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CORONAVIRUS, MALARIA AND THE HORRIFIC COST OF EXPORT BAN!!

(The article is discussing Global Problems while often using Africa as a Case Study)

Two months of uncontrolled coronavirus cost the Chinese economy billions of USD.

What is the cost of the long-uncontrolled Malaria and Export Ban on Africa's economy?

Kenya, one of Africa's largest fresh fruit exporters, has recently found itself under an export ban, which may cost its mango growers 300 million USD.

In fact, many more countries in and out of Africa are under such fresh fruit Export Ban at this very moment.

Export Ban has a central role in shaping economies, and it directly impacts the lives of millions of farmers around the world and their countries' economies.

For that reason, I think it is important to discuss the issue of **Export Ban**.

WHAT CAUSES AN EXPORT BAN?

The most common cause of an Export Ban is the fear of transmitting pests from a country where the pests exist, to another country where they are absent.

Why is this fear so great?

Because **Prevention** is always preferred over *Control* or *Eradication* efforts.

The coronavirus is a good example of how difficult it is to eradicate a pest, or in this case, a virus, once it is spread or brought to another country.

Similar is with any agriculture pests. Therefore, countries prefer to prevent, rather than control or eradicate.



INVADING PESTS

We can see how fast the coronavirus spreads in China, and around the world.

Recent examples of similar situations from agriculture include -

* The Citrus Greening Disease transmitted by pests from the psyllid group - originated from China and currently present in Africa.

The Fall Armyworm (*Spodoptera frugiperda*), which is a moth that attacks maize crops - originated from the Americas and currently present in Africa and Asia.

In both cases, the economic damage following the introduction of the pest/disease is immense and is hard or even impossible to restore.

Any country that failed to prevent the entry of the pest/disease to its territory is paying a heavy toll thereafter.

FRUIT FLIES CASE STUDY

There are about 4,000 species of fruit flies in the world.

Unlike many other pests that attack leaves and branches, **fruit flies damage directly the fruit, causing its complete loss.**

However, within the fruit fly family, some members are considered more problematic and alarming in comparison to others; such is the case of the highly invasive Asian fruit fly, *Bactrocera dorsalis*, better known in Africa as *Bactrocera invadens*.

Once arrived in Africa, within 13 years only, it invaded the entire sub-Saharan African countries.

With no effective control measure, and with a host range of dozen of crops, it brought devastation in the shape of 30% to 80% yield loss to African farmers.

Fruit growers of Citrus, Mango and Avocado for **export markets**, probably suffered the most.

Why?

Because those crops demand high investments, and therefore farmers growing them has a high dependency on marketing to export markets, where they can get premium prices.

But as soon as *Bactrocera dorsalis* invaded their countries, they found themselves defenseless.

With no effective control for *B. dorsalis* in place, African countries started exporting some shipments with infested fruits.

Within a short while, the importing countries began to intercept infested fruits, and issue warnings.

Yet again, with no real effective fruit fly control available, African farmers continued using the same ineffective measures they were using before.

Not surprisingly, interceptions repeated and even grew in numbers.

Reluctant to take further risks, importing countries increased barriers for fresh produce import from nearly all countries where *Bactrocera dorsalis* exists. That 'club' includes about 70 African and Asian countries!

Kenya is one of those countries, that suffer the outcome of a 'successful invasion' of a mega fruit pest to its territory.

This terrible result is unwanted. So we ask - can we predict such situations?

SIGNS THAT EXPORT BAN IS NEAR

The export ban is not a surprise if you know how to read the signs ahead of you.

As described above, for *Bactrocera dorsalis*, there is a process of escalation before the export ban is activated.

If there is a quarantine pest in your country and you recognize one or more of the indicators/signs from the list below, then your country and its farmers are risking an approaching Export Ban on fresh produce.

1. Over two consecutive years, there is no effective control for the target pest. *Effective control* for export markets means – Pest Free and Zero Chemical Residues.
2. Damage level above 1%. This is a definite sign of the lack of an effective control measure!
3. There is no centralized national monitoring of the pest.
4. Your country received from importers/plant-protection services, and others, more than one warning regarding the interception of infested produce.
5. Export is made through several channels, without central control and oversight.

HOW TO REDUCE EXPORT BAN PROSPECTS?

Assuming that the quarantine pest is already established in your country, the best thing to keep away the prospect of Export Ban is by fixing what needs to be fixed in the above list. That is -

1. Centralize export channels, and perform total quality control.
2. Impose a self-export ban on any grower and packing houses, which are not standing up to the required standards required in the above #1 section.
3. Establish centralized total (field to port) quality monitoring.
4. Make sure that infestation is lower than the detected threshold.
5. In the absence of effective pest control, be proactive and impose a self-export ban.

Bonus tip:

learn the reasons that led to the invasion and proliferation of the "quarantine pest" and improved plans to prevent future similar incidents.

NOT DECREE OF FATE

Export bans are an extreme event that can significantly harm the local agricultural industry and have long-term consequences in the event of loss of confidence, loss of markets, etc.

Countries should **never ever** reach a situation where there is an **export ban**.

The export ban means that you lose your reliability as a farmer, an exporter, business person, and government.

Furthermore, the entire country is losing credibility as a 'partner' and a safe place for agro-business!

This is a terrible price to pay, in addition to the immediate loss of income.

The encouraging part is that an Export Ban is not a decree of fate.

It is rather an event having typical preceding characteristics that help us to anticipate it.

The earlier we deal with a potential case of Export Ban, the more we save, and the better and faster results we will get.

EXPORT IS RELIABILITY

With the state of mind of – **eliminating any chance for an export ban** – the Biofeed team developed the *Green Valley* model ([link](#)).

According to the *Green Valley* concept, *Export Ban* is an indicator of failing to meet **quality** requirements, as well as a problem of **discipline** and **professionalism**.

Sustainable exports mean, trust in the reliability of your action, which is reflected in a premium price for premium quality.

Therefore, an agri-industry that is continuously risking *Export Ban* is not a sustainable industry.

I would love to hear your thoughts on this - email nisraely@biofeed.co.il or text +972-5423425 (WhatsApp).

*For a greener world
Free of sprays
Full of joy*

See you soon,
Nimrod



Biofeed
Better produce...
Better income...
Better future...

P.S.

Note, Dotan, our head of business, will be visiting Senegal on February 18th and Kenya on the 20th. This is a great opportunity to meet in person and discuss mutual interests. To schedule a meeting dotan@biofeed.co.il.

P.P.S.

2020 just begun, which means that this is **the best time** to get in touch and discuss fruit fly control and *Green Valley* for 2021 season.

P.P.P.S.

I invite you to FOLLOW me on [LinkedIn](#), where you will see many more posts and updates.

P.P.P.P.S.

On *YouTube*, together with hundreds of videos I already released, you can find the historical series [The Agricultural Gap](#). The 11,000 years history from the Agricultural Revolution to the Agri-industry Revolution. Subscribe to be updated on new chapters.

In short videos, usually 3-4 minutes, I tell the 11,000 years history from agriculture to the agri-industry and the reasons for the gap that we see today between different peoples. The series is still in progress with more chapters to come. SUBSCRIBE to be notified of new chapters.

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***Change Begins With A Decision
That The Existing Reality Is A Choice
And Not A Decree Of Fate***