

1st Pomegranate Consignment Heading to USA by Sea with Collaborative ICAR-NRC on Pomegranate, Solapur and APEDA, New Delhi

28th February 202, Vashi, Navi Mumbai,

ICAR-NRC on Pomegranate, Solapur; APEDA, New Delhi, National Plant Protection Organization (NPPO), New Delhi; Maharashtra State Agriculture Marketing Board (MSAMB), Government of Maharashtra and INI Farms Pvt. Ltd. joined hands for the 1st trial sea shipment of 12.6 tonnes irradiated pomegranate fruits from India to USA. The flag off ceremony was conducted on 28.02.2024 by Sh. Rajesh Agarwal, Addl. Secretary, Ministry of Commerce and Industries, GOI and Sh. Abhishek Dev, Chairman APEDA, Mr. Michael Schreuder, Dy. Principal Officer, US Consulate-Mumbai and other dignitaries present.

After the ban of pomegranate fruit export to the USA in 2018 the pomegranate fruit export from India to the USA was halted. The USDA-APHIS has prescribed a new operational work plan for the pomegranate export to the USA including surfactant wash, surface disinfection, irradiation and packaging, etc. The operational work plan has been meticulously followed and first trial air shipment was shipped by air to New York, USA on 27th July 2023. However the costs of the air freight makes it very difficult for the Indian exporters to be competitive in US markets. The adoption of the sea route is challenging as the ships have to voyage distance of 20000 km and 35 days travel time. The static storage trials for the irradiated fruits were conducted at ICAR-NRCP, Solapur. The successful static trials for pomegranate fruits has paved way for the sea shipment to USA. The success of this trial shipment through sea will open up the opportunity of the export to premium markets of the USA while remaining competitive with international counterparts.

Dr. R. A. Marathe, Director ICAR-NRCP, Solapur has congratulated Dr. Nilesh Gaikwad (Sr. Scientist) and Dr. Namrata Giri (Scientist) the scientists who were involved in the successfully conducting the static storage trials. He underlined the potential of pomegranate in the export basket of Indian fruits and vegetables owing to its health benefits and nutraceutical value.

Sh. Rajesh Agarwal has appreciated the cooperation and coordination of the various stakeholders namely APEDA, NPPO, ICAR-NRCP, MSAMB and exporter INI farms involved in this endeavor. He has pointed out that varied agroclimatic conditions in India

provides an unique opportunity for improving export of various commodities from India.He also opined that this will certainly boost the export of pomegranate to the premium and long distant markets.

Sh. Abhishek Dev, Chairman APEDA has said that Indian pomegranate export has been growing steadily at the rate 20% year on year. This will be the milestone in the Indian pomegranate export he added.

Mr. Michael Schreuder, Dy. Principal Officer, US Consulate-Mumbai said that this is landmark day for India-USA trade and this trial sea shipment is a testimony to the growing bilateral relations and trust between two countries.



Flag off of first sea consignment of irradiated pomegranate fruits to USA from Vashi, Navi
Mumbai on 28th Feb. 2024