



# News Release



Office of Public Affairs

U.S. Embassy

## USAID Workshop Explores Pakistan's Mango Export Potential, Highlights Importance of Certification

**Lahore, April 3, 2007** – A USAID-funded workshop began in Lahore today to explore mango export potential and highlight the importance of EurepGap \*\* certification for Pakistani fruit growers and exporters. The workshop aims to spread awareness of good agricultural practices and create possible linkages for mango export to the international markets, including the U.S.

“This workshop is one of several initiatives the U.S. has taken, through USAID, focused towards making Pakistani industries competitive in the international market. Competitive industries mean more jobs, better jobs and more income for the Pakistani people,” said Mr. James. Dever, Agriculture Attaché in the U.S. Embassy. Experts representing Pakistan, United Kingdom, Germany and the United Arab Emirates also participated in the workshop.

The two-day workshop is being conducted under the auspices of USAID’s Pakistan Initiative for Strategic Development and Competitiveness (PISDAC) which aims to increase competitiveness of Pakistan’s small and medium sized enterprises. Collaborating with PISDAC are the Pakistan Horticulture Development and Export Board, the Agribusiness Support Fund and the Small and Medium Enterprises Development Authority. Sectors currently covered under the PISDAC project are Gems and Jewelry, Dairy, Marble and Granite, Horticulture, Surgical Instruments and Medical Devices, and Furniture.

“The goal of the PISDAC project is to help develop a sustainable and diverse Pakistani fruit crops sector in each of the four provinces by providing guidance and technical assistance, as well as training to the growers. This assistance will enable growers to provide the market with consistent supplies of uniform high quality product at competitive prices,” said Dr. Warren Weinstein, chief of the PISDAC project.

Started in May 2004, PISDAC has worked with several Pakistani industries and helped form Strategic Working Groups (SWOGs) which develop strategies aimed at upgrading production, improving marketing, and meeting consumer demands.

The SWOG on Horticulture has brought to Pakistan internationally renowned consultants to identify shortcomings in the fruit industry and to develop an action plan to strengthen the Pakistani fruit crop industry in the domestic and international markets.

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\*\* EurepGap started in 1997 as an initiative of retailers belonging to the Euro-Retailer Produce working group (Eurep). It is a private sector body that sets voluntary standards for the certification of agricultural products around the globe.

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