



IAEA

Atoms for Peace: The First Half Century

1957–2007

Controlling fruit flies to boost the export of fruits and vegetables

The challenge...

This regional project in Central America aims to control fruit flies, using an integrated approach which includes the sterile insect technique. The ultimate goal of this effort is to export fruits and vegetables to high value markets without having to resort to quarantine treatments, thus saving millions of dollars.

The project...

The Member States in the region, Belize, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua and Panama strongly committed to this project, which benefited from extrabudgetary contributions from other national and international organizations such as the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization, Inter-American Institute for Cooperation on Agriculture, International Regional Organization for Plant and Animal Health and United States Department of Agriculture, in what has been called a regional inter-institutional project alliance.

The impact...

Bell peppers and tomatoes are already being exported to the USA and papayas to Mexico and the USA from El Salvador, Guatemala and Nicaragua. In 2006, these exports already generated important revenues for these countries. In October 2006, Honduras signed a protocol to export bell peppers to the USA and Costa Rica invested in infrastructure to start horticultural exports to the USA in 2007. Belize expanded its range of horticultural products in the international market by retaining its sanitary status as a country not affected by the Medfly. Projections indicate that in the medium term, as exports of fruits and vegetables from these areas realize their full potential, the expected socioeconomic impact will be important throughout Central America.

