

## Pakistan: University to help growers market onion, chilli and tomatoes

University of Agriculture Faisalabad (UAF) Vice Chancellor Prof Dr Iqar Ahmad Khan, has said that scientists from the university will help the Sindh Agriculture Department to produce the best varieties and develop post-harvest management to prevent losses for onions, chillies and tomatoes. According to Khan, a vibrant marketing system for the vegetables will not only help meet domestic needs but also fetch heavy foreign exchange.

Speaking to a delegation of progressive farmers of 'Sindh Agriculture Growth Project' – funded by the World Bank – at the UAF, he said that “Sindh growers of chillies, onions and tomatoes are facing a crisis this year, and to solve this we need to formulate the modern marketing systems.”

“Normally, chilli is cultivated on 80,000 acres in Sindh, but this year it will be cultivated on 200,000 acres,” said the head of the delegation Dr Zulfiqar Yousfani.

He said the major problem for chilli growers was the surplus supply, since chilli or onions' shelf life was very short. “We have experts and researchers working on viable solutions to extend their shelf life but in the meanwhile we should focus on exporting the surplus amount, which can help us earn heavy foreign exchange.

“We are exporting onions to the Middle East, Sri Lanka and other countries, but in order to access the European markets, we have to increase the shelf life of our produce to meet their parameters.”

Dates, he added, were also not getting their due share in the international market due to the lack of the value addition mechanism.

Source: [tribune.com.pk](http://tribune.com.pk) <http://www.freshplaza.com/article/151892/Pakistan-University-to-help-growers-market-onion,-chilli-and-tomatoes> (19-01-2016)