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Current Status of Guava (*Psidium Guajava* L.) Production, Utilization, Processing and Preservation in Kenya: A Review DUKE G. Omayio^{1*}, GEORGE O. ABONG¹, MICHAEL W. OKOTH¹ CHARLES K. GACHIRI² and AGNES W. MWANG'OMBE³

Abstract

The guava (*Psidium Guajava* L.) tree is extensively grown in the tropical and sub-tropical regions of the world. It is quite resilient, highly productive, has high economic returns and requires minimal care. The fruit is very nutritious with a characteristic flavor and has a high demand internationally especially when processed into pulp, concentrates, ready to serve beverages, wines, as well as jams and jellies. Although Kenya has a favorable climate for guava farming, the fruit's nutritional and economic potential remain highly underutilized due to low adoption of processing and preservation techniques in addition to limited research. This review focuses on guava production utilization, processing and preservation with emphasis on Kenya. There has been progressive increase in the total acreage under guava farming with various varieties of guavas being produced. The country produces as much as 11,327 tons of guava fruits worth 1.1 million US dollars although the fruit is mainly cultivated for local consumption with minimal processing. Naturalized guavas from sprouts of randomly dispersed seeds are common across all the agroecological zones both in the wild and on farms except in the arid areas. The fruit is however, climacteric and has a high rate of perishability resulting to high postharvest losses when in season. Processing of guavas into commercial products can increase the fruit's value, improve farmers' household incomes and enhance their utilization. The guava value chain also remains highly underexploited and since it is a neglected crop, there is need for a multisectoral approach in order to exploit the nutritional and economic potential of the fruit.

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Doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.12944/CARJ.7.3.07>