

## **MMSU GOLD: REGISTERED MANGO VARIETY IN THE ILOCOS**

*Gliceria S. Pascua, Zenaida S. Pugat, Joselito I. Rosario,  
Melvilyn M. Leño and Sosimo Ma. Pablico*

### **Introduction**

The 'Carabao' mango variety, popularly known as the "Manila Super Mango", is the country's mango variety for the export market. It is recognized as one of the best in the world. It is aromatic, tender, melting, spicy, super sweet, rich and deliciously succulent.

Because of the array of business opportunities now being offered by the booming mango industry, new entrepreneurs and those already engaged in the industry are already going into large scale planting of mango. Thus, there is now an increasing need to produce good quality planting materials.

In the Ilocos Region, mango growers depend on suppliers from the Southern Tagalog Region, particularly Batangas, for grafted mango seedlings which they claimed to be 'Carabao' mango. It has become apparent when fruiting started that many of the seedlings planted in the past are either not the exportable 'Carabao' mango or unproductive.

Because of the above situation, the MMSU participated in the national effort to identify outstanding 'Carabao' mango accessions so that these could be utilized as sources of scion in the mass production of high quality grafted mango seedlings. MMSU's participation in this endeavor resulted in the registration of an accession (Payao #2) in its farm with the name 'MMSU Gold'. The variety is now being mass-produced and recommended for commercial planting.

### **Characteristics**

MMSU gold was approved as a variety in September 1997. Its certificate of registration was awarded to MMSU, owner of the mother tree, in year 2000.

MMSU Gold compares well with the varietal selection standards. In general, MMSU Gold is a high yielder and its fruits are large, thin-seeded and very sweet with full cheeks. Following are the characteristics of MMSU Gold as a variety:



**Tree**

Age	:	>50 years old
Height	:	35 m
Growing habit	:	Spreading
Growth and vigor	:	Vigorous
Regularity of bearing	:	Regular
Yield	:	490 kg

**Fruit**

Whole fruit		
Weight	:	288.00 g
Length	:	118.70 mm
Width	:	72.50 mm
Thickness	:	58.25 mm
Shape	:	Oblong
Skin		
Color	:	Yellow
Texture	:	Smooth
Thickness	:	1 mm
Weight	:	45.06 g
Flesh		
Color	:	Yellow
Texture	:	Smooth and firm
Juiciness	:	Moderately juicy
Fibers	:	None
Aroma	:	Mild
Total soluble solids	:	18°
Flavor	:	Very sweet
Edible portion	:	74.13%
Seed		
Weight	:	28.91 g
Length	:	89.40 mm
Width	:	35.70 mm
Shape	:	Flat

As a mother tree, MMSU Gold is now being used as a source of scion in the mass production of grafted seedlings. Initially, this activity is intended to help meet the growing need for good quality grafted 'Carabao' mango seedlings in Ilocos Norte. After its registration, however, there has been a great demand for the variety. To cope with the demand, a mango clonal garden covering an area of 4,900 m<sup>2</sup> was established in 1999 where 14 grafted seedlings MMSU Gold were planted. These are now augmenting scion production from the original mother tree.

## **Benefits**

At present, many farmers in the Ilocos Region are still planting mango seedlings from seeds. Depending upon the size, these are sold at ₱10.00 to ₱100.00 each. On the other hand, grafted mango seedlings brought by traders from Batangas cost ₱35.00 to ₱200.00 per piece depending on the age of the graft. In contrast, the price of grafted MMSU Gold old seedlings is a lot cheaper since the grafts are produced in the University. Depending on the age of the graft, seedling cost ₱25.00 to ₱35.00 each.

The price of seedlings alone would already encourage Ilocos farmers to plant MMSU Gold. They would be further encouraged to plant this variety since it already performs very well in the region. Even farmers in other places, *i.e.*, Los Baños, Caloocan and the Visayas, have already requested for grafted seedlings of MMSU Gold.

Moreover, farmers who plant the new variety would be assured that their trees will surely bear exportable good quality fruits of 'Carabao' mango. As mentioned earlier, many of the 'Carabao' mango seedlings planted in the past have turned out to be other varieties contrary to the claim of traders that those were 'Carabao' mango.

Furthermore, the availability of grafted planting materials of the variety would encourage landowners to plant their barren hillylands. In the long run, this may help restore watersheds and make formerly fallowed/idle lands productive.