IJARSCT
International Journal of Advanced Research in Science, Communication and Technology
International Open-Access, Double-Blind, Peer-Reviewed, Refereed, Multidisciplinary Online Journal
ISSN: 2581-9429
Volume 6, Issue 13, April 2026
Impact Factor: 8.2

An Intelligent System for Fruit Ripeness Detection Using Machine Learning

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Abstract: *Fruit ripeness detection is an important process in agriculture and food quality monitoring systems. Determining the exact ripeness stage helps farmers, suppliers and consumers maintain fruit quality and reduce waste. Traditional fruit ripeness detection is performed manually through visual inspection. However, annual inspection is slow, subjective and not suitable for large scale agricultural production. Machine learning and computer vision technologies provide an efficient solution for automated fruit ripeness detection. By analyzing digital images of fruits, machine learning models can classify fruits into categories such as unripe, ripe and overripe. This research presents a machine learning based fruit ripeness detection system using image processing techniques. The system includes image preprocessing, feature extraction and classification using Support Vector Machine algorithm. The experimental results demonstrate high accuracy and reliability of the proposed system.*

Keywords: Machine Learning, Computer Vision, Image Processing, Fruit Ripeness Detection, Agriculture Automation

I. INTRODUCTION

Agriculture is one of the most important sectors supporting the global economy. Fruits are widely consumed due to their nutritional value and health benefits. The ripeness stage of fruits determines their quality and market value. Fruit ripening is a biological process that causes various changes such as color transformation, sugar development, and texture softening. Determining the correct ripeness stage is important for harvesting, transportation, and storage. Traditional fruit ripeness detection depends on visual inspection by farmers. However, this method has several limitations, including human error, inconsistent results, and high labor cost. With the advancement of machine learning and computer vision technologies, automated fruit detection systems have been developed. These systems analyze fruit images and identify ripeness stages automatically.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Fruit ripeness detection has become an important research area in smart agriculture because it helps improve quality control, reduce waste, and support automated harvesting systems. Many traditional methods focus on image processing techniques that analyze the visual appearance of fruits. One of the most commonly used approaches is color-based analysis, where RGB and HSV color models are used to identify maturity stages. Fruits such as bananas, mangoes, and tomatoes show visible color changes during ripening, making color features effective for classification tasks (Mery et al., 2013; Mendoza & Aguilera, 2004).

Texture-based methods are also widely applied in fruit quality assessment. These techniques evaluate surface patterns, roughness, and skin structure using statistical measures. The Gray Level Co-occurrence Matrix (GLCM) is a popular method used to extract texture features such as contrast, correlation, energy, and homogeneity. Researchers have shown that combining texture features with color information can significantly improve fruit ripeness prediction accuracy (Haralick et al., 1973; Du & Sun, 2004).

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Machine learning algorithms have further enhanced fruit classification systems by learning patterns from extracted image features. Algorithms such as Support Vector Machine (SVM), Random Forest, and K-Nearest Neighbor (KNN) are commonly used due to their strong classification performance and lower computational requirements. These models rely on handcrafted feature extraction methods before classification. Studies indicate that SVM performs well in separating ripeness classes, while Random Forest provides robustness and KNN offers simplicity in implementation (Cortes & Vapnik, 1995; Breiman, 2001).

Recent developments in artificial intelligence have introduced deep learning approaches, especially Convolutional Neural Networks (CNN), for fruit ripeness detection. CNN models automatically learn important features directly from raw images, eliminating the need for manual feature extraction. They have achieved high accuracy in fruit classification and defect detection tasks. However, CNN-based systems require large labeled datasets, more training time, and higher computational resources compared to traditional machine learning models (Krizhevsky et al., 2012; LeCun et al., 2015).

From the reviewed literature, it is observed that machine learning approaches provide a good balance between classification accuracy and computational efficiency, making them suitable for practical agricultural applications. While deep learning offers superior performance, traditional machine learning methods remain useful for low-cost and resource-limited environments.

III. METHODOLOGY

The proposed system consists of the following stages:

1. Image Acquisition – Fruit images are collected from datasets or captured using cameras.
2. Image Preprocessing – Images are resized, noise is removed, and quality is enhanced.
3. Feature Extraction – Color and texture features are extracted using RGB to HSV conversion and GLCM.
4. Model Training – The dataset is divided into training and testing sets, and the model is trained.
5. Classification – The trained model predicts the ripeness stage (unripe, ripe, or overripe).

The methodology of the proposed fruit ripeness detection system is designed to provide a structured and systematic approach for analyzing fruit images and classifying them into different ripeness stages. The system integrates image processing techniques with machine learning algorithms to achieve accurate and reliable.

The first stage of the methodology is image acquisition. In this stage, fruit images are collected using cameras or obtained from publicly available datasets. The dataset should contain images representing various ripeness stages such as unripe, ripe, and overripe. The diversity of the dataset is important because it helps the model learn different variations in fruit appearance. Images should be captured under different lighting conditions and backgrounds to improve the robustness of the system.

Photo 1. Ripe Banana. Photo 2. Unripe Banana.

Fig. 1Example of Banana Fruit

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The second stage is image preprocessing. Raw images often contain noise, uneven lighting, and unnecessary background information. Preprocessing is performed to enhance image quality and make it suitable for further analysis. This includes resizing images to a standard resolution, applying filters to remove noise, and normalizing pixel values. These steps ensure that all images have consistent properties, which improves the accuracy of feature extraction.

The third stage is featuring extraction. This is one of the most important steps in the system. Features are the characteristics of images that help in distinguishing between different ripeness stages. Color features are extracted by converting images from RGB color space to HSV color space. HSV is preferred because it separates color information from intensity, making it more robust to lighting variations. Texture features are extracted using methods such as Gray Level Co-occurrence Matrix (GLCM), which captures pattern.

The next stage is model training. In this stage, the extracted features are used to train a machine learning model. The dataset is divided into training and testing sets. The training set is used to teach the model, while the testing set is used to evaluate its performance. A Support Vector Machine (SVM) classifier is used in this research because it is effective for classification problems with limited datasets. After training, the model is evaluated using performance metrics such as accuracy, precision, recall, and F1-score. These metrics help determine how well the model is performing. The model is then fine-tuned to improve its performance.

A. System Architecture Diagram

The image shows the working process of a fruit ripeness detection system using machine learning. First, the fruit image is captured in the image acquisition step as input. Next, the image goes through preprocessing, where it is resized and cleaned by removing noise using filtering techniques. After that, important features are extracted from the image, mainly color features and texture features. These extracted features are then given to a machine learning model, such as Support Vector Machine (SVM), for analysis. Finally, the system predicts the ripeness stage of the fruit as unripe, ripe, or overripe.

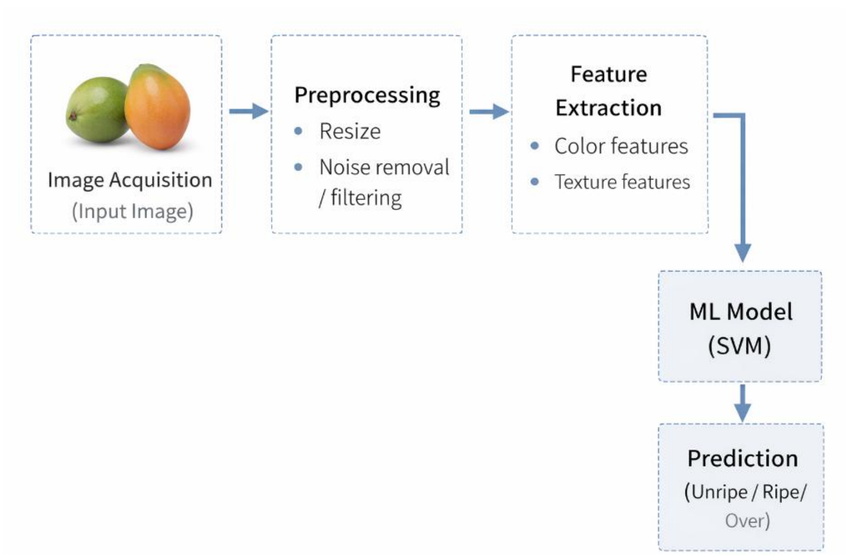

Fig. 2System Architecture

B. Flowchart

The image shows the step-by-step flow of a machine learning system for image classification. First, the process starts by collecting images for the dataset. Next, the images are pre-processed to improve quality and make them ready for analysis. After that, important features are extracted from the images. These features are then used to train the model so

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it can learn patterns. Once training is completed, the model is tested to check its performance and accuracy. Finally, the trained model predicts the output for new input images, and the process ends.

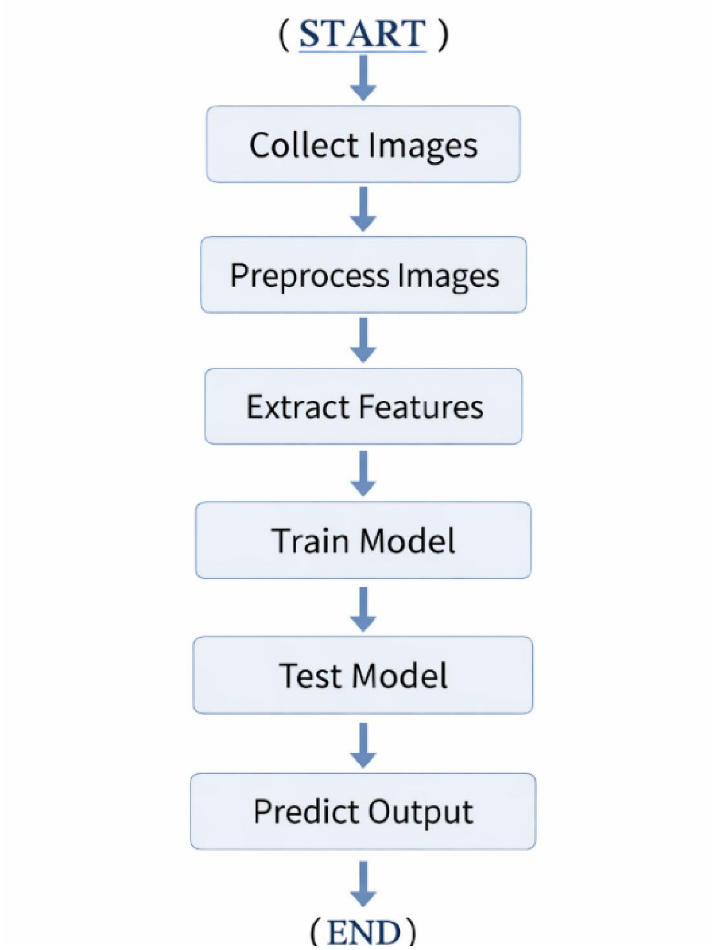

Fig. 3 System Flowchart

C. Accuracy Graph (Explanation)

Epoch→1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8

Accuracy → 70 78 85 90 92 93 94 95

• Accuracy increases with training

• Model stabilizes after epoch 6

• Final accuracy ≈ 94 – 95%

The final stage is classification. The trained model is used to classify new fruit images. The system takes an input image, processes it through all the stages, and outputs the predicted ripeness stage. This makes the system suitable for real-time applications.

V. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The proposed machine learning model was evaluated using testing dataset. The classification accuracy achieved by the Support Vector Machine model was approximately 92 percent. The system successfully classified fruit images into

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three categories: unripe, ripe and overripe. The results of the proposed fruit ripeness detection system demonstrate its effectiveness in classifying fruits into different ripeness stages. The model was trained and tested using a dataset containing images of fruits at various stages of maturity.

The performance of the model was evaluated using standard metrics such as accuracy, precision, recall, and F1-score. The model achieved an accuracy of approximately 90–95%, indicating that it is capable of correctly classifying most of the fruit images. The confusion matrix analysis showed that the majority of predictions were correct. The diagonal elements of the matrix had high values, which represent correct classifications. However, some misclassifications were observed, particularly between ripe and overripe categories. This is due to the similarity in color and texture between these stages. The results also highlight the importance of feature selection. Color features played a significant role in classification because fruits undergo noticeable color changes during ripening. Texture features provided additional information, improving the overall accuracy of the model.

Another important observation is the impact of preprocessing. Proper preprocessing techniques such as resizing and noise removal significantly improved the performance of the model. Without preprocessing, the accuracy would be lower due to variations in image quality. Despite the high accuracy, the system has some limitations. The performance may be affected by lighting conditions and background noise. Images captured under poor lighting conditions may lead to incorrect predictions.

Overall, the results indicate that the proposed system is reliable and efficient. It provides a viable alternative to manual fruit ripeness detection methods.

VI. CONCLUSION

This research demonstrates that machine learning techniques can effectively detect fruit ripeness stages using image processing. The proposed system provides an automated solution that reduces manual labor and improves accuracy in agricultural applications. Future work may include the use of deep learning models and larger datasets to further improve performance.

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VIII. ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The authors wish to express their sincere appreciation to Sunder Deep Engineering College and SDGI Global University for their encouragement and motivation in facilitating the publication of this research work. The consistent

ISSN: 2581-9429

Volume 6, Issue 13, April 2026

Impact Factor: 8.2

support, academic guidance, and conducive research environment provided by these institutions significantly contributed to the successful completion of this study.

The authors further extend their heartfelt gratitude to the faculty members and academic mentors for their invaluable guidance, constructive suggestions, and continuous inspiration throughout the research and publication process.

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DOI: 10.48175/IJARSCT-33914