

Diseases caused by plant pathogens which lessen the quality of several farm products after harvest in the Dominican Republic.

Rosendo Angeles Ramos, MS. Plant pathologist and Bacteriologist, Santo Domingo, D.R. hairo90@hotmail.com., Candida M. Batista Marte, IDIAF.

In order to assess the level of produce deterioration caused by plant pathogens and diseases carried over from the farm, a study was conducted. Sampling of produce was undertaken over a span of two years (2009-2010). The sampling sites included commercial plazas, supermarkets, convenient stores, and truck and street vendors. Santo Domingo, the Capital City, and its vicinities were chosen as the sampling area, under the understanding that commodities in this expanse originated from country's main produce producing regions. A total of 19 fungal, bacterial and viral diseases were found to affect 17 different farm produces. As part of the study, a list of possible causal agents is presented. The results suggest that plant pathogenic fungi, bacteria and viruses which affect these produces at field level, might continue their infestation through postharvest stages, along with opportunistic pathogens, detrimentally impacting produce quality and thus resulting in important postharvest losses. It was found that mechanical damage on the studied produces, either during harvest or transportation, as well as inadequate storage conditions, could exacerbate proteolysis from fungi and bacteria, as well as natural physiological deterioration or senescence.

Palabras Claves/Key Words: diseases, pathogens, postharvest, detection.