

# Coconut Production Status and Area of Coconut Production: A Review Based Study

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Coconut is a tree of great versatility. It provides food, drink, clothing and shelter, as well as a source of income from its products. Coconut can grow in fragile environments, on coasts and coral atolls where few other species survive. In extreme weather, the coconut provides refuge and sustenance to coastal and island communities. The health-promoting properties of coconut are increasingly being recognized. Yet coconut is too often seen as a „sunset crop“, with little future, unable to compete in export markets with palm kernel oil and, more recently, with genetically modified rapeseed oil. This timely publication summarizes the case for coconut. It describes ways in which the full potential of coconut and its benefits may be realized for better health, food and the environment. Coconut are both delicious and nutritious, and you definitely should include them in your diet, if you want to stay healthy and enjoy your meals in the process. Health benefits of coconut fruit are numerous. The most important of them are coconut can be considered a complete good as it is incredibly rich in vitamins, minerals and calories. One fruit can provide you with adaily dose of almost all essential nutrients.

Coconut production in Kerala plays an important role in the state economy and culture of Kerala in southwestern India. Kerala is actually named after the coconut tree with "Kera" meaning Coconut tree and "Alam" meaning land so means "Land of Coconut Trees". Various terms like Copra and Coir are derived from the native Malayalam language. By the late 1970s it accounted for some 68% of total production in India and at one stage some 899,198 hectares were reportedly under cultivation. Today Kerala produces

roughly 45% of India's coconuts, with some 92% of total production lying in the southern Indian states and Kerala's neighbors. The Coconut Development Board which plays an important role in the development of coconut production in India has its headquarters in Kochi, Kerala. One problem which poses a major threat to production in Kerala is Root wilt disease. Coconut has great importance in Kerala agriculture. Even though coconut was one of the profitable crops earlier, factors such as low productivity, inadequate financial support, etc. have rendered the cultivation unremunerative in the recent compared to other states of India. Although the government is taking steps for the inclusive

growth, whether the coconut economy is getting adequate consideration is another remarkable question. The present crisis in the coconut economy of Kerala affects not only the cultivators but also lack of labors who depend on coconut processing and other related activities.

R.L Clodius and W.F Muller (1998) defined structure to include marketing channels and facilities , geographic and temporal price relationship and the values of the elasticity co- efficient in agricultural markets . K. Gopalan and M.S. Venkataraman(1999) classified the cost of cultivation of coconut as follows: (i) Cost of bringing up the palms to the stage of bearing (ii) Cost of maintenance under the first category includes cost of land, seedlings, manuring, watering and fencing. The second category includes all agricultural operations, manuring and harvesting.

Jacob Mathew(2001) , in his Dissertation " Trend and Fluctuations in price of coconuts and coconut oil". The market for coconut and coconut product are will integrated. The price of coconuts and copra are determined by coconut oil prices. The differential behavior in price movements could be explained to a large -extent by the trends in imports of coconut and coconut oil into the country. This shows domestic coconut market is influenced not only by endogenous factor but also by exogenous factors like the govt of India's export -import policy , variations in the external. Value of rupee , trends in international prices of coconuts and coconut production ... Etc

C. Chandran's(2004) intensive study on "Coconut Marketing in Tamil Nadu" explains the marketing practices such as harvests, grading, packing, marketing channel and the like and throws much light on the marketing costs, margins, price spread, effect of variations in the consumer's price on the share of the producer seller and the retailer as well as in the efficiency of the market system. Besides analyzing the problem faced by the traders in coconut marketing, the researcher concludes his study saying that marketing efficiency is high due to fewer middlemen and low marketing margin and the producer's share is inversely related to consumer's price while the retailer's share is positively related to consumer's price.

M.K. Nair, C.V. Sairam and Gopalasundaram(2000) of the Central Plantation Crops Research Institute, Kasargod have conducted an in depth study of the possibilities of reducing the cost of production of coconut. According to them cost of production of coconut in India has increased considerably due to the steep rise in the factor costs, mainly of labor, fertilizers and transportation.

M.V. George and P.I. Joseph(2006) carried out a study on „Cost Benefit Analysis of Investment in tree crops and arrived at the cost of production of coconuts by taking into account both capital and current expenses as the opportunity cost of land.

According to P. Rethinam(2003) India's share in the export of coir and coir products is sizeable whereas the export of other coconut based products is very negligible. Increasing global population and demand for coconut products, changing consumer preferences, intensifying safety and security concerns and shifting marketing networks have significant impact on the character and shape of the global market for coconut products.

M. Lathika and C.E. Ajithkumar(2005) examined the growth trends in coconut area, production and productivity for five years (2000-2005) in the different coconut producing states of India and came to the conclusion that area effect assumes greater role in output growth in almost all coconut regions of the country, though some states like Kerala and Orissa recently showed signs of a productivity

based output growth. States like Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka are already on the path of vast area expansion.

George V.Thomas(2005), of the Central Plantation Crops Research Institute, Kasargod have dealt with production Technology for sustainable coconut cultivation. Pointing out the fact that the low production of coconut in India i.e around 40 nuts/palm/year is due to lack of adoption of scientific cultivation practices that can enhance productivity, they hold that application of low cost production technologies in the right combination suitable for coconut cultivation can help to enhance productivity. Integrated approach in nutrient management by way of recycling crop biomass, raising green manure legumes and green leaf manure plants and their incorporation and the use of bio fertilizers are some of the efficient low cost production technologies. Biological management of soil fertility in coconut plantation is cost effective, environment friendly, easily adoptable and makes efficient utilization of local resources. Soil and water conservation structures are vital to conserve natural resources for enhanced productivity.

R. Venkitaswamy and H.Hameed Khan(2002) have dealt with Drought Management in coconut in Tamil Nadu and point out that drought management is the foremost requirement in the western districts of TamilNadu viz: Coimbatore, Erode and Dindugal. They suggest economic utilization of available irrigation water and adoption of the soil moisture conservation practices for containing drought.

E.A.Parameswara Gupta(1993) conducted an in-depth study on the trend in area, production and productivity of coconut in India with special reference to Karnataka. He says that the majority of coconut holdings in our country are very small and 98 percent of them are less than 2 hectares. Small and marginal farmers form a sizeable portion of the coconut farming community. The area under coconut showed an impressive rise during 1955 to 1971, but the growth rate declined in the seventies and eighties.

R.P.Iyer, E.V.V Bhaskara Rao and M.P.Govinda Kutty(1999)are of the opinion that the rural economy of the state is very much dependent upon coconut production, processing and marketing. Even though it is very difficult to ensure information on productivity of a crop like coconut, there is evidently a decline in yield. However, they are optimistic that the present efforts to preserve the high yield potential in subsequent generations of non- proponent elite palms through tissue culture will be rewarding if only growers extend their cooperation for carrying out scientific investigation for taking coconut to new levels of productivity.

A. Christopher Lourduraj (2001)et al., point out the decline in coconut production in Kerala and the increasing trend in area and production in Tamil 14 Nadu. According to them the increasing trend in Tamil Nadu is due to changing trends in agriculture, non availability of labor, escalation of wages, conversion of area under annual crops into coconut plantations, higher profits from coconut etc. Based on the survey conducted in the Pollachi Tract in 1991, these researchers attribute decline in productivity to lack of interest on the part of the small and medium farm holders in irrigating or fertilizing the plantations and negligence in taking timely plant protection measures. These researchers suggest regular fertilization and plant protection are a must to increase productivity. According to them the possibility of utilizing coconut by- product and land use efficiency by planned intercropping

have contributed to the increase in coconut area.

Kurup and Rajmohan (1995) conducted a study on 64 volunteers and found” no statistically significant alteration in the serum total cholesterol, HDL cholesterol, LDL cholesterol, HDL cholesterol / total cholesterol ratio and LDL cholesterol /HDL cholesterol ratio of triglycerides from the baseline values...” A beneficial effect of adding the coconut kernel to the diet was noted by these researchers.

Kaunitz and Dayrit (1992) have reviewed some of the epidemiological and experimental data regarding coconut – eating groups and noted that the “available population studies show that dietary coconut oil does not lead to high serum cholesterol nor to high coronary heart disease mortality or morbidity” they noted that in 1989 Mendis et al reported undesirable lipid changes when young adult Sri Lankan males were changed from their normal diets by the substitution of corn oil for their customary coconut oil.

P. K Hamedkutty(2003) , in his M Phil thesis " Market structure and inter linkage of market - A study of coconut marketing in a village in Kerala" focused on the structure of coconut market and in inter linkage with the credit of market. This seems to be an important factor when considered coconut grower to accept as advance from trader and other agents before the nuts are harvested. Hamedkutty analyzed in various relationship existing in the coconut sector and the structure of interest rate and price merchants , which are later , adjusted against the price of the nuts brought .

Mendis and Kumarasunderam (1990) also compares the effect of coconut oil and soy oil in normolipidemic young males, and again the coconut oil resulted in an increase in the HDL cholesterol, whereas the soy reduced this desirable lipoprotein.

Kurup and Rajmohan (1995) , who studied the addition of coconut oil alone previously mix fat diets, had reported no significant difference from baseline . Previously, Prior et al (1981) had shown that islanders with high intakes of coconut oil showed “no evidence of the high saturated fat intake having a harmful effect in these populations” When these groups migrated to New Zealand, however , and lowered their intake of coconut oil, their total cholesterol and LDL cholesterol increased , and their HDL cholesterol decreased statement that any saturated fat is a dietary problem are not supported by evidence (Enig 1993).

Now a days the demand of the coconut is increasing on our market. But the availability of coconut is less. Because of the lack of the production from this sector. The farmers don't get any satisfaction from the coconut farming. This study shows that coconut farming is profitable only for large scale producers who have more land. Also the profit is very less for small scale producers who have less amount of land. If the area of production is higher profit also increases and vice versa . Now a days the climatic conditions are not suitable for the farmers. Kollam district is the one of the leading producers in Kerala. Ithikkara is the largest coconut producer in the Kollam district. But in the recent years the coconut production in Kollam district shows decreasing trend. And also the area of production decreases in recent years.

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