**Title of the Paper**
Mango Production and existing economic challenges associated with Fruit fly infestation and management practices in Kenya: A survey

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**Purpose of the paper**
Mango is a key food and cash crop in Sub-Saharan Africa. In Kenya, it contributes significantly to local and export earnings. However, mango production in the country is greatly affected by the Tephritid fruit fly complex especially, the invasive Bactrocera dorsalis and the native Ceratitis spp. Losses due to fruitfly infestation can reach up to 80%, and often result in mango export bans to other continents due to phytosanitary restrictions. The current study was conducted to investigate the prevalence of fruitfly infestation in key mango-producing counties in Kenya. The cost burden associated with fruitfly infestation among mango farmers in terms of applied management methods, and associated farm and post-harvest losses was also investigated.

**Design/methodology/approach**
Questionnaires were administered to mango producing farmers and agro-dealers in Muranga and Embu counties, Kenya using the Open data Kit (ODK) software. The respondents sample size comprised of 230 farmers and 68 agro-dealers. The questions were both closed and open-ended on general demographics, quantities of mango harvested, investment returns, losses, key pests affecting their crop, and pest management options. Agro-dealers reported on their stocked fruitfly management products, including market preferences between the synthetic chemical pesticides and biological methods. The data was statistically analyzed using R-software and SPSS.

**Findings**
Fruit fly was reported as a key pest of mango crop by 92% of the mango farmers in the study region. About 34% of the total production costs of mangoes were spent on managing fruit flies. Further, about a third of harvest was lost due to fruitfly infestation. To control the fruit flies, 74% farmers used chemical pesticides which were mostly broad-spectrum-moderately hazardous chemical pesticides. A smaller proportion of farmers used cultural methods, and biological control methods especially pheromones to control the pest. Agro-dealers
described chemical pesticides as preferred and fast moving products (68%) as compared to the biological control options (32%). They also explained the different challenges faced inorder to improve the market base of biological control approaches which are recommended due to their safety and sustainability. These challenges included lack of enough knowledge of availability and usability of existing biological options by a significant number of farmers and agro-dealers, and a few limitations in functionality of the existing options.

**Research limitations/Implications**

The survey was carried out in only 2 counties and there are many more counties that produce mango. The survey was also done only once towards that end of mango production season.

**Practical implications (if applicable)**

The survey has highlighted the lack of knowledge on biological control options for management of fruit fleis in mango. Additionally the perception that biological control products are not as effective as chemical pesticides was also highlighted by the fact that 74% of farmers in the survey areas used chemical pesticides compared to 32% who used biological control options. This points to the need for awareness creation through trainings and increase the uptake of biological control methods which are sustainable and environment friendly and enhance food safety.

**Social implications (if applicable)**

The study provide important and current information from primary players in the mango production chain i.e. farmers and agro-dealers. The data acquired is therefore key in promoting sustainable mango production and profitability in Kenya and, is relevant to different stakeholders in academia, industry, governments, research institutes and NGO’s.

**Key Words**

Fruit fly, Mango crop, Survey, Sustainable agriculture, Profitability

**Paper Type (theoretical or empirical)**

*Sections must be completed: (Purpose, Design, Findings and Value).*

**Max six words**

Abstract should be a maximum length of 350 words and in Times New Roman; font size 12.
## For Authors - How to write and submit a structured abstract (Based on Emerald guidance)

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<th>*Purpose of this paper</th>
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