

# Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) in Horticulture: A Valuable Approach for Environmental, Economic and Social Sustainability

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**Abstract**—Good Agricultural Practices (GAP) has emerged as a most technical and scientific farm management approach which ensures food safety from right at the farm gate. Food safety, quality, and the environmental sustainability of agriculture are the most priority for wide range of stakeholders. Due to rapidly changing and globalizing food economy, demand of safe and quality horticultural produces has increased worldwide. A grower has more pressure to fulfill the demand of fruit and vegetables for India as well as to global market. Thus the quality and safety has been avoided during production, which have created big challenge to Indian farmers to export fruit and vegetable in foreign market. As per 2016-17 database India is the largest producer of bananas (26.04%), papayas (44.51%) and mangoes (40.75%) in the world. India has steadily increased its fresh fruit and vegetable exports to the EU in the past three years. As per Agricultural & Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA), report in 2016-17, India exported fruits worth of Rs 4,448.08 core, where contribution of mangoes, walnuts, grapes, bananas and pomegranates accounted more. In spite of that India's agri commodity exports are under threat in major global markets due to none following of GAP practices prescribed by the international agencies. The European Union (EU) has now warned India over the poor quality of its fresh fruits and vegetables. The EU has raised serious concerns regarding the interception of harmful organisms in fresh fruits and vegetables exported to the European region. Food safety is an important concern for every one now day's. Therefore, farmers, and growers have a big responsibility to minimize risks to produce food that is not only wholesome and nutritious, but also safe. Fruit and vegetable growers should be more concerned about food safety. GAP is the application of available knowledge to addressing environmental, economic and social sustainability for on-farm production and post-production processes resulting in safe and healthy food and non-food agricultural products. Many farmers in developed and developing countries already apply GAP through sustainable agricultural methods such as integrated pest management, integrated nutrient management and conservation agriculture. These methods are applied in a range of farming systems and scales of production units, including as a contribution to food security, facilitated by supportive government policies.