

P.I. NEWS

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STOP PRESS

PISTACHIO PRODUCTION MANUAL - LATEST EDITION (University of California)

The University of California has just released the latest edition of its Pistachio Production Manual.

Whilst Californian and Australian growing conditions are different, the UC Manual remains the only single document that covers all aspects of growing pistachios. It remains the best source of reference material.

Chapters cover topics including orchard design; rootstocks and cultivars; planting and training young trees; weed, insect, mite, and

vertebrate management; irrigation and salinity management; disease management; and physiological disorders including alternate bearing, nut blanking and shell splitting.

It is available on line for USD52.00 plus USD32.75 postage.

[Click here to obtain a copy.](#)

GLOBALG.A.P. RELEASES NEW FSMA GUIDE

GlobalG.A.P. has published a new guide for compliance with the Food Safety Modernization Act (FSMA).

The GlobalG.A.P. *User's Guide and Self Assessment for FSMA Produce Safety Rule Compliance* supports Integrated Farm Assurance (IFA) users in efficiently meeting Produce Safety Rule (Produce Rule) requirements. IFA is one of the most widely utilized good agricultural practice scheme for fresh produce in the world.

Where differences in approach and requirements were identified, GLOBALG.A.P. developed an explanation in the form of this Guide. It includes a Self Assessment, highlighting specific differences between GlobalG.A.P. IFA coverage and the Produce Rule. The Self Assessment allows the IFA user to make the necessary adjustments to comply with the Produce Rule. The *Guide* provides an extra table that details exactly how IFA requirements address those in the Produce Rule.

The Self Assessment is not audited as part of the GlobalG.A.P. IFA certification process at this time by GlobalG.A.P.'s independently accredited and licensed certification bodies. Producers can receive help with the Guide and Self Assessment from GlobalG.A.P.'s USA-based and international technical support staff.

Dr. Kristian Moeller, CEO of GlobalG.A.P., expressed his gratitude to the many individuals who contributed to this Guide's development:

"At GlobalG.A.P., we are committed to an inclusive process for developing our standards and guidelines. We wish to thank the technical staff, National Technical Working Group members, producers, retailers and other stakeholders who contributed to the development of this *Guide* over the past year. Your contributions of time and knowledge ensure that GlobalG.A.P. reflects your needs, making IFA your standard."

"GlobalG.A.P. has created a practical management tool for GlobalG.A.P. IFA users all over the world to help ensure FSMA Produce Rule compliance with the publication of this guidance document," said Walter Ram, VP of Food Safety at the Giumarra Companies and Chairman of the GlobalG.A.P. USA Crops National Technical Working Group.

Mr. Ram added: "As a supplier of fresh produce from the USA and many other countries, we want to maximize the efficiency of our food safety and regulatory controls and this tool helps our growers to use GlobalG.A.P. IFA to ensure Produce Rule compliance. It addresses the unique requirements in the Produce Rule without compromising IFA's global identity and recognition."

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Pistachio Growers' Association



NEW PRODUCTS FROM OVERSEAS

A Ricchigia product range welcomes new products

The 'A Ricchigia product range welcomes new products: Pistachio spread and pesto and organic PDO Bronte pistachio pesto.

"A Ricchigia, south of Bronte, is where our family business is located and where we have been growing pistachios for over fifty years," explains Laura Lupo, who came up with the idea of this niche product range.

"My family started working this land in the 1970s and promoted Bronte pistachios worldwide as they started shipping it to France, Switzerland, London and the US."

"We still believe in what we do despite the difficulties, this is why we try to carry on with our traditions."



"Even though many companies now use chemical compounds to make quality higher, we prefer to focus on the health and safety of our customers and subject our products to strict tests."



Panettone

"Harvesting pistachios is hard, because they are usually cultivated on slopes. Operators have bags in which they insert the branches to collect the fruits one by one. Then the husk is removed and pistachios are dried for at least two days, so they can be stored throughout the year."



"Nowadays, we also produce sauces, spreads and pastes. Everyone is welcome to taste our products, our research for natural ingredients will wake up your senses for a truly unique, extraordinary experience."



In Moscow for World Food, one of the main events in Russia dedicated to operators in the food and agricultural sector.

The birth of an idea - pistachio products

"We have always cultivated pistachios in our family - my grandfather, my father and me. My husband is also a producer and the idea of processing pistachios came to me as I accompanied him to the various fairs. There are many companies that process products without being producers, so we could provide something more. This is how we started producing pesto, spreads, sweets and flour."



"In Bronte, pistachios are harvested every two years between late August and early September. The oldest pistachios have been growing for over a century."



"We harvest every two years to continue with the tradition taught to us by our forefathers, otherwise quality wouldn't be as good."



"Manual cultivation and harvesting and gentle handling is essential for this delicate fruit, which requires time and care. Machinery would not fit among the trees, so all operations must be carried out by hand. Passion is essential for this kind of work, as trees start producing after 12-14 years and grow a couple of kg each."

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ORCHARD MANAGEMENT

Seaweed extract could protect pistachio from water stress, soilborne pathogens

A seaweed extract could mitigate water stress and offer protection from soilborne pathogens of pistachio.

Elizabeth Fichtner, a University of California Cooperative Extension farm advisor for Tulare and Kings counties, has been researching the use of *Ascophyllum nodosum*, a seaweed extract, during research in the laboratory and in the field.

She is not alone in learning the beneficial effects of the extract. Other researchers have separately found the extract beneficial when used with plants or trees including petunia and tomato transplants, and potted citrus. The extract increased shoot growth and mitigated water stress on deficit irrigated citrus trees.

Fichtner says seaweed products are used in a variety of ways by those in agriculture, mostly as a plant growth stimulant. Growers often include seaweed extracts in fertility programs. However, many do not know the rationale behind their use.

About 18 million tons of seaweed products are produced annually. Some products are sold for plant nutrition or as plant growth regulators. Fichtner says its value in agriculture, however, is more likely related to the product's ability to induce plants to produce beneficial secondary metabolites that offer protection from diseases and abiotic stresses. However, the extract is "not a silver bullet," she notes, but its efficacy in mitigating several pathogens and lessening water stress is backed by scientific data.

Fichtner focused on one pathogen in pistachios, *Phytophthora helicoides*. It is soilborne and can result in root rot and tree mortality, particularly in the summer. "It likes hot weather," she says. The extract is in liquid form, and she did her research with a product with the brand name Acadian Seaplants out of Nova Scotia.

Fichtner says it appears that the extract helps supplement naturally occurring betaines, osmolytes that boost protection against osmotic stress, drought, high salinity, or cold temperature. Natural accumulation of betaines would otherwise be insufficient to ameliorate stresses, she says.

Her field studies focused on the Golden Hills variety with a Randy pollinator on UCB-1 seedling rootstock. Trees studied were in their seventh leaf. The extract was applied through a drip line at two quarts per acre. There were seven applications between April and October, though Fichtner said an influence on water stress was observed after only two applications.

During the research, midday stem water potential measurements were taken. Initial girth was noted, and there was a July foliar analysis. Researchers looked at yield and studied nut quality, but no data is yet available on quality. There was no statistical difference between treated and untreated trees in yield.

Fichtner said the application of the extract dropped foliar sodium levels by 14 percent and chloride levels by 12 percent.

In pathology studies, Fichtner said plants challenged with *P. helicoides* exhibited wilting within one week of inoculation. Plant treatments with either seaweed extract or phosphites offered protection from the disease, reducing plant decline and mortality.

Fichtner acknowledged project assistance from commercial pistachio growers, College of the Sequoias students enrolled in the SURGE (Student Undergraduate Research Group Experience) program, and the Lindcove Research and Extension Center where laboratory and greenhouse experiments were conducted. The research was funded by the California Pistachio Research Board with additional support from Acadian Seaplants.

In 2017, Fichtner will conduct studies with seaweed extract on pistachios and almonds in saline soils. She'll seek to determine the potential to mitigate salt stress with the extract, and also assess the tree's mechanism that influences plant stress.

Future studies will continue to focus on the growth promoting properties of the seaweed extract, plus the influence it has on plant protection.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT: Dennis Pollock

Chill Hours Getting More Complicated

Calculating chill hours for pistachio trees has become more challenging as "normal" seasonal weather is changing. The warmer, wet winter in California may be complicating the issue even more.

Many trees need a certain amount of chill hours during the winter months. The pistachio industry was hit hard by a lack of chill in 2014, especially in Kern County. Chill hours are calculated by the period of time the temperature is under 45 degrees. "If we look back 10 to 20 years, we used to have days where it was foggy all day long. The temperatures were 40 to 45 degrees. You didn't see much change, and you could accumulate 24 hours of chill," California Research Board Manager Bob Klein said at this year's Statewide Pistachio Day.

Seasons and weather have changed in California, however, and full foggy days are few and far between. Klein said this is changing how chill is calculated. "Now what we see is what we call 'sunny chill.' That's when we get these really cold night temperatures that are in the 30s. Then it warms up to the 60s during the day, and the bud temperatures get even higher than that because the sun is shining on them all day," he said.

Cooperative Extension Advisor Craig Kallsen showed visuals of the impact the sun has on a tree with the lack of fog. Kallsen's pictures showed trees that had leafed out on one side, yet not at all on the sun-facing side.

Klein said this winter is complicating the chill calculation even more. "Now we have had all of these warm rains where the temperature didn't really get below 45, but it wasn't sunny either, so maybe the buds didn't get all that hot," he said. These different situations have added new variables to estimating chill and create a new question for researchers: "How do we exactly, in our minds at least, compensate for these different wet-warm chill versus cold-sunny chill?" Klein asked.

Normalised Difference Vegetation Index

For those growers who missed the November 2016 'PIT' Group session this is what a pistachio orchard looks like having been photographed from a fixed wing 'drone'.

All plants both absorb radiation and reflect radiation.

Most plants absorb all colours and reflect Green light (visible) and Near Infrared (invisible). The more NIR a plant reflects - the 'healthier' it is.



IRAN SUPPLIES OVER 50% OF WORLD PISTACHIO MARKET

The world pistachio market is worth over \$2 billion and Iran's exports amounted to \$1.2 billion last year (March 2015-16).

The Fourth International Exhibition of Nuts, Dried Fruits and Related Industries opened at Tehran International Exhibition Center in January 2017.

The event was attended by Deputy Minister of Industries, Mining and Trade Mojtaba Khosrotaj, who told Financial Tribune that Iran supplies more than 50% of the world pistachio market.

"The world pistachio market is worth over \$2 billion and our exports amounted to \$1.2 billion last year (March 2015-16). In the nine months to December 20, we exported over \$800 million worth of the product and expect to repeat last year's figure by the yearend."

Khosrotaj, who is also the head of Iran Trade Promotion Organization, said Iran's main rival in pistachio production is the US state of California.

Yet, according to him, Iranian pistachio has four characteristics that give it a unique quality.

First of all, he says, if the seed is separated from the shell, one kilo of Iranian pistachio would give you more seed than American pistachio. Second, the Iranian product has more oil and can therefore, be better processed. Third, the Iranian pistachio has a distinguishing taste and finally there are various kinds of pistachios cultivated in Iran, some of which are consumed as nuts and the rest are used as ingredients in the food industry.

Khosrotaj noted that pistachio produced in Turkey or Syria, for instance, can only be used in the food industry and are not fit for consumption as nuts because of their appearance.

Pistachio, as well as raisins and dates, he said, are the three main nuts exported from Iran and together play an important role in the country's non-oil exports.

"We exported over \$150 million and \$122 million worth of raisins and dates respectively over the nine-month period and expect the figure for both commodities to reach \$200 million by the end of the year. The export of these three products is estimated to reach approximately \$1.5 billion this year," he said.

The deputy minister further said that over the past few years, there have been many improvements in the domestic nut industry, but there are issues concerning each of these products.

He stressed that one common problem is packaging that has yet to catch up with international standards.

"Today in the exhibition, I saw that some companies have launched research and development sections to enhance the industry in all aspects. High technology, which paves the way for innovation, plays a key role in international trade nowadays. We also need to improve quality control all along our production chain," he said.

"On the other hand, consumer tastes are constantly changing and new competitors with new products are entering the arena every day. So, at this point, there's no room to waste time. We need to assess the market and customers' demands regularly and measure up to expectations. True, we have made improvements quality-wise, but where we stand is not yet ideal."

Khosrotaj called on the private sector, their production and export unions and associations to suggest ways of making improvements to eliminate impediments in their respective businesses.

"Basically, experts in the nut business, who have paid visits to farms, orchards and factories across the world and are familiar with different production methods, can better guide officials in taking measures needed for the industry to thrive," he said.

Khosrotaj said TPO considers its duty to help producers and exporters take part in international exhibitions and will assist them in bearing the expenses of attending these events.

Exhibitioners on Nut Business

Mohammad Ali Khoshbin, managing director of Ratinkhosh Company, says his company exports to 45 countries.

Up until now, his company, like many other Iranian ones, has exported its products in bulk, but he says preparations are underway for exports to be carried out under their own brand in the near future.

The official believes Iranian producers need to standardize their products and know what customers seek in terms of quality and packaging. But, unfortunately, he says, producers just copy each other, regardless of market demand.

Foreign customers complain that the quality of Iranian nuts is not the same from one shipment to another and this, he says, is what can significantly damage the business.

"We need proper commercial and agro infrastructure, marketing, financial resources and experience to go hand in hand with and complement the production chain," he said.

Khoshbin said high-tech machinery, including camera, laser sorters and X-ray machines, are usually imported from Europe but Iranian machinery is being used alongside foreign ones.

"The export of goods is a process and in our field of activity this process begins in the orchard. A successful business demands grade one products from the farmers, production capability and good machinery from producers and adequate trade marketing and expertise from exporters," he said.

"The ministries of agriculture, and industries, mining and trade, chambers of commerce and banks have to cooperate for this process to be carried out properly."

What Producers, Exporters Expect

The seasoned businessman said all governments seek to increase their exports, which can be brought about when the government gives support to competent and dedicated exporters.

"We expect the government and Iran National Tax Administration to do away with the many restrictive regulations, banks to provide us with financial resources, the Agriculture Ministry to train farmers in the knowhow of farming and the Ministry of Industries, Mining and Trade to help producers with the machinery and space they need to operate," he said.

Exporters, says Khoshbin, are exempt from paying tax, but INTA demands tax from profits made on foreign exchange fluctuations.

"This is very unreasonable since the profit made is part of the export process," he said.

Mahmoud Sabzi, managing director of Tabrizkar Company - manufacturer of machinery for processing nuts and seeds, said they are not getting any support.

"Government organizations each seem to be operating on different regulations and there is no unified policy to guide them in what they do. One organization promises support while the other puts stumbling blocks in our way. This is highly discouraging," he said.

"High-ranking officials want to help, but when it comes to officials of lower ranks, that's where the problem begins."

Another problem, the owner of the knowledge-based company said, is that producers don't invest in good machinery and are content with the old traditional ones they have.

"They think buying new machinery is just an extra expense, while I believe high-tech machinery increases productivity and can generate more profit in a shorter period," he said.

Sabzi noted that if everyone, including the officials, producers and exporters, thought ahead and had long-term plans, it would benefit the industry.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT: Report prepared by Zeinab Sohrabi

PISTACHIO PRODUCTION IN SPAIN

Organic pistachio, new alternative production in Andalusia, SPAIN

For organic producers looking for alternative production, pistachio cultivation provides a very cost-effective solution.

In Andalusia, the area of organic pistachio has almost quadrupled in the last 2 years. From 116 hectares in 2014 to more than 430 hectares in 2016 according to data from the Ministry of Agriculture. The province of Granada, with more than 130 hectares, alone accounts for more than 30% of the total area of the region of Andalusia

For more diverse crops with a fairly high market price, pistachio is a very cost-effective solution for producers. Among the organic crops currently emerging in Andalusia, pistachio joins other products (aloe vera, stevia, quinoa, kumquat) promised a bright future.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT: almeria360.com



Pistachio acreage in Castile-La Mancha up by 3000 ha

Pistachios arrived in Europe in the first centuries of our era from the Middle East. Iran is currently the main producer, with almost 500,000 tonnes per year, but the nut is gaining more and more ground in Spain, and especially in Castile-La Mancha, competing at a European level with Greece and Italy.

The crop's development is impressive, as over the past year, the acreage devoted to pistachios has grown in Spain by almost 5,000 hectares and in Castile-La Mancha by 3,000. Of the total of 15,000 hectares cultivated across the country in 2016, 12,000 hectares (80%) correspond to Castile-La Mancha, followed by Andalusia, with 1,600 hectares.

If Castile-La Mancha is a big name when it comes to the pistachio production in Spain, Ciudad Real is the leading province by far, as it is the most representative in the sector. It had the most hectares devoted to this crop in 2016, with more than 5,000 ha. In fact, the importance of pistachios for Ciudad Real is such that it has a centre focused on the product: the woody crop research department of the El Chaparrillo agro-environmental centre, located in the capital of Ciudad Real.

"It seems that the number of hectares has soared and that people have lost their fear of new crops, such as pistachio," affirms Francisco José Couceiro, responsible for that department of El Chaparrillo, a branch of the Council of Agriculture. This specialist describes the situation of the crop, especially in Castilla-La Mancha, as an "agronomic revolution of the sort that has very rarely been seen in Spain."

Pistachios started to be planted in Spain in 1996 and twenty years later there is a cultivated area of 15,000 hectares, so he believes that "the prospects are very good thanks to the sector's efforts".

In fact, the head of the El Chaparrillo centre believes that climate change is a factor that has benefited the cultivation of pistachios in Castile-La Mancha, as the product grows on a small desert tree that has a high tolerance to saline soil. Consequently, the producers' commitment has been made with a long-term perspective, because, in Couceiro's opinion, "the producers have to realise that this is an investment for the future and with a price stability superior to that of other agricultural products."

But the crop's importance has not only been noticed in the growth of the acreage, but also in financial terms. "In the coming years, the pistachio sector will become one of the economic drivers of Castilian-Manchegan agriculture," assures Couceiro, who estimates the production of this nut in the region at around 1,000 tonnes per year. There is still more to say in that regard, since in 2015 the sector invoiced about 10 million Euro, an amount that represents an increase of 30% compared to 2014, and this figure is expected to continue increasing from year to year, according to data from the Council of Agriculture of Castile-La Mancha.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT: Source - abc.es

PISTACHIO PRODUCTION IN ALGERIA

Algeria to increase pistachio production

Following many years of research by the Technical Institute of fruit trees and vines (ITAF), Algeria is now launching into pistachio production. Mahmoud Mendil, Director of the ITAF believes that the pistachio sector has real possibilities and could see part of the production being exported. He says that "Europe would be a good destination, Europe is a nearby market and consumption of this fruit is the highest in the world".

Currently, pistachio production covers 90 hectares. By 2025, acreage should reach 50,000 hectares. To reach this objective, services from the Ministry of Agriculture, led by ITAF, will carry out a campaign to increase awareness amongst farmers of the product and give them 100 pistachio plants for free and a kilo of seeds for every farmer interested.

Worldwide pistachio production is estimated to reach 450,000 tons a year. Iran and the USA are the two main producing countries. The EU, China and Hong Kong are the main importers. The USA needs their pistachio market to grow as the record harvest this year reached 200,000 tons- triple that recorded last year. A campaign was carried out to "Eat pistachios, not crisps!", aiming to increase the consumption of pistachios as prices plummeted. California had less dry weather and a cold winter, good for pistachio trees following many years of hard drought. Acreage has also increased in the USA, motivated by the high prices recorded in previous years (a 40% price increase over three years as pistachios were quite rare). However, this year is the opposite with a record harvest - American pistachios have already decreased in price by 10-20%.

The abundance of American pistachios is mostly affecting their Iranian competition; prices of pistachios from Iran have already plummeted by 35%. Iranian pistachios are not as highly rated due to their reputation, despite it being under control now, as having the presence of fungi. They also have commercialisation problems from sanctions. Iranian pistachios are rare this year, as they are every two years, reaching only 60,000 tons. So, with few pistachios and low prices, it is already difficult for Iranian producers. To add to their hard situation, they could lose their main export market - China. Last year two thirds of Chinese pistachio imports came from Iran, but this year they are being replaced by American pistachios that are deploying a worldwide marketing strategy.

MARKET REPORTS

Pistachio declines on fall in demand

Pistachio prices fell by Rs 5 per kg in the national capital today largely due to fall in demand from retailers and stockists.

Adequate stocks position following increased arrivals from overseas markets too put pressure on pistachio prices.

Pistachio (hairati and peshawari) prices were down by Rs 5 each to settle at Rs 1,345-1,445 and Rs 1,550-1,600 per kg, respectively.

Traders said, a fall in demand from retailers and stockists against increased arrivals, mainly led to the fall in pistachio prices.

Following are today's quotations (per 40 kgs): Almond (California) Rs 17,100-17,300, Almond (Gurbandi-new) Rs 12,000-12,200, Almond (Girdhi) Rs 5,600-5,700; Abjosh Afghani Rs 8,000-23,000.

Almond Kernel (California-new) Rs 605-610 per kg, Almond Kernel (Gurbandi-new) Rs 725-825 per kg.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT: Press Trust of India, January 24, 2017

Pistachio nuts market forecast to 2021 detailed in new research report

Complete report on Pistachio Nuts market spread across 121 pages, profiling 10 companies and supported with tables and figures is now available.

2017 Global Pistachio Nuts Market Report is a professional and in-depth research report on the world's major regional market conditions of the Pistachio Nuts market, focusing on the main regions and the main countries (North America, Europe, China, Japan, Southeast Asia and India).

The report provides a basic overview of the industry including definitions, classifications, applications and industry chain structure. The Pistachio Nuts industry analysis is provided for the international markets including development trends, competitive landscape analysis, and key regions development status.

With tables and figures the report provides key statistics on the state of the industry and is a valuable source of guidance and direction for companies and individuals interested in the market.

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Access a copy of this latest research report here.

EDITOR'S COMMENT: Unfortunately the report costs \$2,900.

GLUTEN-FREE ROSE AND PISTACHIO LAYER CAKE



This luscious Rose and Pistachio layer cake is the perfect combination and looks like a true showstopper on any dinner party table.

Ingredients

Cake:

- 300g Organic Gluten Free Self Raising Flour
- 1 tsp Baking Powder
- 4 Organic Eggs
- 300g Organic Caster Sugar
- 80g Organic Ground Pistachios
- 300g Butter
- 100g Greek Yoghurt
- 2 tsp Rose Water

Rose Buttercream:

- 345g Butter
- 750g Icing Sugar
- 2 tsp Rose Water
- 1/4 tsp pink food gel colouring

Extra ground pistachios and edible rose petals to decorate

Method

- Preheat the oven to fan 140°C / conventional 160°C / gas mark 3
- Butter three 6 inch round cake tins and line the bases.
- Beat together the butter and sugar, add the eggs one by one, slowly mixing.
- Sift in the self raising flour and baking powder then fold into the mixture. Then add the ground pistachios, Greek yoghurt and rose water, then fold into the mixture.
- Pour into three 6 inch springform cake tins, lined with baking parchment and bake in the oven at 160°C fan for 20-25 minutes until the sponge is light and springy to the touch.
- Once the cakes are cooked and have cooled in the tin, take out and leave to cool for an extra 20 minutes on a wire rack.
- For the Rose buttercream cream together butter and icing sugar and add the Rose water and food colouring.
- Layer throughout and on top of the cake and lastly top with ground pistachios and edible rose petals - absolute heaven!

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT: Laura Timson is the founder of online artisan bakery Laura's London. Follow her on Instagram @lauras_london