companies based in Asia and Africa, to build understanding of why and how tropical fruit companies should carry out due diligence to reduce sustainability risk and increase resilience to shocks. FAO experts introduced the concept of due diligence; and explained how due diligence can help agribusinesses decrease sustainability risks and increase resilience to shocks and thereby improve their long-term economic performance. Examples of how companies carry out due diligence in practice were provided. Understanding due diligence is key to market access, managing a business for sustainability, and applying the Gap Analysis Guide. (See below for more about this new guide.)

### Peer-learning technical webinars

To date, the project has organized eight events for peer learning and sharing of good practices. To facilitate open discussion, the summary report for each event follows the Chatham House Rule — discussion is not attributed to specific individuals — except for the main presenters who have consented to share information in advance. The following topics have been covered:

1. Climate change mitigation strategies and carbon footprinting (June 2021)
2. Due diligence and OECD-FAO Guidance for responsible agricultural supply chains to address business risk (July 2021)
3. Eliminating deforestation and forest degradation (October 2021)
4. Baseline survey results (December 2021)
5. Reducing agrochemical use and meeting maximum residue levels (February 2022)
6. Water efficiency, sustainability and productivity (April 2022)
7. Adapting to climate change: What this means for the pineapple and avocado industry (June 2022)
8. Biodiversity and climate change (September 2022)
9. Benefits of reducing post-harvest loss and waste (November 2022)

## Technical guides

### Gap Analysis Guide to strengthen the management of sustainability risks

The project's first technical guide supports due diligence in the avocado and pineapple sectors, to strengthen the sustainability and resilience of companies.

The results of the project's Baseline Survey indicated that many businesses rely on certification standards and other voluntary standards to manage risks. The usefulness of such standards in supporting due diligence partly depend on how aligned these are with international expectations. In the agricultural sector, the OECD-FAO Guidance for Responsible Agricultural Supply Chains is the global benchmark for due diligence. The project team, therefore, developed this Gap Analysis Guide to help companies compare the standards and policies in use with the recommendations of the OECD-FAO Guidance.

The Gap Analysis Guide includes a tool, which is both free and easy to use. The results are only available to the company using the tool. The results will give an overview of the strengths and weaknesses of the company's policies and standards being used, and will help the company prioritize areas for improvement.

A brief on the Gap Analysis Guide is now available at [www.fao.org/3/cc2734en/cc2734en.pdf](http://www.fao.org/3/cc2734en/cc2734en.pdf). The complete Guide and tool will be published soon in English, French and Spanish. In the meantime, please contact the project team if you would like more information.



### Climate Change Adaptation Guide

The project team has embarked on the preparation of its second technical guide, this one on climate change adaptation for the avocado and pineapple sector. Findings from the project's Baseline Survey highlighted that adapting to climate change is a priority sustainability issue, which avocado and pineapple companies seek to address. A webinar was held in June to begin discussing climate risks and adaptation strategies with project participants. Following this, a working group of interested companies was formed to support the development of this guide. The working group met in October to discuss the impact of climate risks on avocado and pineapple production. A second working group meeting on identifying adaptation measures will be held in late November. The project team is also holding discussions with FAO country offices and research institutes in major avocado and pineapple producing countries to include regional and local perspectives on the effects of climate change and potential adaptation solutions.

The purpose of the technical guide on Climate Change Adaptation is to:

1. Provide up-to-date information on recent and projected climate change effects in key avocado and pineapple producing and exporting countries.
2. Identify climate change risks and impacts on the production and trade of avocado and pineapple.
3. Identify adaptation practices and recommendations that may help to address these risks and minimize negative impacts.
4. Share good practices adopted by companies to address climate-related production risks.
5. Identify gaps in information, research and technical solutions needed to strengthen the availability and adoption of adaptation practices.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

The project team is organizing research, technical support, peer-learning and other capacity development activities now and in the coming months, including:

- On 24 November, a webinar on Resilience and Climate Change Adaptation in the Asia-Pacific region in partnership with TFNet.
- On 30 November 2022, the second session of the working group for the Technical Guide on Climate Change Adaptation for members in Latin America.
- On 6 December 2022, a validation workshop to review the results of the resilience analysis of avocado and pineapple value chains.
- Five more peer-learning webinars on demand-based topics will be announced in 2023.
- Research on the role of incentives in guiding investment for more sustainable tropical fruit value chains.
- Capacity development to support the use of the Gap Analysis Guide and tool.
- A technical guide for carbon and water footprinting for the pineapple value chain. (A guide for avocado will come later.)
- Commodity-specific guides for responsible business conduct (RBC) in the avocado and pineapple industries: These guides will provide companies with practical information on what is meant by RBC and why is it important, how to identify and address risks associated with RBC, and how to implement good practices within the company to increase business sustainability and resilience.

## USEFUL RESOURCES FROM OTHER SOURCES

- Centre for the Promotion of Imports from developing countries (CBI) - market information resource: <https://www.cbi.eu/market-information/fresh-fruit-vegetables>
- Phytosanitary course from FAO Learning (available in English only at the time of publication): <https://elearning.fao.org/course/view.php?id=860>
- Technical Platform on the Measurement and Reduction of Food Loss and Waste <https://www.fao.org/platform-food-loss-waste/en>

## OUR GLOBAL FOCUS

- Tropical fruits are mainly produced in developing countries, where they generate jobs and export revenues. Tropical fruits are also part of a healthy diet in both producer and importing countries. Our initial focus on avocado and pineapple is due to the rapid growth in the production and trade of these two fruits.
- The project provides businesses, farmer organizations and trade associations with technical support and capacity development on pre-competitive issues. It does not provide direct funding.
- As a global project, we do not focus on a specific country or company. Rather, we gather a worldwide network of actors bringing positive change to the production and trade of tropical fruit.

For more information on the benefits of joining this project, please see our [website](#).

## RECENT PROJECT PUBLICATIONS



### Launch session of the resilience component (Summary report)

This session marked the official launch of new activities of FAO's Responsible Fruits project, which focuses on strengthening the resilience of avocado and pineapple value chains actors and their operations. It introduced the importance of strengthening resilience in tropical fruit value chains in a context where shocks and stressors are expected to become more frequent and intense.

<https://www.fao.org/3/cc2828en/cc2828en.pdf>



### Water efficiency, sustainability and productivity (Summary report)

Avocado and pineapple value chains face risks associated with water use, including excessive use of water resources and the potential to contribute to water pollution. Both value chains are also vulnerable to water stress and related challenges. During this webinar, participants presented their experiences and approaches to sustainable water management.

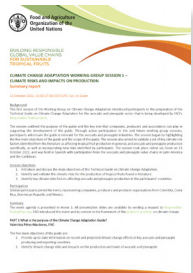
<https://www.fao.org/3/cc2776en/cc2776en.pdf>



### Adapting to climate change - what this means for the pineapple and avocado industry? (Summary report)

The tropical fruit sector is particularly at risk of rising temperatures, more frequent and more intense extreme weather events, and associated challenges such as water stress and plant diseases. At this webinar, participants discussed their experiences and approaches to adapting to climate change impacts.

<https://www.fao.org/3/cc1647en/cc1647en.pdf>



### Climate change adaptation working group session 1 - climate risks and impacts on production (Summary report)

This session of the Working Group on Climate Change Adaptation (CCA) introduced the planned Technical Guide on CCA, outlined its purpose and the key role that participants can play in guiding its development. The session also aimed to validate a set of climate risk factors identified from literature and incorporate risks identified by participants.

<https://www.fao.org/3/cc2894en/cc2894en.pdf>

## GET IN TOUCH

Responsible Fruits Project

[Responsible-Fruits@fao.org](mailto:Responsible-Fruits@fao.org)  
<https://bit.ly/responsible-fruits>

Markets and Trade Division - Economic and Social Development stream

[Markets-Trade@fao.org](mailto:Markets-Trade@fao.org)  
[www.fao.org/markets-and-trade](http://www.fao.org/markets-and-trade)

**Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations**  
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