**Research Article**

**Trends and Constraints in Guava (*Psidium Guajava* L.) Production, Utilization, Processing and Preservation in Kenya**

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ABSTRACT

The guava fruit is a highly palatable and nutritious tropical fruit with a pleasant flavor. It is abundant at moderate prices in Kenya. However, limited processing and poor market returns result in high annual losses of the fruits. This study aimed at assessing the production, utilization, preservation and processing of guavas in Kitui and Taita Taveta counties, Kenya. Data collection (n = 417) was carried out by using a semi-structured questionnaire administered to guava farmers. Guavas were reported to grow naturally by most (83.9%) respondents although 37% had also planted the guava trees. The red-fleshed guavas were the most common varieties (97.6%) in the respondents’ farms compared to the white (49%) and strawberry (0.2%) varieties. Almost half of the respondents (46.6%) had both white- and red-fleshed varieties. Guavas were mainly used for household consumption (97.4%) although 30.5% of the respondents also sold the fruits. The marketability of guavas was significantly different (p ≤ 0.05) between the two counties with market access being more difficult in Taita Taveta (χ2 = 105.3,*p* < .001) compared to Kitui. Most (60%) of the respondents did not know of any processed guava products irrespective of their levels of education and gender (*p* > .05). Despite the high production of guavas in the country, processing remains extremely low (3.1%) due to limited knowledge (74.8%) and lack of appropriate equipment (65.9%) leading to the fruit’s economic under exploitation. There is a need for a structured system focused on guava value addition, reducing the fruits’ postharvest losses and increasing their economic and nutritional potential.

KEYWORDS:

[Guavas](https://www.tandfonline.com/keyword/Guavas)[fruits](https://www.tandfonline.com/keyword/Fruits)[Kenya](https://www.tandfonline.com/keyword/Kenya)[postharvest](https://www.tandfonline.com/keyword/Postharvest)[preservation](https://www.tandfonline.com/keyword/Preservation)[processing](https://www.tandfonline.com/keyword/Processing)