



## The Efficacy of Traditional Innovation and Modern Science in Managing the Banana Value Chain

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### Abstract

Bananas (*Musa paradisiaca*), have played and continue to play a major role in the diets of the people and the economies world over. It is an important food crop providing carbohydrates for both rural and urban households; though grossly suffering loss on the value chain due to its perishable nature. To mitigate this, farmers have adopted several traditional innovative coping strategies which include various ripening practices. The efficacy of these practices in enhancing ripening and their effects on the management of the banana value chain needs to be evaluated. The study was conducted in Imenti South sub-county of Meru County-Kenya. The study involved an experiment to evaluate the effects of traditional innovative banana ripening practices on the duration of ripening and quality of bananas. The five ripening practices were tested in a completely randomized design with three replications. It was found that the practices had an influence on the duration of ripening and quality of bananas. It was observed that the practice where avocado pears and purple passion fruits were used, bananas were influenced to ripen faster. Bananas induced with avocado pear fruits achieved higher sugar levels and a longer shelf life. Findings from this study led to the conclusion that it is beneficial to induce ripening of bananas. Use of avocado fruits influence; faster ripening, develop an appealing peel color, and give bananas a longer shelf life. Further study is recommended with a combination of ripening inducement materials.

**Keywords:** *Traditional innovation, Ripening Practices, Ripening Quality, Faster ripening*