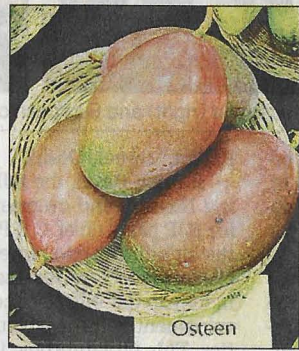


Mangoes grown in S Guj hit sweet spot for US palates

Navsari Agricultural University Grows Less Sweet Varieties Used In Salads In Europe, US

Paul John & Yagnesh Mehta | TNN

Ahmedabad/Surat: The undisputed 'king of tropical fruits' — the mango — reigns supreme over palates during Indian summers, and so does our country as the world's largest producer of its beloved fruit, accounting for nearly 40% of the global production. However, lucrative markets like the US, Canada and the European Union remain untapped since they prefer less sweeter varieties like Tommy Atkins, Kent, Osteen, Keitt, Maya and Lily. For over a decade now, Navsari Agriculture University (NAU) has been growing these popular US and European varieties



Navsari Agriculture University has been growing Osteen, Maya and other mango varieties at its orchard in Paria Farm and has obtained good yields

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"Our traditional varieties

like the Sonpari, Alphonso, Amrapali, Kesar, Dashehari, Totapuri and Rajapuri are

part of our desserts unlike the Europeans and the Americans who prefer lesser sweet mangoes and that too in their salads," said DK Sharma, professor and head of department of horticulture at NAU. The main mango growing states in India are Uttar Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Karnataka, Gujarat, Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu.

NAU results showed that Palmer mango — its skin, a canvas of yellow with crimson blush — emerged as the leader in terms of plant height, stem girth and canopy spread. The Paria farm orchard of NAU has 160 mango varieties grown.

"The yield for Palmer ranged between 119.08 kg/tree to 123.46 kg/tree or between 18.61 and 19 tonnes per hectare, while Maya, round and plump with a golden-yellow peel, came in a close second for most growth parameters. Palmer gave the highest number of fruits per tree, between 246 and 256, as well as the highest average fruit weight, between 667 to 691g.

In terms of fruit length, Maya reigned with its length varying between 14.33cm and 14.74 cm. Kent recorded the minimum fruit yield with 51.27kg/tree.

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'Indian mango varieties have higher sweetness index'

►Continued from P1

Tommy Atkins, Kent, Osteen, Keitt, Maya and Lily, which are the preferred choices in Europe and US, are currently imported from Brazil, Mexico and Peru," said D K Sharma, professor and head of department of horticulture at NAU.

India exports fresh mangoes to countries like the United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Kuwait and Bangladesh. In Gujarat, the area under mango cultivation is 1.66 lakh hectares with production of 12.19 lakh MT. The major mango growing districts in Gujarat are Valsad, Navsari, Gir Somnath, Kutch and Surat.

"All Indian varieties have a sweetness index above 20 while these varieties have a sweetness index of less than



Mangoes from Ratnagiri and Latur have flooded Surat markets

15. They may taste like cucumber and in their native countries they are consumed in salad," Sharma added.

"These exotic varieties of trees are part of the Paria Farm of Navsari Agricultural University where we have 160 mango varieties. We have been growing them here for around 17 years," said Sharma.

The area under mango cultivation and the production of the fruit in India is 23.15 lakh ha and 208.99 lakh MT respectively with productivity of 9.03 MT per ha.

"Diversity is required in agriculture breeding projects to identify the best variety out of many. That is why these varieties were studied," he said.

Gaurang Joshi