

Changes in mango postharvest quality due to nitrogen-phosphorus-potassium dose and production season

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Abstract

This study analysed the impact of two production seasons (PS): off-season (OS) and main-season (MS); plus, three fertilization doses (FD): proposed (PR), regional (RE) and no fertilization (NF); and the PSxFD interaction, on the quality of 'Ataulfo' mango produced in a commercial orchard. A completely randomized factorial design with four replications was used. The experimental unit was a 12-year-old mango tree. The variables evaluated at physiological maturity and maturity of consumption were firmness, color, titratable acidity (TA), total soluble solids (TSS), TSS/TA ratio, total sugars (TS), reducing sugars (RS), β -carotene, total phenols, vitamin C and weight loss (5, 10 and 15 days) only at the stage of maturity of consumption. PS and FD differentially affected (according to fruit maturity stage) the physicochemical and nutraceutical quality. A similar behavior was observed for the PSxFD interaction. The outstanding results were, at physiological maturity, the PR dose elevated TSS, phenols and TSS/TA ratio; in PS, OS increased Hue, TA, TSS and phenols. At maturity of consumption, the RE dose increased TSS, TSS/TA ratio, phenols, β -carotene and RS; at PS, OS increased TS, luminosity, TSS/TA ratio, β -carotene and vitamin C. The best fruit quality is achieved with the MS:PR combination at physiological maturity and OS:RE at maturity of consumption. Depending on the degree of maturity of the fruits, this study showed how the fertilization dose, the production seasons, and their interaction modify the physicochemical and nutraceutical quality of mango fruits.

Keywords: ascorbic acid; gallic acid; fruit color; fruit maturity; *Mangifera indica* L

Introduction

The 'Ataulfo' mango (*Mangifera indica* L.) is a variety with denomination of origin in Soconusco, Chiapas, Mexico and is produced in 23 states. The main producing states are Sinaloa, Nayarit, Chiapas, Oaxaca, Michoacan and Guerrero, this last state occupies the first place in production and in the last five years, 615

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thousand tons of 'Ataulfo' mango were produced in Mexico (Astudillo-Miller *et al.*, 2020; SIAP, 2021). The United States of America is the country where up to 90% of the production of this cultivar has been exported (Mendoza-Hernández *et al.*, 2020). This mango variety has a great acceptance in the national and international market due to its postharvest quality. In quality attributes, NOM-188-SCFI-2012 specifies the levels of firmness, colour and shelf life required for export (Maldonado-Astudillo *et al.*, 2016; Guzmán-Campos *et al.*, 2021).

As part of plantation management, in 'Ataulfo' mango it is necessary to keep nutrients available to cover the metabolic needs that impact fruit quality. Quality indices are affected both pre-harvest and post-harvest. Among the primary nutrients are nitrogen (N), phosphorus (P) and potassium (K), which play a vital role in plant metabolism with an impact on fruit production and quality (Pérez and Rodríguez, 2017). Applications of combined dose of N-P-K (1000-750-750 g tree⁻¹) in 'Dusehri' mango crop significantly raised the levels of total soluble solids (TSS) 24.53%, TSS/titratable acidity ratio 73.5, vitamin C 57.63 mg 100⁻¹ g and total sugars 20.48% of the fruit, compared to the treatment without fertilization (Azam *et al.*, 2021). It has also been reported that in N-P-K fertilization dose (960-80-150 g tree⁻¹) applied for three years of evaluation, do not alter the quality in mango from the Chapay region, maintaining the TSS concentration between 19.2 and 25.2% (Nasreen *et al.*, 2014).

Supplying dose of N-P-K (960-80-150 g tree⁻¹) in 'Ewaise' mango for two consecutive years, allows maintaining unchanged fruit quality in total sugars 14.3 to 14.4%, TSS 24.7 to 24.9%, TA 0.38 to 0.36% and vitamin C from 41.10 to 43.0 mg 100⁻¹ g (Harhash and Ahmed, 2018). Application of N-P-K (0.6-0.3-0.6 kg tree⁻¹) on a mango orchard negatively affected quality by reducing TSS concentration 10.04%, Vitamin C 2.03%, TA 0.253% and TSS/TA ratio 35.73% of the fruit compared to fruit managed with a combination of N-P-K fertilization (0.3-0.06-0.07) plus organic fertilization of sheep manure with an N-P-K input (0.30-0.24-0.53) (Feng *et al.*, 2020).

Production season is another factor that has shown effects on postharvest performance and shelf life of agricultural products (Ali *et al.*, 2011; Mosqueda-Lazcares *et al.*, 2011). In mango, one or two harvests per year can be obtained depending on the management of the plantation. The first harvest corresponds to "forced" off-season production through the use of growth regulators paclobutrazol and/or ethephon (2-chloroethyl phosphonic acid-ethylene), to advance flowering and achieve better fruit prices (Cárdenas and Rojas, 2003; Zainuri *et al.*, 2019; Husen *et al.*, 2021). The use of growth regulators is done individually or in combination with foliar applications of potassium nitrate from 2 to 6% to advance flowering in mango (Morales-Martínez *et al.*, 2020). In Guerrero, Mexico the off-season harvest of 'Ataulfo' mango is carried out in the months of January to March and the second harvest main season from April to June, which is obtained from normal natural flowering (San-Martín-Hernández *et al.*, 2023). 'Royal Special' mango quality harvested off-season in October 2012 showed increases of 62% in total sugars, 138% in reducing sugars, 64% in starch, 50% in TSS, 30% in ascorbic acid, 28% in titratable acidity, 25% in phenols, 291% in flavonoids, and 92% in carotenoids, compared to the main season in June 2013, but these values may vary depending on prevailing weather conditions (Prasad *et al.*, 2015; Kaviarasu *et al.*, 2017).

Currently, there is a concern among producers to have fertilization doses of the three main essential elements with proven effectiveness in both production and fruit quality of 'Ataulfo' mango, given the economic importance of this cultivar in the generation of foreign exchange through exports to the United States of America. Although N-P-K fertilization doses have been tested, in 'Ataulfo' mango, the doses of these nutrients that promote higher productivity and fruit quality are still unknown. Also, there are still no studies that report fruit quality from off-season crops compared to that from normal production or main-season. This work hypothesized that the physicochemical quality of the fruit reaches its best levels both by a particular dose of N-P-K fertilization in this cultivar, but also, by a particular production season. Therefore, the objective of this work was to evaluate at two stages of fruit maturity, the changes in physicochemical quality induced by the

effect of three doses of N-P-K fertilization and two harvesting seasons on 'Ataulfo' mango grown in San Marcos, Guerrero, Mexico.

Materials and Methods

Experimental site and cultivation conditions

The research was carried out in the 2022-2023 production cycle, in a 14-year-old commercial 'Ataulfo' mango plantation, located in Alto de Ventura, San Marcos, Guerrero, Mexico, at coordinates 21° 27' 22" north latitude, 105° 27' 0.5" west longitude and between 30 and 60 m above sea level. The planting was rectangular with 7 m between plants and 13 m between rows. During the experiment, the plantation was managed by weed, pest and disease control on a routine basis at this site and without irrigation. At the base of the tree stem, 25 mL of Cultar® (paclobutrazol) was applied in 3 L of water on July 20, and at the beginning of November, three foliar flowering inductions were made with 4% potassium nitrate sprays up to the drip point and at one-week intervals for each spray. The soil has a clay loam texture, pH 6.5 and organic matter content of 2% determined in a sample composed of 15 subsamples (0-20 cm depth) obtained in a zigzag pattern at the experimental site of the orchard. Using a CONAGUA weather station in the state of Guerrero, the maximum temperature of 35 °C, minimum of 17 °C and precipitation of 1.2 to 217 mm were recorded from July 2022 to May 2023 during the experimental period as shown in Figure 1.

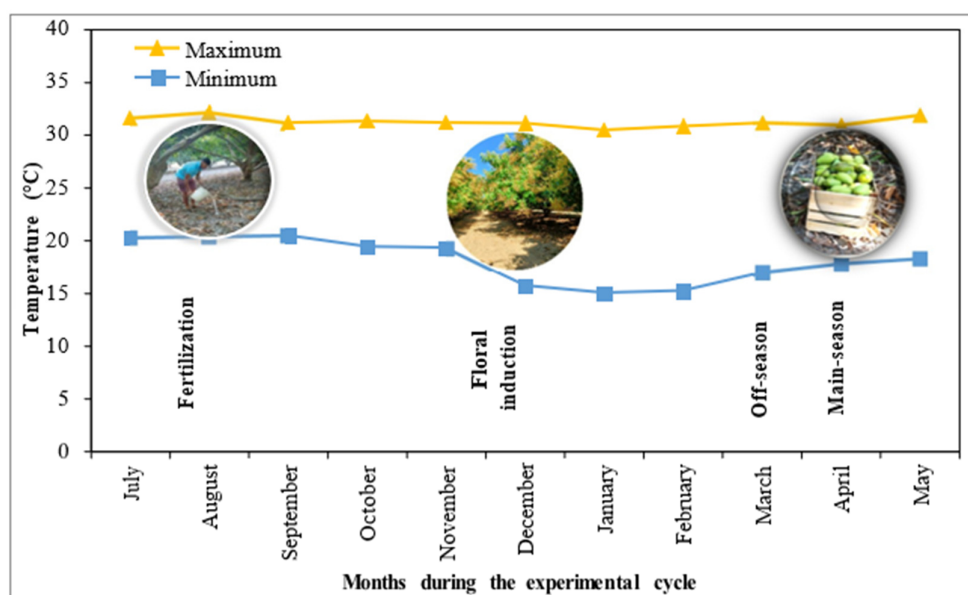


Figure 1. Average monthly maximum (35°) and minimum (17°) temperatures during the experimental cycle in the 'Ataulfo' mango orchard from July 2022 to May 2023

This research was carried out using a randomized complete factorial treatment design. Factor one was the production seasons or harvest with two levels: Off-season (OS) and main-season (MS); and factor two was the dose of fertilization with three levels: proposed fertilization "proposed" (PR), regional fertilization "regional" (RE) and no fertilization (NF). The combination of both factors generated six treatments, represented with four replications. The experimental unit was a mango tree in full canopy production, with homogeneous health and age.

In the year 2022, three doses of fertilization based on N-P₂O₅-K₂O in kg ha⁻¹ were applied: no fertilization (control); regional (123-89-58); and proposed (45-30-95) which was defined based on a yield goal

of 15 t ha⁻¹ and recovery efficiency of 35% in N, 25% in P and 40% in K. Fertilization was divided into 4 applications, the first on August 15, the second on September 2, the third on September 16, during the rainy season, and the fourth by dissolving the fertilizer in 40 L of water per tree at the beginning of flowering in the first half of December. The solid fertilizer was distributed in four cardinal points of the tree, making the first three fertilizations in solid form for the rainy period from June to September, while, in the fourth application, the fertilizer was dissolved in water. The fourth fertilization was made during the first flowering, on December 12 to favour the fruits of the off-season production and for the second flowering in January-February for main-season, fertilizer was no longer applied due to drought conditions.

Fruit sampling was done in two harvests, the first one coming from off-season production in the first week of March and the second one generated from main-season in the third week of April 2023. Fruits sampled at physiological maturity were transported to the postharvest quality laboratory of Fruticultura, Colegio de Posgraduados, Montecillo, Mexico. Fruits were selected on the basis of uniform size, colour and without mechanical damage, washed with soap, disinfested with 150 ppm sodium hypochlorite solution for 2 min, rinsed with tap water and allowed to dry. For the physicochemical determinations of the fruit, 9 fruits per experimental unit were considered, using three fruits for the analysis at physiological maturity, three fruits for the variables at maturity of consumption and three fruits to evaluate weight loss.

The physicochemical quality of the fruit was determined at physiological maturity and maturity of consumption, at stages 2 and 5, respectively, according to the National Mango Board of USA (NMB, 2019) for 'Ataulfo' mango at the harvesting site. Physicochemical analysis at physiological maturity was done immediately after harvest, while at maturity of consumption was done at 15 d of storage (fruits were subjected to a temperature of 13 ±2 °C for 10 days and then moved to a ripening temperature of 22 ±2 °C for 5 days) in plastic boxes with paper on the bottom side. After measuring the colour and firmness of fruits at physiological maturity and maturity of consumption, the pulp without pericarp from the equatorial zone was chopped into squares of ≤0.5 cm, three independent samples of 10 g of fresh pulp were taken and stored in plastic bags at -20 °C until chemical analysis.

Evaluated variables

Firmness

On two opposite sides of the equatorial zone of each fruit, pericarp sections of 2 cm diameter (ϕ) were removed to measure firmness with a digital penetrometer (Texture Analyzer Brookfield CT3[®], USA) equipped with a 4 mm ϕ spherical probe (TA39), recording the values in Newton (N).

Colour

Colour attributes were analysed at two opposite points of the equatorial zone of the fruit. On the flesh inside each sliced lateral 'cheek' section of the fruit, $L^*a^*b^*$ values were obtained from the CIE $L^*a^*b^*$ colour space, using a digital colorimeter (LS170 45/0, Linshang Technology[®], China) and LScolor software (Shenzhen Linshang Technology Co., Ltd.[®], China). The $L^*a^*b^*$ values obtained were expressed in lightness (L), Hue and Chroma (McGuire, 1992).

Weight loss

The fruits were subjected to 13 ±2 °C with 55% RH for 10 days and then transferred to a ripening temperature (22 ±2 °C with 70% RH) for 5 days, recording the weight on an analytical balance. Weight loss was quantified from the initial and final weight of each evaluation from 0, 5, 10 and 15 days of storage and the values were expressed as a percentage of the initial weight (Luna *et al.*, 2006). Consumption maturity was reached on the last evaluation date.

Titrateable acidity (TA)

The titrateable acidity was obtained (equation 1) with method 942.15 (AOAC, 1990). A 10 g sample of pulp was ground in a blender (Osterizer®, Mexico) with 50 mL of distilled water, an aliquot of 5 mL was taken, two drops of phenolphthalein were added and titrated with 0.1N sodium hydroxide to equivalence point at pH 8.2. The results were reported in percentage of citric acid because it is part of the organic acids in greater proportion in mango (Maldonado-Celis *et al.*, 2019).

$$\text{Citric acid (\%)} = \frac{(\text{mL NaOH used}) (\text{N NaOH}) (\text{Meq citric acid } 0.064) (100)}{\text{Sample weight}} \quad \text{Equation 1}$$

Total soluble solids (TSS)

TSS were determined using about 3 g of pulp at maturity of consumption and for physiological maturity the pulp was finely chopped, placed in cloth (muslin), squeezed to obtain an extract and three drops of the extract were placed in a digital refractometer (Atago-Pelette® PR-10, Japan) which recorded the values in %.

TSS/TA ratio

The TSS/TA ratio was obtained by dividing the TSS values by the TA value, its value being dimensionless (San Martín-Hernández *et al.*, 2012).

Total sugars

Total sugars were obtained (Dubois, 1956) by placing 3 g of pulp plus 60 mL of ethanol in a 125 mL flask, brought to a slow boil at 78 °C, until a 15 mL sample of the extract was obtained. 300 µL of the sugars extract was transferred into a test tube, 300 µL of 5% phenol was added, 1.5 mL of 98% sulfuric acid was added, allowed to stand for 20 min and then read in the spectrophotometer (Thermo® model Genesys 10 UV, USA) at a wavelength of 490 nm. Sugars were determined based on a calibration curve with glucose standard (Sigma-Aldrich, USA). Expressing the values in g 100⁻¹ g fresh pulp (FP).

Reducing sugars

This variable was analyzed by the DNS (3,5-Dinitrosalicylic acid) method proposed by Miller (1959). Sugars were obtained by placing 3 g of pulp plus 60 mL of ethanol in a 125 mL flask, which was subjected to slow boiling at 78 °C until a 15 mL sample of the extract was obtained. In a test tube 1 mL of sugars extract plus 1 mL of DNS solution was added, exposed in a water bath for 5 min and then in an ice bath to stop the reaction. Quantification was done in a spectrophotometer (Thermo® genesys 10 UV, USA) at a wavelength of 575 nm. The concentration of sugars was determined using a glucose calibration curve (Sigma-Aldrich, USA), expressing the values in g 100⁻¹ g of fresh pulp (FP).

Ascorbic acid

This variable was analysed according to method 967.21 (AOAC, 2002) with modifications in sample weight. A sample of 5 g FP was ground in a blender (Osterizer®, Mexico) with 50 mL of a 0.5% oxalic acid solution, an aliquot of 5 mL was taken and titrated with Tillman's solution (2,6-dichlorophenol indophenol 0.02%, DCIP from Sigma-Aldrich® USA) until a change in colour to faint pink for 15 s. The concentration of L-ascorbic acid was determined by means of a calibration curve with an L-ascorbic acid standard (Sigma-Aldrich® USA) and the values were expressed in ascorbic acid equivalents (mgAAE 100⁻¹ g FP).

Total phenols

A 1 g sample of pulp was added to 10 mL of 80% methanol in a 20 mL vial, shaken for 15 min at room temperature, then the sample was transferred to a 50 mL polypropylene tube and centrifuged at 5000 rpm for 5 min. The supernatant was recovered in a 10 mL tube, then 40 µL of the extract was transferred into a 5 mL test tube, 1.56 mL of distilled water plus 0.1 mL of Folin Ciocalteu 1N was added, it was kept at rest for 3 min,

0.3 mL of 20% sodium carbonate was added and let it rest for 60 min. The sample was analysed at a wavelength of 765 nm in a spectrophotometer (Thermo® genesys 10 UV, USA) and the phenols were obtained with respect to a calibration curve with an authentic gallic acid standard (Sigma-Aldrich® USA), expressing the results in gallic acid equivalents (g GAE 100g⁻¹ FP).

β-carotene

This variable was obtained by placing 1 g of pulp in a 50 mL polypropylene tube, homogenized with 10 mL of the solvent mixture hexane, ethanol, acetone (50:25:25 v:v) and 1.5 mL distilled water was added. Subsequently, the sample was passed into a separatory funnel, which was allowed to settle and the yellow supernatant organic phase was recovered in a 50 mL test tube. Then the previous step was repeated, making a re-extraction with the same mixture of solvents and volume used. The two extractions were pooled and the final volume obtained was measured. The sample was analyzed at a wavelength of 450 nm in a spectrophotometer (Thermo® genesys 10 UV, USA) using 5 mL quartz cells and quantification was done by reference to a β-carotene standard calibration curve (Sigma-Aldrich® USA) expressing the results in mg β-carotene 100⁻¹ g FP.

Statistical analysis

The data obtained for the response variables were analysed with a factorial effects model with a completely randomized arrangement (equation 2).

$$Y_{ijk} = \mu + A_i + B_j + (AxB)_{ij} + E_{ijk} \quad \text{Equation 2}$$

Y_{ijk} = Response variable; μ = overall mean; A_i = Factor A (production season "PS") with levels of A: ij = 2 (off-season and main-season); B_j = Factor B (fertilization dose "FD") with levels of B: j = 3 (no fertilization, proposed fertilization and regional fertilization); (AxB)_{ij} = Interaction of factors AxB (production season x fertilization dose) with levels of AxB: ij = (off-season and main-season) per (proposed fertilization, regional fertilization and no fertilization); E_{ijk} = Experimental error.

With the data, analysis of variance was performed, the averages were compared with Tukey's test (p ≤ 0.05) adding the standard deviation (SD) and compliance with homogeneity (Bartlett) and normality (Shapiro-Wilk) was verified with the SAS Ver. 9.4 statistical package.

Results and Discussion

The production season (PS) showed main effects on physicochemical quality and differentially by fruit maturity: at maturity of consumption the impact was on total sugars, colour (L, C, Hue), TA, TSS, TSS/TA ratio and weight loss (5 and 15 d); and at physiological maturity on firmness, colour (chroma and hue), TA, TSS and weight loss (5 and 10 d). While, for fertilization dose (FD) at both maturity stages, the main effects were on AT, TSS and TSS/AT ratio, although at maturity of consumption these effects were limited only to total sugars and weight loss (5 d). The PS*FD interaction showed significant differences (simple effects) according to maturity in: colour (chroma and hue), TA, TSS and TSS/TA ratio for both maturity stages; total sugars and weight loss (5 and 15 d) for maturity of consumption; and firmness at physiological maturity (Table 1).

Table 1. Effect (p-value) of production season (PS), fertilization dose (FD) and their interaction (PS×FD), on reducing sugars, total sugars, total soluble solids (TSS), titratable acidity (TA), TSS/TA ratio, firmness, colour (luminosity, chroma and hue) and weight loss at 5, 10 and 15 days (d) at physiological maturity and maturity of consumption in 'Ataulfo' mango fruit

Variable	Maturity	Source of variation			CV (%)
		Production season (PS)	Fertilization dose (FD)	PS×FD	
Firmness	Physiological	0.0024 *	0.2307 ns	0.0445 *	7.4
	Consumption	0.2487 ns	0.1328 ns	0.2135 ns	6.9
Reducing sugars	Physiological	0.4463 ns	0.2093 ns	0.1927 ns	15.6
	Consumption	0.1787 ns	0.0683 ns	0.5193 ns	12.4
Total sugars	Physiological	0.0737 ns	0.7610 ns	0.0838 ns	18.3
	Consumption	0.0059 *	0.0034 *	0.0016 *	18.4
Luminosity	Physiological	0.7246 ns	0.0884 ns	0.2720 ns	1.9
	Consumption	<.0001 *	0.1552 ns	0.0110 *	2.5
Chroma	Physiological	<.0001 *	0.8187 ns	0.0018 *	4.0
	Consumption	<.0001 *	0.3221 ns	<.0001 *	1.7
Hue	Physiological	<.0001 *	0.6696 ns	<.0001 *	0.9
	Consumption	0.0002 *	0.3254 ns	0.0387 *	2.5
TA	Physiological	0.0346 *	0.0349 *	0.0040 *	3.7
	Consumption	0.0162 *	0.0111 *	0.0048 *	20.8
TSS	Physiological	0.0008 *	0.0002 *	0.0001 *	2.8
	Consumption	<.0001 *	0.0047 *	<.0198 *	2.5
TSS/TA	Physiological	0.2728 ns	0.0063 *	0.0104 *	4.4
	Consumption	0.0014 *	0.0004 *	0.0004 *	9.1
Weight loss 5 d	Consumption	<.0001 *	0.0041 *	<.0001 *	8.3
Weight loss 10 d	Consumption	0.1896 ns	0.3655 ns	0.1751 ns	9.0
Weight loss 15 d	Consumption	<.0001 *	0.1381 ns	<.0001 *	10.7

*Significant ($p \leq 0.05$); CV: Coefficient of variation. ns: not significant.

Firmness

Among the factors studied, firmness was affected only by the production season at physiological maturity. In main-season, fruit firmness was 11% higher than that obtained in off-season production and the MS:PR combination achieved the highest firmness, a value that was 20% higher than the OS:RE combination (Table 2). The firmness of 'Neelum' mango harvested off-season in September showed a reduction of 1%, compared to the fruit from main-season production which recorded the maximum value (25.6 N) at physiological maturity (Venkatesan and Tamilmani, 2011). In this work, a similar trend was observed, the reduction was 11% at physiological maturity. For the commercialization of this mango variety, 153 N of firmness (NMX-FF-058-SCFI-2006) measured with a 0.794 and 1.11 mm ϕ flat prop is required (NMX-FF-058-SCFI-2006). However, the equipment included in this investigation used a 2 cm ϕ spherical probe, so the values recorded will be different from those established by the standard. Fruits with low water content, but higher concentration of total soluble solids and cell density, have higher firmness (Maldonado-Peralta *et al.*, 2021).

Table 2. Firmness at physiological maturity and maturity of consumption of 'Ataulfo' mango fruit by effect of production season (PS), fertilization dose (FD) and PS:FD combinations

Factors and levels of study	Firmness (N)	
	Physiological maturity	Maturity of consumption
PS		
Off-season (OS)	75.8±5.2 b	2.3±0.2 a
Main-season (MS)	84.3±8.0 a	2.2±0.1 a
HSD	5.07	0.13
FD		
Proposed (PR)	82.5±9.9 a	2.2±0.2 a
Regional (RE)	80.3±8.1 a	2.3±0.1 a
No fertilization (NF)	77.3±5.1 a	2.2±0.2 a
HSD	7.55	0.20
Combinations PS:FD		
OS:PR	75.2±4.0 b	2.2±0.2 a
OS:RE	74.5±6.2 b	2.4±0.2 a
OS:NF	77.6±6.2 ab	2.1±0.2 a
MS:PR	89.8±8.4 a	2.3±0.0 a
MS:RE	86.1±4.9 ab	2.3±0.0 a
MS:NF	76.9±4.8 ab	2.2±0.2 a
HSD	13.30	0.35

Averages with same letters in columns and each study factor indicate no significant difference (Tukey, $p \leq 0.05$); HSD: honest significant difference.

Colour

For the three colour attributes and the two fruit maturity stages, the effects were observed for the production season and the combination of the study factors (PS:FD), except for lightness at physiological maturity (Table 3).

Luminosity

At maturity of consumption, lightness was 11.5% higher in Off-season than in main-season. Among combinations, OS:NF had the highest lightness, although without differences with OS:RE, but it was 13, 14 and 15% higher than MS:PR, MS:RE and MS:NF, respectively (Table 3). On this colour attribute, the literature is contradictory. On the one hand, fruit brightness of this species increases from 55.9 at physiological maturity to 59.9 at maturity of consumption (Maldonado-Astudillo *et al.*, 2016). While, in other studies, average reductions of 21% in lightness are reported as ripening advances to consumption in 'Ataulfo' and 'Tommy Atkins' mangoes in which the magnitude of change is not clarified (Villamizar-Vargas *et al.*, 2019; Jiménez-Maldonado *et al.*, 2022). In this research, fruit brightness experienced a similar reduction from physiological maturity to consumption. In broccoli harvested in winter-spring, lightness has been reported to be lower than in winter, spring, and summer-fall growth cycle productions (Conversa *et al.*, 2020).

Chroma

At physiological maturity, main-season mango had the highest chroma and was 9% higher than off-season; in contrast, at maturity of consumption, mango off-season had 13% more chroma than main-season. On the other hand, at physiological maturity, the MS:PR and MS:RE combinations achieved 11% more chroma in the fruit than the OS:NF treatment, although without differences with MS:NF and OS:PR; while, at maturity of consumption, the OS:RE, OS:PR and OS:NF combinations achieved up to 12.6% more chroma on average than main-season fruit at the three fertilization doses evaluated (Table 3). As the ripening process progresses, fruit chroma value increases from 40.3 to 46.8 when moving from physiological maturity to

maturity of consumption (Maldonado-Astudillo *et al.*, 2016). The production seasons imposes significant changes in the chroma of broccoli flower heads, achieving their maximum values (around 15) in winter, spring and summer-autumn harvests, compared to that obtained in winter-spring (Conversa *et al.*, 2020).

Hue

At physiological maturity, the off-season mango had the highest hue than the main-season, while at maturity of consumption, the main-season had 5% higher hue than the off-season. In both maturity conditions, there was a reduction in hue from physiological maturity to maturity of consumption, which means that the hue changed from yellow to orange-yellow. Similar responses were achieved at physiological maturity, where OS:PR, OS:RE and OS:NF combinations were on average 3% higher in hue than MS:PR, MS:RE and MS:NF; whereas, at maturity of consumption, the MS:PR combination was 6 and 8% higher than OS:NF and OS:PR, respectively, but without statistical differences with MS:RE, MS:NF and OS:RE (Table 3). Carotenoids are pigments that provide colour to the fruit, which upon ripening triggers the synthesis of yellow-toned xanthophylls initially and then the process continues with the production of orange-toned carotenes (Venkateswarlu and Krishna, 2014). Likewise, in mango hue reductions from 100° to around 62° are reported for the change from physiological maturity to maturity of consumption (Maldonado-Astudillo *et al.*, 2016; Jiménez-Maldonado *et al.*, 2022). In 'Ataulfo' mango ripening there are two opposite events: a positive relationship between carotenoid concentration and a^* values measured in CIEL $^*a^*b^*$ colour space; and a negative relationship between pigment level and hue value, reaching the highest carotenoid concentration with low hue ($\approx 60^\circ$) than with high hue (Ornelas-Paz *et al.*, 2010), similar responses in hue were observed in this work. In broccoli, effects by production season have been obtained, with the best visual quality or higher hue (123.8°) being achieved in the winter-spring (April) flower head harvest, with respect to its lower values (<120°) in the winter (February), spring (June) and summer-autumn (November) crop cycle productions, results that align with the higher chlorophyll and carotenoid concentrations in the April harvest (Conversa *et al.*, 2020). In 'Golden Smoothie' apple, a discrete reduction of hue from 116° at full commercial harvest to 109° has been reported for late harvest fruit (Ríos-Velasco *et al.*, 2023).

Table 3. Colour at physiological maturity (physiological) and maturity of consumption (M. consumption) in ‘Ataulfo’ mango fruit, by effect of production season (PS), fertilization dose (FD) and PS:FD combinations

Factors and levels of study	Colour					
	Luminosity		Chroma		Hue (°)	
	Physiological	M. Consumption	Physiological	M. Consumption	Physiological	M. Consumption
PS						
Off-season (OS)	76.9±1.2 a	67.1±2.1 a	49.8±2.0 b	75.7±0.9 a	89.4±0.7 a	70.4±2.7 b
Main-season (MS)	77.1±1.9 a	60.2±1.9 b	54.4±1.8 a	67.2±1.4 b	87.0±0.9 b	73.7±9.9 a
HSD	1.27	1.60	1.8	1.12	11.48	1.51
FD						
Proposed (PR)	76.4±1.3 a	62.7±2.4 a	52.4±2.7 a	71.4±4.6 a	88.1±1.8 a	71.5±3.4 a
Regional (RE)	78.0±1.1 a	64.2±4.5 a	52.0±3.3 a	71.9±4.5 a	87.4±1.0 a	72.8±2.2 a
No fertilization (NF)	76.6±2.0 a	64.0±5.1 a	51.8±3.5 a	70.9±5.1 a	88.4±1.6 a	71.7±2.2 a
HSD	1.89	2.06	2.68	7.2	7.64	2.25
Combinations PS:FD						
OS:PR	77.0±1.1 a	64.6± 1.2 b	50.3±1.4 abc	75.7± 0.9 a	89.6±0.6 a	68.6±1.7 c
OS:RE	77.5±1.4 a	68.2±1.0 ab	49.6±2.8 bc	75.9±1.1 a	89.0±0.3 ab	72.3±3.1 abc
OS:NF	76.2±1.2 a	68.5±0.9 a	49.3±2.2 c	75.3±1.0 a	89.5±1.0 a	70.2±2.0 bc
MS:PR	75.8±1.0 a	60.7±1.5 c	54.6±1.7 a	67.2±0.2 b	86.6±0.8 c	74.4±0.8 a
MS:RE	78.5±0.6 a	60.2±1.8 c	54.5±1.0 a	67.9±1.6 b	87.1±0.2 bc	73.2±0.9 ab
MS:NF	77.0±2.7 a	59.5±2.6 c	54.2±2.8 ab	66.4±2.1 b	87.3±1.3 bc	73.3±0.9 ab
HSD	3.33	3.63	4.72	3.6	3.79	3.97

Averages with same letters in columns and each study factor indicate no significant difference (Tukey, $p \leq 0.05$); HSD: honest significant difference.

TA

Fruits harvested off-season significantly exceeded 6 and 8% TA concentration, with respect to main-season fruits, at physiological maturity and maturity of consumption, respectively. On the other hand, the treatment no fertilization increased TA by 6% with respect to the regional fertilization, but this was statistically similar to the proposed fertilization at physiological maturity; while, at consumption, the proposed fertilization exceeded the other two fertilization levels by 7% in TA. Among the combinations, MS:RE mango had 10 to 13% less TA at physiological maturity than OS:PR, OS:RE, OS:NF, MS:PR and MS:NF; while at maturity of consumption, MS:PR fruit was statistically similar in TA to MS:NF, but different from OS:PR, OS:RE, OS:NF and MS:RE, however, the MS:PR combination achieved 14% more TA than MS:RE (Table 4). In ‘Royal’ mango at eating maturity, the production season was not determinant in TA, obtaining statistically equal results in this variable with 0.32% in off-season production and 0.25% in the main-season fruit (Prasad *et al.*, 2015). In a mango orchard, changing the dose and source of chemical fertilization (kg tree⁻¹) from 0.60-0.30-0.60 to chemical fertilization 0.30-0.06-0.07 (N-P-K) plus organic sheep manure with 0.30-0.24-0.53, discretely reduced TA from 0.25 to 0.24% (Feng *et al.*, 2020). On the other hand, fertilization dose impacted TA in ‘Dusuhri’ mango, reporting that N-P-K fertilization (1000-750-750) with a value of 0.26% in this attribute was statistically lower than TA levels ($\leq 0.49\%$) obtained with individual fertilizations of N (1000), P (750) and K (750) (Azam *et al.*, 2021). Factors such as variety, maturity stage, pH, lesions and water concentration in the fruit modify the TA content (Maldonado-Astudillo *et al.*, 2016). The increase TA when there is a higher K>P ratio and foliar P>Ca and S (Torres *et al.*, 2009).

TSS

At physiological maturity, mangoes from Off-season had 4% more TSS than main-season (7.2%), in contrast to maturity of consumption, in which mangoes from main-season had 20% more TSS than those from off-season production (TSS 15%). Regarding fertilization dose, at physiological maturity, the proposed fertilization achieved the highest TSS level (7.7%) and was 7% higher than the regional fertilization and no fertilization treatments; while at maturity of consumption, the proposed and regional fertilization doses were 4% and 5% higher than the no fertilization treatment, respectively. Likewise, among combinations, at physiological maturity, the OS:PR combination had the highest TSS percentage with 7.9% and was significantly higher than the other combinations (except TE:PR), reaching 13% more TSS than the MS:RE combination with the lowest TSS concentration (7%). Meanwhile, maturity of consumption, the highest TSS (18.5%) was recorded in the MS:RE combination, which was statistically similar to MS:PR and MS:Nf, but was significantly 28% higher with the lowest value (14.5%) obtained in OS:Nf (Table 4). The amount of TSS of 'Royal' mango at maturity of consumption statistically decreased from 21% in off-season production to 14% in main-season (Prasad *et al.*, 2015). In a study conducted on 'Kent' mango, it was found that an increase in normal fertilization rate of 381-367-296 and high fertilization (normal + 50% of normal rate) (N-P-K g tree⁻¹), TSS concentration improved 9.4 to 10.0% at physiological maturity, and 15 to 17.6% at maturity of consumption, respectively (Nolasco-González and Osuna-García, 2017). In a mango orchard, changing the dose and source of chemical fertilization from (0.60-0.30-0.60) kg tree⁻¹ N-P-K to chemical fertilization (0.30-0.06-0.07 kg tree⁻¹ N-P-K) plus sheep manure organic with N-P-K input (0.30-0.24-0.53), significantly increased TSS from 10.04 to 12.81% respectively (Feng *et al.*, 2020). The reception of 'Ataulfo' mangoes at a packinghouse for marketing should have a minimum of 2.9% TSS, according to NMX-FF-058-SCFI-2006. The foliar application of 6% KNO₃ before flowering favors the increase of TSS, because K promotes the translocation of photosynthates in the plant and to the fruit (Sarker and Rahim, 2013; Quijada *et al.*, 2008). The increase in sugars is related to their accumulation in leaf and fruit, as well as by climate during fruit growth and maturity due to hydrolysis of starch and polysaccharides in the cell (Almanza-Merchán *et al.*, 2016). (Almanza-Merchán *et al.*, 2016).

TSS/TA ratio

At production season, Off-season increased the TSS/TA ratio by 18% compared to main-season fruit at maturity of consumption. At physiological maturity, the treatment no fertilization decreased the TSS/TA ratio by 5%, compared to the proposed and regional fertilization; however, at maturity of consumption, the regional fertilization and no fertilization treatments exceeded the proposed fertilization by 29 and 21%, respectively. On the other hand, at physiological maturity, the OS:PR combination exceeded the TSS/TA ratio from 9 to 12% compared to the OS:RE, OS:Nf and MS:Nf treatments; while, at maturity of consumption, the MS:PR combination decreased the TSS/TA ratio from 42 to 70% compared to the other combinations evaluated (Table 4). In 'Haden' and 'Keit' mango fruit harvested at two different times, in May-July and July-August, showed significant differences in the TSS/TA ratio with 32.3 and 22.6, respectively (Siller-Cepeda *et al.*, 2009). In the literature it has been reported that fertilizations in 'Kent' mango with normal (g tree⁻¹) doses of 381-367-296 (N-P-K) and high (normal + 50%), did not affect the TSS/TA ratio (values observed between 13 and 14) at physiological maturity, but at maturity of consumption, this TSS/TA ratio decreased from 37 to 24, respectively (García *et al.*, 2015). In a mango orchard the application of doses (kg tree⁻¹) of N-P-K fertilization (0.60-0.30-0.60) showed a significant difference in TSS/TA ratio with 19% lower than treatments with doses of chemical fertilization (0.30-0.06-0.07) plus organic fertilization of sheep manure with a contribution of N-P-K (0.30-0.24-0.53) (Feng *et al.*, 2020). The increase in the TSS/AT ratio is related to stressful osmotic conditions (Goykovic and Saavedra, 2007). The decrease in TSS/TA is subject to the nutrient ratios K>P, K>Mg, K:Ca and K:S, in the fruit (Torres *et al.*, 2009).

Table 4. Titratable acidity (TA), total soluble solids (TSS) and TSS/TA ratio at physiological maturity (physiological) and maturity of consumption (M. consumption) in 'Ataulfo' mango fruit, by effect of production season (PS), fertilization dose (FD) and PS:FD combinations

Factors and levels of study	TA (% citric acid)		TSS (%)		TSS/TA ratio	
	Physiological	M. Consumption	Physiological	M. Consumption	Physiological	M. Consumption
PS						
Off season (OS)	3.5±0.1 a	0.20±0.03 a	7.5±0.3 a	15.0±0.6 b	2.17±0.1 a	99.4±12.3 a
Main-season (MS)	3.3±0.2 b	0.16±0.01 b	7.2±0.3 b	18.0±0.6 a	2.12±0.2 a	84.0±15.4 b
HSD	0.11	0.037	0.18	0.35	0.08	9.47
FD						
Proposed (PR)	3.4±0.1 ab	0.21±0.05 a	7.7±0.3 a	16.6±1.3 a	2.23±0.2 a	79.6±16.0 b
Regional (RE)	3.3±0.2 b	0.16±0.04 b	7.2±0.3 b	16.8±2.0 a	2.29±0.1 a	102.5±10.9 a
No fertilization (NF)	3.5±0.1 a	0.16±0.03 b	7.2±0.2 b	16.0±1.8 b	2.05±0.1 b	96.3±8.99 a
HSD	0.17	0.05	0.27	0.52	0.12	6.3
Combinations PS:FD						
OS:PR	3.4±0.1 a	0.17±0.02 b	7.9±0.2 a	15.5±0.4 b	2.32±0.0 a	91.2±8.0 a
OS:RE	3.5±0.1 a	0.17±0.05 b	7.4±0.2 b	15.0±0.4 bc	2.12±0.1 bc	109±12.8 a
OS:NF	3.5±0.1 a	0.14±0.02 b	7.2±0.3 b	14.5±0.5 c	2.08±0.1 bc	100.6±11.6 a
MS:PR	3.5±0.2 a	0.26±0.05 a	7.4±0.3 ab	17.8±0.4 a	2.10±0.2 abc	64.2±6.9 b
MS:RE	3.1±0.1 b	0.16±0.03 b	7.0±0.1 b	18.5±0.2 a	2.25±0.1 ab	96±1.0 a
MS:NF	3.5±0.2 a	0.18±0.03 ab	7.1±0.1 b	17.6±0.6 a	2.08±0.1 c	92±3.5 a
HSD	0.30	0.08	0.47	0.91	0.22	3.13

Averages with same letters in columns and each study factor indicate no significant difference (Tukey, $p \leq 0.05$); HSD: honest significant difference.

Total and reducing sugars

Among the sugars analysed, the effects were limited to total sugars in the fruit at eating maturity. In this variable, Off-season exceeded main-season by 27.8% in total sugars concentration. The PR and RE doses were higher than NF by 45.7 and 34%, respectively. The OS:PR combination achieved 168.5% more total sugars than MS:NF (Table 5). Concentrations of $13.29 \text{ g } 100^{-1} \text{ g}$ total sugars have been obtained in 'Royal Special' mango fruits produced off-season compared to $8.19 \text{ g } 100^{-1} \text{ g}$ in main-season (Prasad *et al.*, 2015), achieving a 62 % difference in total sugars content, which was found to be higher than that observed in this research. Azam *et al.* (2021) obtained higher content (41%) of total sugars in 'Dusehri' mango fruits under NPK fertilization, with respect to the treatment no fertilization. The results obtained are consistent with the dose with higher potassium supply (PR) and, the role of potassium in carbohydrate translocation, stomata opening and closing, etc. (López *et al.*, 2017). On the other hand, individual fertilizations of N (1000), P (750) and K (750) and the combination of N-P-K (1000-750-750) g tree^{-1} in 'Dusehri' mango crop, statistically affected the level of total sugars, with the combination of fertilizers (N-P-K) achieving the maximum concentration with $20.48 \text{ g } 100^{-1} \text{ g}$ of pulp, with respect to the other individual fertilization treatments in which sugars $\leq 15.82 \text{ g } 100^{-1} \text{ g}$ of fruit pulp were obtained (Azam *et al.*, 2021). The increase in K^+ and Na^+ exchange in soil colloids promotes the synthesis of solutes such as proline, betaine, polyols and soluble sugars (Casierra-Posada and Garcia, 2006). On the other hand, potassium is the main enzymatic activator for starch formation and sugar production (García-Gallegos *et al.*, 2020).

Table 5. Reducing sugars and total sugars at physiological maturity (physiological) and maturity of consumption (M. consumption) in 'Ataulfo' mango fruit, by effect of production season (PS), fertilization dose (FD) and PS:FD combinations

Factors and levels of study	Reducing sugars (g 100 ⁻¹ g FP)		Total sugar (g 100 ⁻¹ g FP)	
	Physiological	M. Consumption	Physiological	M. Consumption
PS				
Off-season (OS)	0.8±0.1 a	4.0±0.3 a	1.22±0.2 a	13.3±2.6 a
Main-season (MS)	0.8±0.2 a	3.7±0.6 a	1.03±0.3 a	10.4±4.3 b
HSD	0.11	0.42	0.21	1.97
FD				
Proposed (PR)	0.8±0.2 a	4.2±0.6 a	1.1±0.1 a	13.7±2.2 a
Regional (RE)	0.9±0.1 a	3.6±0.4 a	1.2±0.3 a	12.6±2.8 a
No fertilization (NF)	0.8±0.1 a	3.9±0.5 a	1.1±0.3 a	9.4±4.5 b
HSD	0.16	0.62	0.32	7.2
Combinations PS:FD				
OS:PR	0.9±0.2 a	4.2±0.2 a	1.2±0.1 a	14.5±2.4 a
OS:RE	0.8±0.1 a	3.8±0.3 a	1.1±0.2 a	11.6±3.2 a
OS:NF	0.8±0.1 a	4.0±0.6 a	1.4±0.1 a	13.4±2.1 a
MS:PR	0.8±0.1 a	4.1±0.8 a	1.0±0.1 a	12.9±2.0 a
MS:RE	0.9±0.1 a	3.3±0.4 a	1.2±0.4 a	13.6±2.4 a
MS:NF	0.7±0.1 a	3.9±0.4 a	0.9±0.2 a	5.4±0.3 b
HSD	0.28	1.09	0.56	3.6

Averages with same letters in columns and each study factor indicate no significant difference (Tukey, $p \leq 0.05$); HSD: honest significant difference.

Weight loss

Between the at 5 and 10 day of storage, weight loss of the off-season fruit exceeded that of the main-season fruit by 200 and 52.4 %, respectively. The treatment with no fertilization suffered greater weight loss and was 16% greater than the proposed fertilization at 10 days. At 10 days, the OS:NF, OS:PR and OS:RE combinations showed a high weight loss and were statistically equal but superior to MS:PR, MS:NF and MS:RE, but the OS:NF combination exhibited the maximum weight loss with 79%, with respect to MS:PR; while, at 5 days the same trend was observed and the OS:NF combination reached up to 242% more weight loss than MS:PR (Table 6). In 'Kent' and 'Haden' mango fruits, production season induces variations in weight loss, since fruits harvested in July-August lost up to 4% of their weight, compared to the 2.5% recorded in May-July production (Siller-Cepeda *et al.*, 2009). On the one hand, in 'Kent' mango fertilizations with the doses (g tree⁻¹) of N-P-K, normal (381-367-296), high (normal + 50% of normal dose) and no fertilization, the weight loss at maturity of consumption was 6.4, 6.2 and 5.8%, respectively; while, on the other hand, the fruit weight loss increases in the course of its ripening process (Nolasco and Osuna, 2017). Fruit weight loss is related to transpiration and acceleration of metabolism when subjected to water stress and N and K deficiency (Vélez *et al.*, 2012; Martínez *et al.*, 2008).

Nutraceutical properties

The production seasons (PS) showed main effects on phenol content at physiological maturity and on β -carotene content at the two maturity levels studied. On the other hand, main effects on phenol, β -carotene and vitamin C content were obtained by fertilization dose (FD), but it was differential by fruit maturity. Meanwhile, by the interaction of both factors (PSxFD) simple effects were observed in the three nutraceutical attributes in the two maturity conditions, except for vitamin C at physiological maturity (Table 7).

Table 6. Weight loss at 5, 10 and 15 days of storage (13 ± 2 °C at 55% RH for 10 days and subsequent transfer to 22 ± 2 °C at 70% RH for 5 days) in ‘Ataulfo’ mango fruit, by effect of production season (PS), fertilization dose (FD) and PS:FD combinations

Factors and levels of study	Weight loss (%)		
	5 d	10 d	15 d
PS			
Off-season (OS)	6.0±0.5 a	6.4±0.4 a	7.4±0.6 a
Main-season (MS)	2.0±0.3 b	4.2±0.7 b	7.0±0.8 a
HSD	11.48	0.38	0.5548
FD			
Proposed (PR)	3.8±2.1 a	5.0±1.4 b	7.1±0.6 a
Regional (RE)	3.9±2.0 a	5.1±1.2 b	7.0±0.5 a
No fertilization (NF)	4.0±2.3 a	5.8±1.2 a	7.5±0.9 a
HSD	7.64	0.56	0.83
Combination PS:FD			
OS:PR	5.8±0.5 a	6.3±0.37 a	7.3±0.3 a
OS:RE	5.7±0.5 a	6.1±0.3 a	6.9±0.3 a
OS:NF	6.5±0.4 a	6.8±0.2 a	8.0±0.3 a
MS:PR	1.9±0.2 b	3.8±0.4 b	7.0±0.9 a
MS:RE	2.1±0.5 b	4.0±0.2 b	7.1±0.7 a
MS:NF	2.1±0.3 b	4.8±0.8 b	7.0±1.0 a
HSD	3.79	0.99	1.4

Averages with same letters in columns and each study factor indicate no significant difference (Tukey, $p \leq 0.05$); HSD: honest significant difference

Table 7. Effect (p-value) of production season (PS), fertilization dose (FD) and their interaction (PS×FD), on total phenols, β -carotene and vitamin C content of fruit at physiological maturity and maturity of consumption of ‘Ataulfo’ mango

Variable	Maturity	Source of variation			CV (%)
		Production season (PS)	Fertilization dose (FD)	PS×FD	
Total phenols	Consumption	<.0001 *	0.0034 *	<.0001 *	14.9
	Physiological	0.1562 ns	0.0075 *	0.02 *	16.7
β -carotene	Consumption	0.0001 *	0.0723 ns	0.0018 *	34.5
	Physiological	0.0228 *	0.011 *	0.0494 *	12.0
Vitamin C	Consumption	0.443 ns	0.8422 ns	0.0571 ns	11.3
	Physiological	0.6646 ns	<.0001 *	0.0009 *	16.4

*Significant ($p \leq 0.05$); CV: Coefficient of variation. ns: not significant.

Total phenols

At physiological maturity, the Off-season treatment improved phenol concentration by up to 70% compared to main-season. Likewise, at physiological maturity, the treatment no fertilization reduced the concentration of phenols 33% with respect to the proposed fertilization and 28% with respect to the regional fertilization; at maturity of consumption, a similar response was obtained, although the regional fertilization with the maximum value exceeded the treatment no fertilization by 43%. On the other hand, at physiological maturity, the combinations OS:PR, OS:RE and OS:NF were significantly superior to the other treatments, but OS:PR was 224% higher than MS:NF in phenol concentration; at maturity of consumption, the phenol concentration suffered a loss of 68% in the OS:NF combination, in relation to OS:RE, which statistically achieved the maximum phenol level (Table 7). The production seasons in ‘Royal’ mango does not influence phenol concentration where $0.81 \text{ mg } 100^{-1} \text{ g pulp}$ was recorded in Off-season and $0.653 \text{ mg } 100^{-1} \text{ g pulp}$ in main-season (Prasad *et al.*, 2015). In ‘Mamey’ sapote fertilizations at low ($1\text{-}1\text{-}1 \text{ kg tree}^{-1}$) and high ($2\text{-}2\text{-}2 \text{ kg tree}^{-1}$) doses did not show significant difference having phenolic concentrations of 12.77 and $10.92 \text{ mg } 100^{-1} \text{ g}$

(Vallejo-Pérez *et al.*, 2009). The application of nitrogen fertilizer applied as calcium carbonate and ammonium nitrate from 75 (40-35) to 150 (80-70) kg ha⁻¹ favoured the application of nitrogen fertilizer. Phenolic compounds increase when there is stress by the presence of pathogens and by an increase in temperature during fruit development (Pérez *et al.*, 2016). Low nitrogen concentrations reduce phenolic compounds in fruit (Fariás *et al.*, 2019).

β-carotene

On the one hand, the concentration of *β*-carotene was reduced 86% in mango Off-season with respect to the seasonal one at physiological maturity; but, on the other hand, at maturity of consumption, an opposite behavior was obtained, achieving 13% more *β*-carotene in off-season production than in main-season. At maturity of consumption, the concentration of *β*-carotene suffered a loss of 23% in fruits of the treatment no fertilization in relation to the regional fertilization that exhibited the maximum level of this carotenoid. At physiological maturity, the combinations MS:PR, MS:RE and MS:NF showed the highest concentration of *β*-carotene and were significantly higher than OS:PR, OS:RE and OS:NF, although MS:RE obtained the maximum level of *β*-carotene with 220% more than OS: NF with the lowest value; while, at maturity of consumption, the MS:NF combination had 51% less in *β*-carotene concentration than OS:PR, which was statistically similar OS:RE, OS:NF, MS:PR and MS:RE (Table 8). The concentration of *β*-carotene was affected by the production season, in which Off-season improved the level of this carotenoid with 4.47 mg 100⁻¹ g, compared to the lowest level (2.33 mg 100⁻¹ g) obtained in 'Royal' mango in main-season (Prasad *et al.*, 2015). Fertilizations at low (1-1-1 kg tree⁻¹) and high (2-2-2 kg tree⁻¹) doses of N-P-K in the 'Mamey' sapote crop showed no significant difference maintaining the *β*-carotene concentration between 2.11 to 2.47 mg 100⁻¹ g (Vallejo-Pérez *et al.*, 2009). The increase of carotenoids in fruits is due to factors such as temperature, light and low nutrient competition (Prasad *et al.*, 2015). N stress can alter enzymes involved in pigment biosynthesis (Martínes *et al.*, 2017).

Table 8. Total phenols and *β*-carotene in fruits at physiological maturity (physiological) and maturity of consumption (M. consumption) in 'Ataulfo' mango, by effect of production season (PS), fertilization dose (FD) and PS:FD combination

Factors and levels of study	Totals phenols (mg GAE 100 ⁻¹ g FP)		<i>β</i> -carotene (mg 100 ⁻¹ g FP)	
	Physiological	M. Consumption	Physiological	M. Consumption
PS				
Off-season (OS)	129.2±19.0 a	85.7±24.2 a	0.7±0.3 b	11.0±1.4 a
Main-season (MS)	76.1±10.4 b	61.7±16.5 a	1.3±0.5 a	9.7±1.9 b
HSD	12.17	13.86	0.29	11.48
FD				
Proposed (PR)	105.4±35.2 a	88.2±10.6 a	1.1±0.5 a	10.6±1.5 ab
Regional (RE)	101.7±39.3 a	91.0±16.2 a	1.2±0.5 a	11.3±1.3 a
No fertilization (NF)	79.3±40.9 b	63.5±10.6 b	0.8±0.5 a	9.2±1.8 b
HSD	18.11	20.79	0.44	7.64
Combination PS:FD				
OS:PR	136.7±15.0 a	96.3±6.7 ab	0.8±0.3 bc	11.9±0.6 a
OS:RE	134.5±23.6 a	100.9±13.7 a	0.8±0.2 bc	11.0±1.6 a
OS:NF	116.4±14.5 a	60.1±24.9 b	0.5±0.2 c	10.2±1.5 ab
MS:PR	74.0±6.3 b	80.1±6.5 ab	1.4±0.4 ab	9.3±0.9 ab
MS:RE	68.9±12.8 bc	81.2±13.5 ab	1.6±0.3 a	11.5±1.2 a
MS:NF	42.1±3.9 c	66.9±4.7 ab	1.1±0.6 abc	7.9±1.5 b
HSD	31.90	37.01	0.77	3.79

Averages with same letters in columns and each study factor indicate no significant difference (Tukey, $p \leq 0.05$); HSD: honest significant difference GAE: gallic acid equivalents.

Vitamin C

At eating maturity, of season promoted 48% higher vitamin C synthesis than seasonal fruit. At the same maturity level, OS:PR and OS:NF combinations were significantly higher in vitamin C than MS:PR, MS:RE and MS:NF, however OS:PR reached the highest vitamin C concentration which was 59% higher than MS:RE with the lowest observed value (Table 9). The production seasons has shown effects on vitamin C concentration, in main-season in ‘Tetapuri’ mango, higher vitamin C concentration was recorded with 8.42 mg 100⁻¹ g, than in off-season production with 6.59 mg 100⁻¹g (Reddy *et al.*, 2013); while, in ‘Royal’ mango, off-season production presented higher vitamin C concentration with 0.89 mg 100⁻¹ g, than seasonal fruits with 0.67 mg 100⁻¹ g (Prasad *et al.*, 2015). A change in fertilization with normal dose of 381N-367P₂O₅-296K₂O to high dose (normal + 50% of normal dose) non-significantly increased vitamin C concentration from 18 to 20 mg 100⁻¹g, respectively (Garcia-Martínez *et al.*, 2015). In ‘Dusuhri’ mango, fertilization dose influences vitamin C content, reporting that N-P-K fertilization (1000-750-750) achieved the maximum vitamin C concentration with 57.63 mg 100⁻¹ g pulp, which was statistically higher than the levels of this vitamin (≤ 36.62 mg 100⁻¹ g pulp) obtained with individual fertilizations of N (1000), P (750) and K (750) (Azam *et al.*, 2021). It has been reported that vitamin C content changes during ripening, its content is higher in less ripe mango fruits compared to fully ripe fruits (Maldonado-Celis *et al.*, 2019).

Table 9. Vitamin C in fruits at physiological maturity (physiological) and maturity of consumption (M. consumption) in ‘Ataulfo’ mango, by effect of production season (PS), fertilization dose (FD) and PS:FD combination

Factors and levels of study	Vitamin C (mg AAE 100 ⁻¹ g FP)	
	Physiological	M. Consumption
PS		
Off-season (OS)	58.6±7.2 a	35.0±3.7 a
Main-season (MS)	58.1±7.3 a	23.6±5.1 b
HSD	5.67	4.12
FD		
Proposed (PR)	60.5±9.1 a	30.2±7.6 a
Regional (RE)	58.3±6.3 a	28.1±8.3 a
No fertilization (NF)	56.2±5.8 a	29.7±6.6 a
HSD	8.44	6.13
Combination PS:FD		
OS:PR	61.2±8.5 a	36.0±5.4 a
OS:RE	62.6±4.6 a	33.4±2.9 ab
OS:NF	52.0±2.8 a	35.6±2.6 a
MS:PR	59.9±1.9 a	24.4±3.9 b
MS:RE	53.9±4.6 a	22.7±8.8 b
MS:NF	60.4±4.8 a	23.8±1.4 b
HSD	14.86	10.79

Averages with same letters in columns and each study factor indicate no significant difference (Tukey, $p \leq 0.05$); HSD: honest significant difference AAE: ascorbic equivalents acid.

Conclusions

The dose of fertilization, production season and the interaction of both factors, modify the physicochemical quality depending on the maturity level of the mango. The off-season production gives benefits in a greater number of attributes such as colour (Hue), titratable acidity, total soluble solids and phenols in physiological maturity and in maturity of consumption in total sugars, colour (L), TSS/TA ratio, β -

carotene and Vitamin C; whereas, fruits harvested in the normal seasonal period the benefits are limited only to firmness, colour (Chroma) and β -carotene at physiological maturity and colour (Hue) and total soluble solids at maturity of consumption. While, on the one hand, the regional fertilization dose of N-P-K 123-89-58 increases the level of TSS/TA ratio and phenols at physiological maturity, and at maturity of consumption it maintains this trend in total soluble solids, TSS/TA ratio, phenols, β -carotene and total sugars; but, on the other hand, the proposed fertilization dose 45-30-95 increases total soluble solids, phenols and TSS/TA ratio at physiological maturity and titratable acidity, total soluble solids, total sugars, phenols and β -carotene at maturity of consumption. In this work and others reported, it was found that the lack of fertilization offers fewer advantages in fruit quality than when fertilization is applied. However, even though comparable quality benefits are obtained in the regional dose (123-89-58) and the proposed dose (45-30-95), the fact of reducing the dose turns out to be more attractive to producers due to its low cost. Likewise, if at physiological maturity it is desired to privilege the best and highest quality in total soluble solids, titratable acidity, phenols, TSS/TA ratio, β -carotene, firmness, hue and chroma, one can choose those treatments resulting from the combinations of off-season (OS) or main-season (MS), plus the proposed fertilization (PR), regional fertilization (RE) or no fertilization (NF), which in this case were OS:PR and MS:PR. Although, in maturity of consumption the combinations OS:PR, OS:RE, OS:NF and MS:PR are the ones that offer the best performance (total sugars, β -carotene, total soluble solids, vitamin C, phenols, TSS/TA ratio, titratable acidity and colour in its three attributes) for the consumer and this cultivar has its particular attraction of great international acceptance.

Authors' Contributions

Data curation: LBH; Formal analysis: LBH and CSMH; Funding acquisition: SHCF; Investigation: AML; Methodology: DJC, CGO, ALJ and CSMH; Resources: ALJ and SHCF; Supervision: LBH, CSMH, SHCF and DJC; Writing - original draft: LBH. Writing - review and editing: AML, CSMH and SHCF.

All authors read and approved the final manuscript.

Ethical approval (for researches involving animals or humans)

Not applicable.

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Conflict of Interests

The authors declare that there are no conflicts of interest related to this article.

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