



Improvement of citrus nurseries in Egypt

The Mediterranean region is a vast area for citrus production, which includes Egypt. Within a free trade area, Egyptian citrus farming must provide health guarantees for all plant products from nurseries

OBJECTIVE

The project involved the setting up of a certification programme.

The citrus production sector is facing growing biotic and abiotic pressure. The risk of emerging diseases, such as the Tristeza virus, becoming more widespread in hot zones in the Mediterranean Basin, is still growing, given the context of global climate change.

Technical assistance adapted to the context

Through training programmes for agronomical engineers and doctoral students (Master of Science, PhD) at the Centre International des Hautes Etudes Agronomiques Méditerranéennes (CIHEAM), the project consisted of evaluating and then improving the state of health of citrus fruits in Egypt's main production areas. In order to validate virus detection and disease prevention methods, the main objectives for the proposed technical assistance were: development of legislative measures; clonal and healthy selection of local genotypes; creation and management of installations

and equipment for certification programmes; management of nurseries; skills' strengthening through specialized training programmes.

Improving quality by a citrus certification service

The propagation of disease in citrus fruits can be limited by the selection of certified plants. Quite apart from updating knowledge on the state of health of citrus fruits and eliminating incriminating viruses when detected in nurseries, the project made it possible to inform producers about the risk of transmission of pathogenic agents by grafts. It has also demonstrated the economic gains from improved management of multiplication equipment from fruit certification. Thanks to this project, Egypt can now produce virus-free citrus fruits; regulations relating to products from 'certified' citrus fruit nurseries has been drafted.

As a result, public institutions and the private sector have worked together on improving Egypt's citrus industry by participating in the CIHEAM/MAIB Mediterranean research network on certification of citrus fruits.



Repository of true-to-type, 'healthy' citrus genotypes at the Citrus Certification Centre, Bahtem.



Grafting in the citrus nursery increases block.

THE PARTNERS IN THE PROJECT Toward the quality of citrus nursery plants in Egypt -1999/2006: German cooperation in 2006/2008, and Italian cooperation in 1999/2008: ARC IAMBari (Italy); MARL(Egypt)

