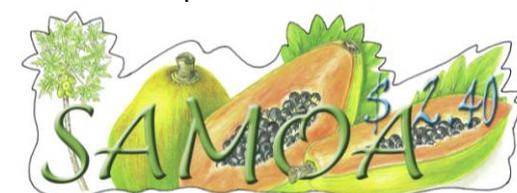




# TROPICAL FRUIT

The economy of Samoa has traditionally had a dependence on agricultural products including coconuts, bananas, breadfruit, pineapples, papayas, taro, yams, coffee and cocoa. The primary sector (agriculture, forestry, and fishing) employs two-thirds of the labour force, and furnishes 90% of exports, including coconut cream, coconut oil, fish and copra. It also provides much employment for the manufacturing sector. Since 1994 when Samoa's strong dependence on taro exports had to change following the blight, diversification shifted the focus to coconut by-products and fish. The market focus also shifted from Pacific countries to include those in Europe which now receive 15% of Samoa's exports. This



diversification led by the humble coconut, has seen the economy expand greatly. Local fruit growing too is slowly diversifying with many unusual fruits being introduced, especially to the villages. These include passionfruit, rollinia, durian, soursop, mandarins, star fruit, oranges, abiu and pommelo. These and the other beautiful fruits of Samoa when added to pork, chicken or fish, make up the famous Samoan fiasia or feast. The stamp issue features four popular fruits found in Samoa and used extensively:



The **Coconut Palm** *Cocos nucifera* grows to 30 m tall, with 4-6 m long leaves. Requiring plenty of warm sunlight and a high humidity, the palms have a comparatively high yield of up to 75 fruits per year with virtually every part of the coconut palm having some human use. It has been described as "the tree which provides all the necessities of life".

**Mangoes** *Mangifera indica* go by different names within the Samoan markets, including milk, water, apple and parrot mangoes, all named according to their taste or shape. The climate is suitable for this fruit but the industry has a long way to go to maximise this product. The tree reaches over 30 metres in height bearing hanging fruit of 25cm + weighing up to 2-3 kg. The fruit is yellow-orange-red in colour and carries a single flat, oblong seed.

**Pineapples** *Ananas comosus* this medium tall (1-1.5m) plant with 30 or more trough-shaped and pointed leaves 30-100 cm long, provides a popular fruit within the country. Each produces a fleshy fruit that becomes pressed against the fruits of adjacent flowers, forming what appears to be a single fleshy fruit.

**Pawpaw** *Asimina triloba*. A native of North America, the pawpaw has adapted to humid climates and grows as a deciduous conical tree growing to 6 metres. The leaves are dark green and the fruit is reddish-orange in colour. The texture is soft and the skin is thin.

The issue is available as self-adhesive sets and First Day Cover. To purchase contact the SamoaPost Philatelic Bureau or any of its appointed agents worldwide.

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