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## Employment opportunities for FoCTs in India and abroad

Dear Coconut Farmers,

This issue of the journal is an attempt to take stock of the functioning of the FoCTs during the last one year and to share their experiences in the field. Board has so far trained 5661 FoCTs and provided them climbing machines. The feedback received from the farmers and the general public are very positive and encouraging.

Inspired by the FoCTs of Kerala, 102 persons from Lakshadweep have attended the training conducted by the Board in Thrissur district. In Maharashtra 60 persons have been trained so far in three batches. In Karnataka also a training programme was conducted wherein the Board has trained 18 persons. In 2012-13, Board is planning to train 5000 youth in Kerala, 2500 in Tamil Nadu, 500 in Karnataka, 500 in Andhra Pradesh, 500 in Maharashtra, 500 in Goa and 100-200 in Lakshadweep and Andaman and Nicobar Islands.

**Opportunities are emerging outside the country also for the best performing FoCTs. Many countries have expressed interest in availing technologies from India on coconut cultivation and post harvest technologies including processing. An MoU is executed between the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago and the Coconut Development Board on 17<sup>th</sup> May 2012.**

The thrust areas in the MoU are the identification and supply of coconut seednuts, transferring of technologies for production and

protection, post harvest management and primary processing, manufacturing of value added products from coconut and mechanised palm climbing. Skilled and trained manpower outsourcing is also envisaged as part of this MoU. The Hon'ble Minister for Agriculture of Mozambique will be visiting the Board shortly. Coconut Authority of Kenya has also come forward with similar request.

The coconut farmers are passing through one of the toughest periods due to the prevailing very low price. The prevalence of pests and diseases aggravates this situation. In the coming season from August to December we must do the marketing of more tender coconut and tender coconut products to safeguard against the price fall of coconut and copra during January – June 2013. More and more tender coconut water processing and packaging units need to come up in all potential states, especially in Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Kerala, Odisha and West Bengal. We have to target atleast 25% of the coconut to be harvested as tender coconut and another 25% to value added products other than copra and coconut oil.

Farmers are not getting the benefit of the MSP declared by the Government of India as the copra procurement is moving very slowly. As per the information received on 18<sup>th</sup> May 2012, Kerala has procured only 742.545 M.T, Tamil Nadu has procured 5583.650 M.T, Lakshadweep 3099.488 M.T and Andhra Pradesh 1850.550 M.T of copra.

As a solution to overcome this precarious situation, CPS must actively come to the forefront by recognizing and making use of the available opportunities. CPS should grow out to functionally vibrant and dynamic producer groups working for achieving better value for their products. Board is planning to encourage CPS for production of copra by installing copra dryers. It is proposed to give 50% subsidy to Federations of CPS's under the Technology Mission on Coconut. 200 copra dryers having capacity to process 10,000 nuts will be facilitated through the CPS, their Federations and the Local Self Government Institutions.

It is high time for farmer producer organisations to venture into product diversification and value addition. The Project Approval Committee of the Technology Mission on Coconut held on 18<sup>th</sup> May 2012 has cleared 41 projects at a total cost of Rs.27.49 crores. Board expects that these projects would trigger the processing and product diversification, market research and promotion as well as the other emergent requirements of the coconut sector. As a part of the awareness creation and to attract more people to coconut sector, Board is planning to conduct coconut seminars with the farmers and potential entrepreneurs in all major coconut growing states. The Board at its Technology Development Center is imparting training in coconut based convenience foods. The training is open to all. Board expects that these efforts will definitely contribute to product diversification and value addition which in turn will help to create more employment opportunities in coconut sector.

Board has made tie ups with the academic institutions and NGOs for the large scale production and distribution of quality hybrids & dwarf planting materials in a scientific manner. Four Academic Institutions and two NGO's have come forward to avail

themselves this opportunity. These institutions have already started surveying the mother palm gardens. As part of the project, training will be given to skilled workers and pollinators at the DSP farm of the Board at Mandya. Similar trainings are requested to be conducted at the substations of CPCRI too.

Senior officers of the Board participated in the governing council meeting of the High Value Agriculture Development Agency of the Andaman and Nicobar Islands. The meeting requested that the Board and National Horticulture Mission must review and guide the farmers programme under the horticulture sector implemented in the Island. Proposals are also received for setting up Virgin Coconut Oil and Desiccated Coconut Powder units as well as a composite seed garden.

**Board is planning to extent its reach to more non traditional states which are having potential areas for coconut cultivation. The Government of Meghalaya has approached the Board with such a request and Board will be extending the technical support and also will make available 50,000 coconut seednuts/ seedlings immediately.**

As a step to provide relief to farmers who suffer income loss due to sudden damage to coconut palms, Board is extending the Coconut Palm Insurance scheme to the eastern states of the country too. An outlay of Rs.1 crore is set apart for this scheme.

Thus while the coconut farmers are going through difficult phase in the midst of the violent price fall and various adverse conditions, Board assures to be in the forefront for the betterment of the coconut farmers.

With regards,

T K Jose



Chairman

# FoCT- Marching Ahead towards Other Coconut Growing States

Mini Mathew\* & Sreekumar Poduval\*\*



## Introduction

The Coconut Development Board had introduced the novel scheme on Friends of Coconut Tree (FoCT) on 17th August 2011 (Chingham 1) with the major objective of imparting training on palm climbing to 5000 unemployed youth in Kerala. Merely within a short period of 225 days, the Board could accomplish the target. For the first time since its establishment, the Board has provided massive employment to 5661 youths including 390 ladies within the age limit of 18-45 years under FoCT training programme. The Board had undertaken the FoCT training programme in Kerala covering 13 major Districts, Maharashtra, Karnataka and Union Territory of Lakshadweep with the main objective to tackle the problem of unavailability of coconut tree climbers for coconut harvesting and plant

protection operations. A revolutionary shift could be made in coconut sector through the implementation of FoCT training. This project is an attempt of the Board to bring back the lost glory of coconut sector. Nowadays the impact of the successful conduct of the programme is being reflected in other coconut growing states where a lot of enquiries are being received for con-

duct of FoCT training programme. Now the Board is having even a bigger plan for scaling more and more heights. Based on the tremendous response received from the beneficiaries including farmers, during the current year the Board is planning to extend this training program to other coconut growing states mainly in Tamil Nadu (2500



*Women FoCT batch trained at Calicut, Kerala*



### Training Centres of FoCT during the financial year 2011-12

|                    | Training Centres   | No. of participants |
|--------------------|--|---------------------|
| Thiruvananthapuram | Karakulam Grameena Padana Kendram, Karakulam, Tvm<br>Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK), Mithanikethan, Vellanad, Tvm  | 618                 |
| Kollam             | KVK, Kottarakkara, Kollam<br>YMCA, Kottiyam, Kollam  | 514                 |
| Pathanamthitta     | KVK, Pathanamthitta  | 122                 |
| Kottayam           | KVK, Kottayam,<br>LEDS, Thanneermukkam   | 277                 |
| Alappuzha          | Socio Economic Unit Foundation, Sarvodayapuram, Kattoor<br>KVK, Krishnapuram, Kayamkulam   | 327                 |
| Idukki             | Gandhiji Study Centre, Thodupuzha  | 164                 |
| Ernakulam          | LEDS, Ernakulam  | 569                 |
| Thrissur           | KVK, Mannuthy, Thrissur<br>Green Army, Aravoor, Mundathicode, Thrissur   | 525                 |
| Palakkad           | Maithri, Urukulam, Govindapuram PO,  | 461                 |
| Malappuram         | Maithri, Urukulam, Govindapuram PO, Palakkad<br>KVK Malappuram   | 548                 |
| Kozhikode          | Kozhikode KVK, Peruvannamoozhi, Kozhikode,<br>Block Panchayath, Koduvally, Kozhikode<br>Vyaparabhavan, Poonoor, Kozhikode<br>Krishi Bhavan, Kattippara | 609                 |
| Kannur             | Maithri, Karikkayam, Manakkadavu, Kannur   | 507                 |
| Kasaragod          | KVK, Kasaragod   | 200                 |
| Karnataka          | DSP Farm.,Mandya   | 18                  |
| Maharashtra        | State Centre,Thane   | 60                  |
| Lakshadweep        | KVK, Thrissur  | 102                 |

nos of FoCT) Andhra Pradesh (500 nos.), Karnataka (1000 nos.), Maharashtra, (500 nos.) Goa (500 nos.), Andamans and Lakshadweep (100-200 nos.).

Even though initially the programme was viewed with suspicion; the Board could achieve the target within the targeted time limit during first phase in 2011-12. FOCT training is an opportunity for an unemployed youth to realize a better income and livelihood at his/her native place. Training curriculum includes scientific management

practices of coconut, major pests and diseases and their control measures, harvesting, collection of seed nuts and management of coconut nursery, irrigation, fertilizer application etc besides classes on human resource development, banking, yoga and healthy way of living. The Board is visualizing a bright future for those who have completed the training successfully and especially for those who consider this as a serious profession. A charge of Rs.10 for a normal tree (upto 40 feet height) Rs.15 for taller

as well as trees in the city limits (where harvesting is slightly difficult) has been fixed. In short, Board has transformed the pluckers to professional plant protectors. Most of the trainees are earning Rs.400-900 per day. Some of them are even earning an income of Rs.1000-1500 per day. The curriculum of the scheme has been devised in such a way so as make them experts in all aspect of coconut harvesting and plant protection. The safety and security of the FoCTs has been assured by pro-

viding insurance coverage to the participants to the extent of Rs one lakh for a period of one year

The sincere and collective efforts of all coordinators from KVKs / NGOs/ Master trainers and charge officers of the Board were resulted in achieving the target. All of them have strived hard to make the dream come true. During the training period, the Chairman, CDB and the coordinators continuously monitored the activities and achievements at various centres. The performance of FoCT was monitored weekly through performance report. The painstaking efforts made by the institutions viz. KVKs in all districts, NGOs viz. Maithri, Thrissur, LEDS, Ernakulam Krishi Bhavan, Kattippara, SEUF Alleppey Gandhiji Study Centre Thodupuzha

KSS, Kottayam, YMCA, Kollam, and Grameena Padana Kendram, Thiruvananthapuram were praise worthy. They provided unstinted support to popularise the programme.

### Impact of FoCT

More than 85 percent of the trainees have taken up coconut climbing as a profession and has stuck on to the job and earned a remunerative income. In the case of wages, there is no gender parity. Those who are skilled earn more wages. In future the Board is having a concrete plan to carry out more employment generating initiatives for women through FoCT activities. Reports from various sources revealed that an average FoCT earns minimum Rs.350 per day. In order to avail information

on trained FoCTs, a district wise directory has already been published in which full addresses and phone numbers of FoCT's are enlisted. Those who are in need of climbers can call them with the help of this handbook which is distributed through CPS, Block Panchayat, District Panchayat, Krishi Bhavan etc. In future the activities of the FoCTs will be linked with the Coconut Producer's Societies (CPS) which is another innovative scheme of the Board. In future minimum number of 10 trainees will be selected from each panchayat. The responsibility to find out FoCT's are entrusted with CPS. Now there are totally 1158 CPSs registered with the Board in Kerala under charitable societies act wherein a group of farmers of 40-100 from a particular area unite

### Excerpts of telephonic interview with Shri. V V Limaye, a senior Board member of CDB from Maharashtra.



*With strong initiative, interest and enthusiasm from your side the Board had conducted 3 FoCT training programmes in Maharashtra state. As a member of the Board what is your opinion about the novel scheme FoCT? Is it an income generating programme?*

The dearth of coconut climbers is a serious issue in Maharashtra especially in Konkan region. Shri. T.K. Jose IAS, our Chairman and team members have taken very good initiative to solve this problem to a certain extent. The first training programme was held at Regional Coconut Research Station at Bhatye in Ratnagiri district wherein 20 trainees successfully completed the training programme with the whole support of the faculties of Regional Coconut Research Station (RCRS), Bhatye in association with Bala Saheb Sawant Konkan Krishi Vidyapeeth. The launching of FoCT programme in Maharashtra provided much relief to the farmers of Konkan region, the potential coconut belt (Sindhudurg, Ratnagiri, Raigad and Thane District). The programme

was very impressive and useful for the participants. The second training programme arranged at Regional Fruit Research Station (RFRS), Vengurla district, Sinddurg in association with Dr. Bala Saheb Sawant Konkan Krishi Vidyapeeth, Dhapoli and the 3rd training programme was arranged at Albolli district, Ratnagiri from 27th April to 2nd May. Mahila Kathya Audyogig Sanstha, women NGO in Ratnagiri. There were 5 female and 15 male participants in the programme. Most of the trainees belonged to the small and medium level families and some of them are degree holders. The ladies have also started climbing satisfactorily and earned better income for their family. They showed great enthusiasm for carrying out harvesting, palm



*Shri. Vasant Vishnu Limaye, Board Member, CDB along with the participant trainees*

cleaning, pests and diseases. A couple from Kerala, Smt. Simi and Gopi Lee has been engaged as the master trainers in Maharashtra. They are very diligent and hard working couples. 6 days systematic training programme made the participants well acquainted in physical, technical and managerial aspects. Their confidence level has also increased and they could climb upto 60 feet. They have already started savings account in Bank. The programme has uplifted the lifestyle of

underemployed and underprivileged group in the state.

Most of the climbers are earning regular income of Rs. 8000 to 10000 per month. This is an opportunity for unemployed youth to realize better income and livelihood at his/her native place. The next 2 training programmes will be organized in the last and first week of June at Vengurla and Patpanhale, Maharashtra. Now they have become the real friends of Coconut Tree.

together to undertake the activities of farming, procurement of nuts, processing and marketing of value added products of coconut with the technical and financial support of the Board.

### **Experiences from Maharashtra**

The state Centre office of the Board at Thane had already carried out 3 training programmes in



*FoCT's and master trainers at the field*

### **What is the response of farmers towards FoCT programme?**

They showed a very positive attitude and approach especially in the areas of Konkan and neighboring districts. Most of the trainees are belonging to the category of farmers. Chairman, CDB has given assurance for continuing the programme in Maharashtra based on the requests from various NGOs in Maharashtra. We will continue the next phase of FoCT training after rainy season which prolongs from the month of June to September.

Maharashtra under strong initiative and relentless support of Shri. Vasanth Vishnu Limaye. The feedback received from Maharashtra is very encouraging.

'The trained FoCTs have a bright future who are scaling heights', according to Nagvekar, Senior Agronomist, Regional Coconut Research Station (RCRS) Bhatye, an active facilitator, of the FoCT programme in Maharashtra. Three FoCTs have already been engaged in RCRS Bhatye for carrying out hybridization techniques, pollination at Coconut Research Station for monthly wage of Rs. 8000/-" he said.

"All those trained FoCTs under





*Physical exercise in FoCT training programme*

my guidance showed their gratitude by offering some gifts to me”, says Simi and her husband, master trainers of Maharashtra region. They had already carried out 3 training programmes. They are the natives of Varkala. Since they are well versed Marathi, Hindi language the Board has identified them as master trainers for Maharashtra region.

“I took training from Karakulam Grameena Padana Kendram training centre, Thiruvananthapuram”. Now I am well acquainted for imparting training on palm climbing and yoga classes. I could climb up to 60 feet trees during the training programme. Most of the coconut trees in Maharashtra are skyscraping with more than 60 feet”. According to her, she is indebted to Shri. T.K. Jose, Chairman, CDB and other Board officials for imparting unconditional support for arranging a well disciplined training programme which changed my lifestyle, as a whole’. Now the couple is ready to go anywhere in the country as instructors of FoCT. According to the couple, the path they have chosen, the progress they have achieved and the recognition they

have received from Maharashtra are unforgettable.

### **2<sup>nd</sup> Phase FoCT training programme scheduled for 2012-13**

Next phase of programme would commence immediately in association with KVK's/NGO's after reviewing the present status of trainees. In Tamil Nadu, the President of Coconut Growers Association and Pollachi Chamber of Commerce has contacted the Coconut Board for imparting FoCT training which would be initiated by them. Each batch comprises of 20 trainees and it is a residential training programme for 6 days. There would be two master trainers for every batch of 20 trainees. In cases of number of participants exceeding 25, one additional master trainer would be provided. The Board has already formulated a training Curriculum and training schedule which will be continued in next phase also. The participants would be offered free accommodation, food, stipend @ Rs150 per day per trainee and a climbing machine (worth Rs.2300/-) free of cost. The Board also provides insurance coverage of one lakh rupees to the participant trainees valid for a period of one year.

### **Criteria for selection of participants:**

- Age group of 18-40 yrs
- Preferably underemployed healthy individuals (not having the habit of liquor consumption)
- Free from any mental/physical disability
- Minimum literacy with the ability to read and write regional language of concerned state.
- Expect 30% of trainees to be women

### **Criteria for selection of master trainers:**

- Age limit 20-50 years.
- Preferably underemployed healthy individuals (not having the habit of liquor consumption)
- Minimum 3 years experience using mechanized climbing device.
- Should be conversant in regional language of concerned state.
- Minimum educational qualification of 7<sup>th</sup> Standard pass.

Details of 'Friends of Coconut Tree' (FoCT) with training curriculum and training estimate is available in Board's website [www.coconutboard.gov.in](http://www.coconutboard.gov.in) along with the latest information on 'Friends of Coconut Tree' training held at various training centers.

*\*Publicity Officer and  
Co-ordinator, FoCT  
\*\* Processing Engineer,  
CDB, Kochi*



# Life is beautiful for Friends of Coconut Trees

Friends of Coconut Tree (FoCT) is the training programme of the Board to develop a group of youth for harvest and plant protection operations of coconut. The objective of the Board was creating friends for the coconut farmers and the coconut trees. Till recently, farmers were running short of coconut climbers for harvesting, crown cleaning and other plant protection operations. But with the introduction of FoCT, friends are easily available for doing all these works. Board commenced this massive training programme during August 2011. The target of the Board was to train 5000 unemployed youths in developing special skills in coconut palm climbing and plant protection activities for the benefit of the coconut community as a whole. Now 5661 persons have been trained under this programme and the review conducted at various centers show that most of the trainees are active in the field.

The training programme in Thiruvananthapuram district started on 17<sup>th</sup> August 2011 at Mitra Niketan, KVK. Later on, the training was conducted at Karakulam village study centre. 618 persons have been so far trained from the district in 27 batches from both the centers. Out of this 38 are ladies. The cooperation of both the centers was an inevitable factor for the successful conduct of the training.

The family of Binu, a native of Poovachal in

Thiruvanthapuram consists of his wife and two daughters. He attended the training from Mitra Nikethan. He is doing the climbing job upto three in the afternoon and climbs nearly 80 trees daily. Earlier he was a casual labourer and he also used to climb coconut trees manually. At that time he could climb only 50 trees daily. Now with the machine he is able to climb upto 80 trees. He is also doing crown cleaning along with harvesting and is charging Rs.20/- for a tree.

Aruli, a native of Vithura was a trainee of the third batch. He is doing the harvesting in Vithura panchayath and in some areas of Thiruvananthapuram city. Usually he climbs 75 trees. He is doing the crown cleaning also along with harvesting. On cloudy days, he is climbing upto 120 trees. Aruli is of the view that the machine makes the climbing easy. He is planning to buy a two wheeler and is happy now that this new job has given him a better financial status. Aruli has also served as the master trainer for one FoCT programme.

Shekhar a migrant from Tamilnadu is married to a Malayalee and is settled in Tholikodu panchayath in Thiruvananthapuram district. He is climbing trees from six in the morning to one in the afternoon. He is climbing upto 110 trees a day. He is confident that



*Binu*



*Aruli*



*Gopakumar*

the machine has made the climbing easy. Earlier without the machine he could climb only 70 trees and that too on alternate days only. Shekhar has bought a two wheeler recently for carrying the machine and to reach far off places. His wife Asha is attending the calls of the farmers and is fixing convenient dates. Shekhar is planning to open tender coconut parlours also.

Gopakumar is a farmer who is having 15 coconut trees. It was the scarcity of the coconut climbers that prompted him to attend this training programme. Now Gopakumar is climbing 30 trees daily. He will start the work at five in the morning along with Asokan and Subash, other two trainees. They have formed the Kalpasree Coconut Producer's Society. He is practicing the plant protection operations like spraying of neem garlic emulsion and also crown cleaning which he has learned as part of the FoCT training programme. He considers this training as the need of the hour.

Vignesh and Rahul are other two trainees who have attended the training together from Mitra Nikethan. They go for the work together and each of them climbs 30 trees per day. They are charging Rs.15 – 20 per tree. Both of them are attending a computer course during weekends. They are also planning to join for graduation next year. They have already started a bank account and are hopeful that the hard earned money would help them in their future endeavours.

In Kollam district, 514 persons are trained at various centers. The training programme initially started at KVK. Eight trainings are so far conducted at the centre and 198 persons including 27 ladies are trained from this center. Y.M.C.A, Kollam was another voluntary organization which conducted the training in Kollam district. YMCA conducted 13 trainings and 318 persons including 58 ladies have attended training from



*Yasodharan*

this centre.

22 FoCTs from Kollam have formed a group based at Ambalakunnam. They have hired an auto and is undertaking harvesting on group basis. Another group of 15 FoCTs based at Kareepra is also formed. Both these units together have so far climbed more than 50000 coconut trees.

Yasodharan, a native of Pилanthara has attended the training from KVK, Kollam. He confesses that this training has changed his life. Now he is having regular work and regular income too. He is charging Rs.20-25 for a tree and during a month, he works 20-23 days. He is charging Rs.30 for doing the plant protection operations. Now after nine months he could earn more than one lakh rupees.

Martina, a native of Mailom was an instructor in a motor driving school. She was in search of a job for making additional income. It was at this time that she saw the advertisement on FoCT training. She attended the training conducted at KVK.



*Martina*

She has climbed more than 5000 coconut trees now. Her brother Johnson is also an FoCT. She goes to far off places for climbing along with her brother. She is charging @ Rs.20 per tree. She is proud that she is even having bank balance now.



*Jose*

Jose, another trainee from Kollam was a charismatic preacher. After attending this training he goes for coconut climbing for five days and his work spreads over upto even the neighbouring district. He has made a bag for carrying the machine on his back. He carries the machine like a guitar on his back while travelling on his two wheeler. He is



charging Rs.20 per tree and in city limits he charges Rs.30 per tree. Unni and Markose are the other FOCTs who go along with Jose for coconut climbing. They are earning an average Rs.1000 per day. Jose considers this new job not only as a means of living but also as a social responsibility.

Anil, a native of Panavally was a trainee from Alapuzha district. After attending the FOCT programme, he firmly believes that each job has its own dignity. Anil is an employee of a private hospital in Kochi. It was quite accidentally that he came to know of this training and he attended the first batch of the training programme held at KVK, Kayamkulam. He started the job from the very next day of training. He has given his contact number to the nearby Krishi Bhavan and other related offices.

Anil is very punctual in his job. He is doing climbing in the morning and during the afternoon he goes for his previous work in the hospital. As this new job has brought him additional income, he is leading a happy and contented life now. Inspired by Anil's commitment to this job, 19 youngsters from the nearby areas have also attended the training. They have erected flex boards with their contact numbers so that those who need climbers can contact them easily. As they are very punctual and disciplined in this job, those who have availed their service once are calling them again and again. They are climbing 30-40 trees daily and are charging Rs.20-25 per tree. They are ready to reduce the rates, if the number of palms are more. The traditional climbers of this area had initially objected the entry of this new mechanical climbers. The issue is settled amicably now.

Babu, another trainee from Alappuzha was a fisherman earlier. Now he is a climber and is earning



*The FoCT group in Thomas's garden*

a minimum of Rs.750 per day. Rajesh an electrician also shares the same experience. He is having job on all the days and is getting good wages too. Sanchu, another trainee from Alappuzha, was a painter earlier. Now after attending the training he has taken up this as a full time job. He is happy that with the hard earned money from this job, he could send his sister for her graduation. This group is planning to work together with the newly formed CPS of their area.

Sudheer, Deepu, Praveen, Sanchu, Aneeth, Reji and Suresh have formed a group and they are undertaking the harvesting on a group basis. They are working from 6.30 in the morning to four in the evening and is making upto Rs.1000 per day. Praveen was a painter earlier and Reji and Pradeep were doing some other works. As they are having the climbing machine, they can now work even during rainy season. This team from Alappuzha is also attending to the call of the farmers from Ernakulam district. The only practical difficulty they are having is carrying the machine to far off places.

Subash, Suloj, Anil, Anu, Shivaraman and Sandhya have formed another group. They got the first call on the next day of the training itself. The team is getting on an average Rs.800 per day. Sandhya, along with harvesting is undertaking hybridization at the Research Centre, Onattukara. She has also given training to a batch of youth in her nearby Krishibhavan.

Thomas, a farmer of the area is happy since FoCT's are easily available in his area and he can harvest the nuts periodically now. Earlier due to the dearth of climbers he could harvest only once in 4-5 months. The FoCTs are also doing the crown cleaning and other plant protection operations. He is paying them @ Rs.25 per tree.



*FoCTs with Dr. Muralidharan, Programme Coordinator, KVK, Shri. Sivadasan, Agriculture Officer and Smt. D.S. Resmi, Technical Officer, CDB*

Dr.Muralidharan, co-ordinator of the programme of Alappuzha district comments that the service of the FoCTs have created a revive to the coconut sector. The FoCTs should work together with the Coconut Producer's Societies. The existing dearth of climbers can only be solved if more youngsters are coming to this field. Sivadasan, Agricultural Officer, Arukutty opines that we need to give wider publicity to such initiatives. This may attract more youngsters to this field.

The FoCT training was conducted in Idukki district at the Gandhiji Study Centre, Thodupuzha was started during December 2011. 164 trainees including 23 ladies are so far trained from this centre. Almost all the trainees attended the review meeting held on 22<sup>nd</sup> April and expressed their content and happiness in attending such a training. Most of the trainees are active in the field.

'Elroy' FoCTs is a group formed by the FoCTs of Idukki district. Manoj, a trainee took the initiative and



The flex board erected by Elroy FoCTs

formed this group. Elroy FoCTs are undertaking harvesting on a group basis.They are planning the sale of tender coconut and to form a CPS.

Radha Kunjumon, Susheela Balakrishnan and Lissy Mathew, female trainees from Idukki remember that people used to laugh at them when



Radha Kunjumon

they attended the training and started doing this job. But once they came to know and see their work ,more and more people are approaching them now.

Some of the FoCTs of Idukki district are giving training in palm climbing to others

along with their work. Most of them are earning more than Rs.20000 per month. The trainees admit that the personality development programmes of the training curriculum have changed their life. They are



Unnikrishnan as a trainee

determined to go ahead with this job. They are even planning the sale of tender coconut, production of value added products and hybridization.

M.G Unnikrishnan was one of the first applicant for the FOCT training programme of the Board in Ernakulam district. He attended the 3rd batch of the training conducted at Assisi Shanthi Kendram in Karukutty, Kerala.

Unnikrishnan was a toddy tapper earlier. Later on he started rearing rabbits.He was the recipient of ATMA award for the best farmer for rearing rabbit in 2011. But Unnikrishnan has left all the other works now and has become a full time FoCT. Unnikrishnan's entry to this field was objected by the traditional climbers of his area. But Unnikrishnan was determined and he did his job with sincerity and dedication. Now he is doing the harvesting in Paravoor, Kodugalloor, Cherai, Vypin,Valluvally and even in Ernakulam city limits. He starts his work at seven in the morning and finishes by two in the afternoon. On an average, he climbs 40 trees per day. He has climbed upto 72 trees on a single day. Unnikrishnan is carrying machine in



Unnikrishnan (extreme left) as master trainer along with the trained team



his two wheeler and goes to far off places to attend to farmers. Unnikrishnan has also served as the master trainee for the FoCT programme. He is of the opinion that all the healthy and hard working youngsters can make a decent living by taking up this as their profession. He calls upon the youngsters that if you are ready to work hard you can definitely make a better income from this job.

Jijo George, another trainee of FoCT from Ernakulam district is trying to bring back farmers to the old practice of harvesting coconut in every 45 days. He was an electrician earlier. He attended the 4<sup>th</sup> batch of FoCT training conducted by the Board at



*Jijo George*

Samanwya Retreat Centre from 10<sup>th</sup> to 15<sup>th</sup> October 2011. After attending the training, Jijo has turned to a full time FoCT. He starts his work at 8.30 in the morning and works upto eight in the evening.

Initially he was doing this work only in his nearby areas like Thuravur, Angamaly and Karukutty. Now he even goes upto Kalady, Thripunithura and Ernakulam.

Along with harvesting, he is doing the crown cleaning and also the spraying of chemicals against the attack of pest and diseases. He is climbing on an average 40 trees per day. Ambi, another trainee from Ernakulam is working together with Jijo. They are planning to send SMS to the farmers to remind them of harvesting at every 45 days interval. He is also planning to distribute his card with phone number to all the farmers.

Most of the trainees of the FoCT training programme of the Board from Thrissur district are now friends of the farmers. Yesudas from Vadakanchery, Haridasan and Binoy from Mala are few among them.

23 batches of training was conducted in Thrissur



*Binoy*

district and 627 persons are trained from the district. This includes 102 trainees from lakshwadeep

Binoy, a trainee from Thrissur is basically a farmer. Now after attending this training he is undertaking pollination also along with harvesting. He has formed a group of FoCTs and has taken contract for doing the harvesting at the Kerala Agriculture University Campus. He is making a monthly income of Rs. 10000 from this job alone. Binoy is active in the field since the last six months. He is charging Rs.15 per tree. He certifies that the curriculum of the training programme was beneficial especially in personality development. Getting paid immediately after doing the work attracts Binoy to continue in the field.

Haridasan, another trainee from Thrissur was a traditional coconut climber earlier. But now after the training, he is using the machine to climb trees. This has increased the number of trees he could climb daily and which in turn has added up his income. He is happy that with the machine, he can climb trees even during the rainy season. Haridasan has so far climbed 26000 trees. He is happy and satisfied about the FoCT training. Yesudas, another trainee from Thrissur is considering this training as a means to make additional income. This kho kho trainer affirms that courage and

interest is required for climbing coconut trees.

FoCTs of Lakshwadeep are doing this job in the morning hours and in the afternoon they go for fishing. They are charging Rs.20 per tree and is climbing on an average 25-30 trees per day. 20 FoCTs from Kiltan Island have been selected by the Panchayat to work for the department of agriculture. Along with coconut harvesting, they are also doing toddy tapping.

Most of the trainees of Thrissur district are happy and satisfied with the training. The only problem raised by the trainees are gaining accessibility for carrying the climbing machines to distant places. They are hopeful that if they are provided with two wheeler the problem could be solved.

‘Hard work is always rewarded and it has changed my life’, says Shaji Paul of Mudugad, Kozhikode who has undergone the Friend’s of Coconut Tree training from KVK Peruvannamuzhi, Kozhikode district. She owes this to Coconut Development Board



*Shaji Paul*

and KVK who gave her the opportunity to undergo the training. Before joining the training programme, she was a casual labourer. Her family consists of her husband Paul and two daughters. Her husband is a mazdoor and he works only 15 days in a month. Now she is earning more than her husband and can run her family happily.

After getting income from palm climbing, the condition of the family has improved. She could refund the loan she has taken from different sources. She is getting regular calls from farmers from her nearby areas. She is climbing 40 palms per day. People come with their vehicle to take her from her residence since she cannot carry the palm climbing machine alone. After availing her service, farmers are happy that they can regularly harvest the nuts after 45 days interval. She does the crown cleaning and is giving the necessary advises to the farmers for the proper the maintenance of the palm and garden.

She came to know of the training from newspaper and she contacted KVK for further information and registered her name for the training and attended the training conducted for women at KVK Peruvannamuzhi. Now she is planning to make a women’s group who have completed the training so that they can do the work on a group basis. Shaji is very proud of herself that she is self-employed and can meet her own expenses. With her earnings from this new job, she has opened a bank account in the Service Co operative Bank. Shaji is a social worker also. Address: Smt. Shaaji Paul, Kommekazhil House, Muthukadu (PO), Peruvannamuzhi (via), Kozhikode-673528. Phone No: 9544282332



*Ramesh Kumar*

Rameshkumar, K.K of Muthukad, Kozhikode came to know about the FoCT training from KVK and attended the very first batch of training held at Kozhikode district from 17<sup>th</sup> Aug 2011. The training has made him self-confident. Ramesh is getting regular calls from the nearby areas. Along with harvesting, he is doing the crown cleaning, application of pesticides and the maintenance of

palms. He is sharing his knowledge with the farmers and he advises the youth of his area that the FoCT training would give them regular employment and a regular income. He is charging @ Rs.15 per palm and if he covers 10 palms at a time the farmers are giving one nut to him. Ramesh’s father was also a traditional coconut climber. Ramesh and his family is grateful to Coconut Development Board and KVK for giving him the opportunity for attending the training, which has changed his thinking, life and made him independent. Address: Ramesh Kumar, K.K., Kerampoyil House, Muthukad (PO), Peruvannamuzhi (via), Kozhikode-673528. Phone No: 9744616626

Manoj.A. from Kaakkara in Kannur district is a coconut climber since the last three years. He attended the 21st batch of the training conducted by the Board at Manakadavu in Kannur district. He works from 7 in the morning to 2 in the afternoon. He climbs





Manoj

around 80 trees per day and is charging Rs.15 per tree. He is now earning Rs.30000 per month. Manoj could earn around Rs.6 lakh from this job alone. He has built a new house with 2 lakh rupees and has bought a two wheeler for Rs.58000. As he is having a two wheeler now, he can go to a far off places for this work. Eventhough he was climber earlier, he could learn more about this crop from this training programme. He learned about the pests and diseases control measures and also about the cultivation techniques. He proudly says that now he is earning more than his brother who is working in a gulf country. He is planning to give training to his brother when he returns. He has already trained two of his neighbours and he is taking them also along with him for harvesting.

### FOCTs , a relief to CPSs

Simon, George , President of the Karippal, Coconut Producer's Society is very happy to avail the services of the FOCTs. They could not do the harvesting regularly due to the shortage of climbers. But with the introduction of FOCTs, they are regularly doing the harvesting. The FOCTs are also doing the crown cleaning. They are only charging Rs.15 per tree. This has motivated more farmers to join the CPSs. CPSs in association with FOCTs are willing to start coconut nurseries, tender coconut parlour and copra procurement. CPS is even planning to send 5 youth for the FOCT training too. Simon George is confident that the CPSs in association with the Board will definitely regain the lost glory of the coconut sector.

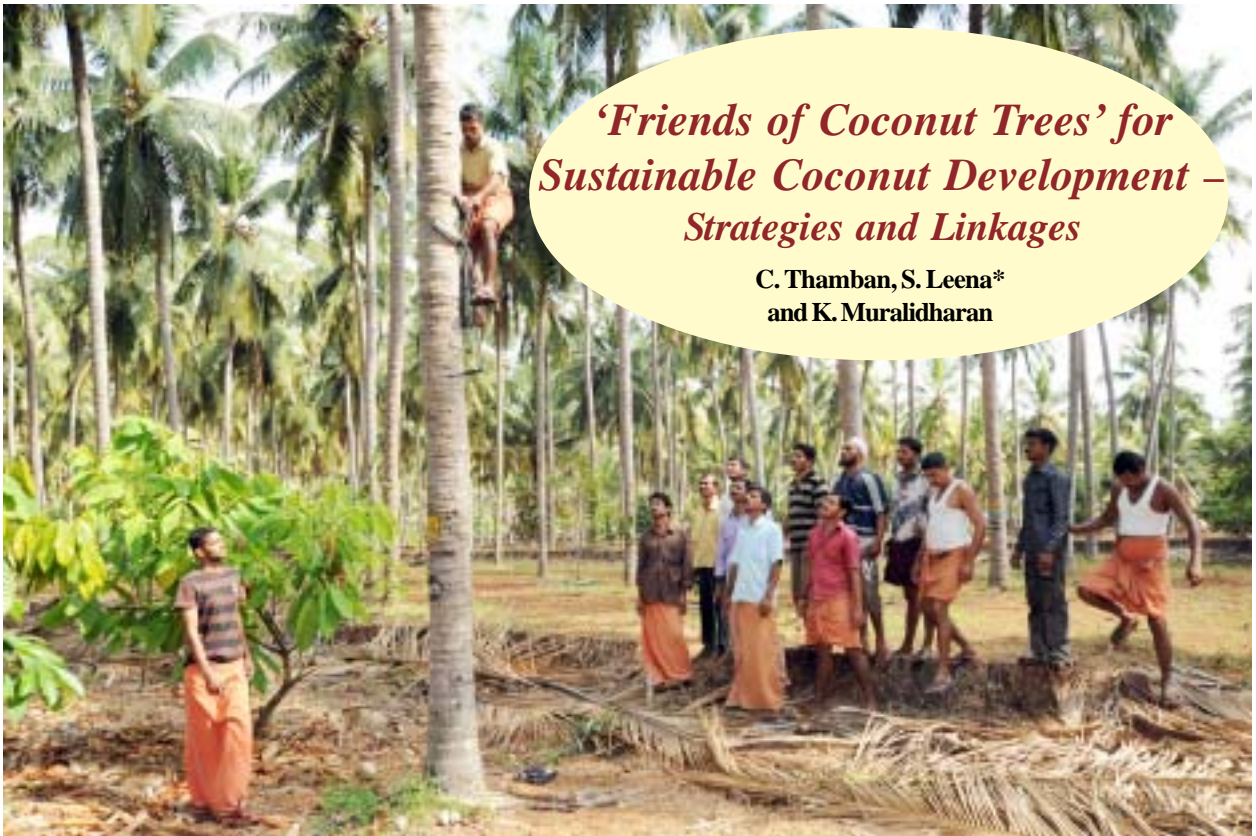
P.R.Rajesh from Manankadavu is a trainee of the 19th batch of FoCT training conducted at Kannur by the Board. He is climbing coconut trees from seven in the morning to one in the afternoon. He is climbing nearly 70 trees per day and is charging Rs.15 per tree. He proudly says that he is earning more than Rs.25000 per month. Earlier Rajesh was a rubber tapper and his income was Rs.15,000/- per month. He said that this new job has given him a better social status and better income. People are coming in search of him even from far off places. He is now able to meet the expenses for the education of his children and also could do the maintenance of his house. Rajesh is a member of the FoCT group based at Manakadavu. The group is undertaking harvesting for the CPSs of the area.



Rajesh

Arun Kumar P was a trainee of the 23<sup>rd</sup> batch of the FoCT training of Kannur district held at Karikkayam. Prior to this he was a casual labourer and was getting only Rs.450 per day. But after attending this training, Arun Kumar is climbing more than 70 trees per day and is earning around Rs.1000. So far he has climbed 3000 trees. With the income from this new job, Arunkumar is meeting his day to day expenses and even the expenses for his sister's education. He is even having a bank balance now.

As he is punctual and sincere in his work, people are happy with his service and they are availing his service again and again. Arun Kumar is happy with the social status this new job has bestowed on him. He is grateful to the Board in giving him the opportunity for attending such a training. He is ready to attend more trainings and is confident enough to impart the training to others also.



## *'Friends of Coconut Trees' for Sustainable Coconut Development – Strategies and Linkages*

C. Thamban, S. Leena\*  
and K. Muralidharan

Coconut growers face various constraints to improve farming on a sustainable basis. Price fall and fluctuation of coconut continue to be the major problem limiting the efforts to enhance productivity. The utilisation of technologies viz., improved varieties, integrated nutrient management, cropping/farming systems, integrated pest and disease management and value addition through product diversification is not being exploited at satisfactory level. Hence, concerted efforts are required to enhance productivity and income through integration of technologies in farmers' field. Lack of availability of labour, especially skilled labour for coconut climbing, and high wage rate are important problems faced by growers in adopting timely crop management practices. It is in this context that the 'Friends of Coconut Tree

(FoCT)' programme implemented by Coconut Development Board to develop a professional group of youth for harvesting and plant protection operations in coconut assumes much significance.

Usually training programmes in agriculture sector target farmers and in many an instances training is equated to a talk by an expert on a selected topic. In Kerala, most of the farmers who are land owners do not till their land themselves; instead they only manage the farm by supervising the agricultural labourers. Under such a situation it is imperative that training on improved farming practices is to target the workers who actually do the farming operations. 'Friends of Coconut Trees', initiated in the background of acute shortage of trained coconut palm climbers for

harvesting and plant protection operations, has been quite unique in this regard. The training targeted the group of unemployed youth in developing technical skills, entrepreneurship capacity, leadership qualities and communication skills to address the needs of the coconut growers.

### **'Friends of Coconut Trees' - Field Experiences**

The field level experiences clearly indicate that 'Friends of Coconut Trees' programme has been quite successful in achieving the desired results as the initial target of training 5000 youth has been already exceeded. Experiences shared in a review meeting held at CPCRI, Kasaragod on 8<sup>th</sup> May 2012, of about 50 'Friends of Coconut Trees' who were trained at Krishi





*The training in progress*

Vigyan Kendra, revealed that more than 70 per cent of the trained youth render their service to the coconut growers on a regular basis. Out of the 50 members of FoCT participated in review meeting, all were literate except one. Majority (50 %) were having high school level of education. About 10 % of the members were graduates. Before enrolling in the FoCT programme, about 15 per cent of the trainees were having some experiences in climbing coconut palms through traditional method and were earning about Rs 300-400 per day. They felt that climbing of trees using the mechanical device has substantially reduced the drudgery. The average income of the participants was considerably increased after the FoCT programme. A trained youth, on an average, is able to climb 60 coconut trees and earn an amount of Rs 750-900 per day. Apart from harvesting, crown cleaning also is done while climbing the trees for which they charge slightly higher wage rate.

All the participants of FoCT programme opined that the training programme was highly useful. According to them, the coverage and utility of topics included in the programme, apart from use of mechanical climbing device, were very high. They also perceived that the topic related to Integrated Pest and Disease Management was of immediate utility as many of the coconut gardens in the area of their operation were having high level of incidence of diseases like stem bleeding and farmers were quite happy to utilise their expertise in the integrated management of the diseases of coconut palms. The exposure they gained during the training on entrepreneurship capacity, leadership qualities and communication skills also proved to be useful as many of the trainees were able to visit the local Krishibhavans and grama panchayat offices to interact with the officials and people's representatives. Through these interactions, some of the 'Friends of Coconut Trees' were able to

effectively communicate to the officials and people's representatives and convince them about the need to have integrated coconut development initiatives at the grass root level and also about the readiness of 'Friends of Coconut Trees' to be associated with such initiatives. One of the trainees, Mr. T. K. Sukumaran, Kalakkara House, who was trained in the fourth batch of 'Friends of Coconut Trees' at the KVK, CPCRI, took initiative to organise coconut growers in and around his native place at Kuttikol to form three Coconut Producers' Societies.

The participants were of the opinion that the mechanical climbing device needs to be refined to avoid tear and wear of the device especially for the parts which come into contact with the cables while climbing. They also opined that the device needs to have some safety mechanism attached to it to ensure the safety of the climber. Most of the trainees keep the log book recording the daily details of coconut gardens covered, number of trees climbed etc. so that they can schedule the climbing to meet the needs of coconut farmers in different localities. Some of the participants revealed that farmers were quite happy and appreciated their prompt service in comparison to their earlier bad experiences with the traditional climbers. Mostly the farmers contact the 'Friends of Coconut Trees' through the mobile phone and ensure their services.

Many of the participants revealed that they took initiative to train some farmers and youth in their native place on coconut

climbing using mechanical device. It shows the effectiveness of 'Friends of Coconut Trees' programme in terms of horizontal spread of the technology. It was observed that in some localities the 'Friends of Coconut Trees' work as a team of 3-5 members. The unique experience of a five member team of 'Women Friends of Coconut Trees' from Kuttikol gramapanchayat in Kasaragod District is a model of women empowerment through 'Friends of Coconut Trees' programme.

Economic empowerment is the most important gain as each member of FoCT are able to earn on an average Rs 750-900 per day. And there is no dearth of opportunities; only thing is that they are unable to meet the demand from the local coconut growers. The members of 'Friends of Coconut Trees' who were gathered at CPCRI to share their experiences were unanimous in their perception that their status in the society have gone up and they are proud to be reckoned as a group of resourceful people who are of great help to the farming community rather than mere skilled labourers climbing coconut trees. They opined that they are eager to associate with the coconut growing community for the effective field implementation of coconut development schemes of different agencies.

### **'Friends of Coconut Trees' for Sustainable Coconut Development – The way ahead**

The skilled manpower made available through 'Friends of Coconut Trees' programme is to be effectively utilised for the sustainable development of coconut



*The FoCTs with the trainers*

sector for which appropriate strategies need to be formulated and implemented.

#### **i. Promote group approach among the 'Friends of Coconut Trees'**

It would be beneficial if 'Friends of Coconut Trees' of a particular area, say a gramapanchayat, are organised into a group so that their service can be effectively made available for the coconut growers of that locality. Such a team can formulate action plan for a year taking into account the coconut farming situation in the locality. The action plan should consider the requirement for harvesting, crown cleaning, pest and disease management and other crop management practices. It would be useful if participation of coconut farmers through Coconut Producers Societies (CPSs) is ensured in the meeting to discuss and finalise the action plan.

#### **ii. Facilitate Coconut farmer - 'Friends of Coconut Trees' interface**

It is essential that cooperation between coconut growers and members of the 'Friends of Coconut Trees' is strengthened in every locality so that the 'Friends of Coconut Trees' can serve the farmers better. The extent and quality of service expected by the farmers and wages to be paid for the service of members of 'Friends of Coconut Trees' of the locality can be discussed in the 'Coconut farmer - 'Friends of Coconut Trees' interface programme. The interface programme can be facilitated at gramapanchayat level.

#### **iii. Participation in the implementation of coconut development interventions**

Various agencies, including Coconut Development Board, Department of Agriculture, Local Self Governments and other agencies, implement schemes for coconut development, mostly through farmers' cluster approach. The components of such schemes include coconut nursery management for quality seedlings,

integrated nutrient management, multiple cropping, pest and disease management and value addition through product diversification. A formal mechanism to ensure the participation of the team of 'Friends of Coconut Trees' of the locality in the field level implementation of such interventions is highly necessary for the effective implementation of coconut based interventions envisaged under various schemes. Hence, the action plan of the 'Friends of Coconut Trees' should also reflect the requirement of their services for the field implementation of coconut based interventions through different schemes in the locality.

#### iv. Need based Training of 'Friends of Coconut Trees'

It is necessary to organise training on regular basis for the members of 'Friends of Coconut Trees' depending on the specific

needs to enhance their technical capabilities and managerial efficiencies. Apart from the use of mechanical climbing devices, topics related to pest and disease management and other crop management practices should be included in such training programmes, depending on the needs of the locality. Central Plantation Crops Research Institute, Kerala Agricultural University and Krishi Vigyan Kendras can provide the technical support for conducting the training programmes.

#### v. Participatory Approach and Functional Linkages

The functional linkage between various agencies related to coconut development including research, development and extension is to be strengthened to enhance the effectiveness of implementation of coconut based interventions at the grass root level. The effectiveness

of coconut development schemes can also be enhanced through ensuring the participation of coconut growers and the members of 'Friends of Coconut Trees' in the field level implementation. The platform provided by the ongoing programme of decentralised planning by the local self governments at the district, block and grama panchayat levels can be effectively utilised for formally coordinating the activities of various coconut development agencies through a participatory approach. Coconut Producers Societies and the team of 'Friends of Coconut Trees' can also substantially contribute for the effective coordination at the grass root level as active partners in coconut development initiatives.

*Central Plantation Crops Research Institute, Kasaragod  
\*Krishi Vigyan Kendra, Kasaragod*

## CDB Participated in Entrepreneurs Conclave

The Coconut Development Board, Regional Office, Guwahati participated in two new districts declaration programme held at Ampati and Resubelpara Garo Hills Meghalaya on 23<sup>rd</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> April 2012. An entrepreneurs Conclave was also held at both the centers. Programmes were co organized under the state sponsored scheme of Integrated Basin Development and Livelihood Promotion Programme.

Coconut Development Board

also participated in the exhibition held as part of the programme and displayed coconut products, handicrafts and publications of the Board. Dr. Mukul M. Sangma, Hon'ble Chief Minister of Meghalaya visited the Board's stall and appreciated the activities of the Board in the region. He further directed Dr. Pravin Bakshi, IAS, D.C., West Garo Hills, Tura to arrange training on coconut handicraft and coconut convenient foods for the women SHGs of the Garo Hills.

## How to apply for Kissan Credit card

The Kissan credit card is issued for any seasonal agricultural operations. The interested farmers may contact the nearest bank branch. They are required to submit the prescribed application form alongwith latest land tax receipt, possession certificate and declaration of no dues from other banks. The beneficiaries will be issued a smart card which could be used as a credit card. The banking transactions including issue of card can be completed in 3 days time.



# Friends of coconut tree a model for unemployment youth in Maharashtra

G.R.Singh



The Friends of Coconut Tree training programme of CDB in Konkan region of Maharashtra is making revolutionary change in coconut farming community in the state. This programme was initiated by the Coconut Development Board, when coconut sector was passing through the severe crisis for undertaking various operation such as harvesting of coconut, crown cleaning, control of pest and disease etc. The training programs in the state for the farmer was very much helpful for undertaking such operation by organizing farmers training programs in different area of the state.

So far three FoCT trainings were conducted, in different locations in Maharashtra. 60 trainees including 10 female

trainees have took part in the training programme.

The first FoCT programme was inaugurated on 9<sup>th</sup> January 2012, at Regional Coconut Research Station Bhatye, Dist. Ratnagiri. Maharashtra and 20 trainees successfully completed the FoCT

training programme. During the valedictory function certificates were distributed by Dr. Shirang Kedrekar, Ex-Vice Chancellor of Dr. Balasaheb Sawant, Agriculture University Dapoli. Dr. H.K. Patil, Director, Extension, presided over the programme. Shri V.V. Limaye







Board member CDB, Dr. Vijay Joshi, Principal, Fisheries College, Shirgaon, Dr. D.D. Nagvekar, Agronomist, RCRS Bhatye also attended the programme. Shri. V.V. Limaye, Board Member appreciated CDB for encouraging unemployed youth and for supporting the coconut farmers in intercultural operations in coconut garden like harvesting, crown cleaning, plant protection etc.

The 2<sup>nd</sup> training programme was held at RFRS Vengurle. Dist Sindhudurg from 16<sup>th</sup> to 21<sup>st</sup> March 2012. The programme was

organised by the Coconut Development Board State Centre, Thane in association with the Dr.



Balasaheb Sawant Konkan Agriculture University, Dapoli and Mahila Kathya Kamgar Audyogic

Sanstha Vengurle.

Adv. Vijaykumar Kolte, Vice Chairman, Agriculture Education and Research Parishad Pune inaugurated the training programme.

The training was attended by 20 trainees including five ladies. The valedictory function was attended by Shri. M. Thomas Mathew, Chief Coconut Development Officer, CDB, Dr. B.R.Salvi Director of Research and Dr. B. N. Swant. Scientist Agriculture Extension, RFRS Vengurle were presented on the occasion.

The 3<sup>rd</sup> training programme was organised by CDB in association with Dr. Balasaheb Sawant Konkan Agriculture University, Dapoli, Lokshikshan Mandal Abloli, & Shrifal Utpadak Sangha Narvan Taluka Guhagar at Abloli Dist Ratnagiri from 27<sup>th</sup> April to 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2012. 20 trainees including 5 ladies attended the training.

On completion of each programme evaluation was conducted by the expert team. The feedback received was very

positive. Most of the trainees are earning Rs.300-400 per day

*Dy. Director, CDB, Thane*

## Feedback from the Centres

The Friends of Coconut Tree training programme was initiated by the Board from the long standing demand of the coconut farmers. Board started the training programme in August 2012 and 5661 FoCTs are trained by the Board in various parts of the country. Board could materialize its target through the support of the participatory agencies like state department of Agriculture, Agricultural Universities, Local Self Government Institutions, coconut clusters, CPCRI, Krishi Vigyan Kendras, Coconut Producer's Societies, Agricultural Co operatives and non government Organisations. Local Economic Development Society, Kottayam Social Service Society and the Gandhiji Study Center were the organisations who actively participated in making this dream programme of the Board a reality. They share their experiences on the conduct of FoCT.

### Local Economic Development Society

Local Economic Development Society (LEDS), Ernakulam is a professional incubation agency that works for the economic empowerment of small producers and farmers, by assisting them in capacity building and in establishing enterprises and collectives of excellence, using market based strategies and by making available professional management services.

LEDS was engaged in the implementation of the FoCT

programme for the districts of Ernakulam and Kottayam. The programme is designed at giving know how, imparting skill as well as invigorating them for the cause of coconuts and themselves. The training is a 6 day residential programme with training in climbing the coconut tree with the machine, knowledge on the plant, diseases, fertilizers, exercises, and also classes on finance, communication, positive thinking, and first aid for equipping them to be better human beings.

LEDS engaged professional yoga teachers for improving the physical and mental health being of the trainees and encouraged them to practice even after training period. The sessions by professional motivation speaker helped the participants to understand their potential and to look forward for positive thinking and healthy way of living.

A significant social change that

happened during the training programme was the participation of women trainees. Even though FAO estimates that around two-third of the female labour force in developing economies is engaged in agricultural work, traditional in case of coconut farming, the direct roles like land preparation, plucking of nuts, fertilizer application etc are mainly done by men and women are mainly involved in other works like removal of husk, making of coir etc. As a result, work undertaken by women is not given enough focus and recognition. So it is astounding to see the women trainees accepting the challenge and coming forward for learning the skills. Women actively participated in Coconut Olympics by giving a tough competition to the male counterparts and in few cases winning prizes also.

One of the important challenges that LEDS faced is the identification of right trainees for



*The training programme conducted by LEDS*

the programme. LEDS reached out to the grass root through various ways. The trainings were mainly conducted in three different centres which were located in three different blocks. LEDS actively engaged with local self governments to reach out to the grass root. LEDS also took the help of Kudumbashree members in passing the information about the training to the villages. Different opinion leaders were also briefed about the programme and their active engagement was sought for the training programme. Local print and visual media were used for reaching out the people.

LEDS have had a gratifying experience when participants passed out invigorated and dedicated to champion the cause of coconuts. Participants have called back later with testimonies of how this skill helped them in times of crisis when they could not mobilize funds. This was also an experience which gave them confidence, expanded their vistas of knowledge, self realization thereby inspiring them to realize their potential.

Friends of Coconut Tree have created a visible impact in the state and have already making its own contribution in the coconut cultivation in Kerala. It is also the right time for LEDS to introspect on value additions to be made to this initiative. The integration of FOCT and CPSs are important as they are all actors in the value chain. CPS should play an active role in the identification of trainees and engaging them actively after the training. LSGs could support the initiative in various ways by

supporting in the identification of right trainees, financial support to trained FOCTs, integrating with local agriculture office etc. Identification of the right candidates for the training remains a challenge and proper strategies should be devised for achieving this objective. The use of visual communication in local languages will enhance the effective of communication for the training. Another challenge faced is the identification of right model farm/ demonstration plots as a part of the curriculum. A certification process of model farms should be carried out in each district. Currently the programme is stretched across 6 days. Some of the participants have made a suggestion to compress to a 5 day course as interested employed people find it difficult to take off 6 days. As the labour situation in Kerala is worsening day by day, we can also look at imparting the skill to higher secondary/ college students. In that offering it can be done spread across 4-5 Saturdays/Sundays. The effort done after the training camp

is seldom tracked. A follow up mechanism to ensure each trained person has climbed a minimum number of trees can ensure the system is fool proof and farmer is at ease for labour. A session on value added products from coconut should also be included so that trainees are exposed to the commercial side of value addition.

The important factor is to keep up the current rigour, create more awareness and do value addition. There is a need to reach out to more number of people through this initiative. This initiative is a model across the globe wherever labour crisis is affecting cultivation.

*(Tony Jose. K.,*

*Vice President, Projects, LEDS, Kochi)*

### **Kottayam Social Service Society**

Kottayam Social Service Society (KSSS) is a voluntary organization which is working with the mandate of reviving the lost glory of the agriculture sector of the state of Kerala. KSSS has joined hand with the Board in the FoCT training programme with the



*Shri. K.M. Mani, Minister for Finance, Govt. of Kerala  
distributing certificate to the trainees at KSSS*



objective of protecting the Kalpavriksha and also for strengthening the agriculture sector.

KSSS is the only one voluntary organization in Kottayam district which conducts the training programme. KSSS initially conducts an awareness creation programme on FoCT and later only those who are voluntarily interested to take part in the training are selected for the programme. KSSS has so far trained 143 persons in seven batches. Out of this 26 are women. This training not only attends to the dearth of climbers, but also is creating employment opportunities. It is a matter of proud for KSS that some of the trainees are earning more than Rs.20000 per month.

The training programmes were conducted at the Chaithanya pastoral centre at Thellakom, Kottayam. Classes were held on the significance of this crop, how to handle the machine, the necessity and scope for protecting this crop, value addition and marketing. The visit of T.K.Jose, IAS Chairman, Coconut Development Board added encouragement to the trainees.

The women trainees are more happy than the men trainees as they have entered a new field which was dominated by men so far. The FOCT programme conducted by KSSS was well covered by the media. KSSS is also conducting road show for giving publicity to the programme. Most of the trainees have taken up this as their job and is making good income from this job. The activities carried out by the participating

trainees were reviewed and the future course of action was formulated.

As a second step KSSS has initiated action for farming Coconut Producer's Societies. KSSS has also initiated the steps for forming a mobile coconut clinic which is scheduled for inauguration on June 3<sup>rd</sup> at the Chaithanya pastoral centre, Thellakom, Kottayam.

*(Fr. Michael Vettikatt, Secretary, KSSS, Kottayam, Tel: 9447365180)*

### Gandhiji Study Center

Gandhiji Study Center, Thodupuzha is conducting the FoCT training programme of the Board in Idukki district. Gandhiji Study Center (GSC) established in the year 1983 is a voluntary socio-

for the integrated development of Kerala and for carrying the message of organic farming of multiple cropping, animal husbandry etc.

Gandhiji study center has so far trained 164 persons. The center is already in receipt of applications for conducting 10 batch trainings. A review meeting of the previous batches of the FoCTs were held at the Gandhiji Study Center hall on 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2012. The meeting was inaugurated by Shri. P J Joseph, Minister for Irrigation, Government of Kerala. The Minister directed the farmers to form CPSs in their area. He also expressed his satisfaction over the activities of trained FoCT's and in their financial upliftment. Gandhiji Study



*Shri. P.J. Joseph, Minister for Irrigation, Government of Kerala, inaugurating the review meeting of FoCTs*

cultural organization for promoting and practising Gandhian values and thoughts. Among its practical projects the Centre has over the years tried to focus on the overall development of Kerala. The Centre has been organizing Karshika Melas (Agriculture Fairs) and seminars on various subjects

Center is planning to register CPSs in all the nearby villages. Study Center will convening the review meeting of the trainees in every month and will publish the details of the trainees who will be doing coconut climbing as a full time job.

*(V.J.George, Project Administrator, Gandhiji Study Centre, Thodupuzha)*



# Agriculture in Meghalaya and the potential for coconut in the state

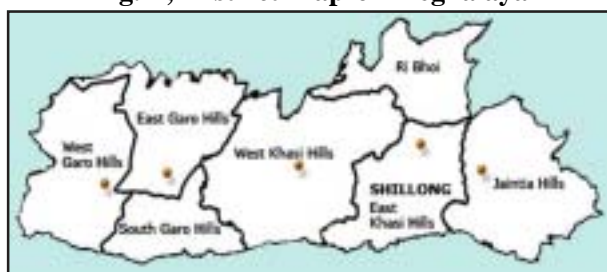
Sugata Ghose<sup>1</sup> and CO Rangad<sup>2</sup>

Meghalaya, one of the seven sister states of northeast India, is an embodiment of eternal bliss and tranquillity wrapped in utter beauty. The word Meghalaya literally means “the abode of clouds”. The abode of clouds acquires its charm from the picturesque locales, bountiful nature and sedating landscape.

With Shillong as capital Meghalaya became a full-fledged state on 21<sup>st</sup> January 1972. The state spread over an area of 22,429 sq km is bounded on the north and the east by Assam and on the south and in the west by Bangladesh. The State lies within 25°1' and 26°5' North latitudes and 85°49' and 92°52' East Longitudes. The state has been divided into seven districts (Figure-1) out of which largest is West Khasi Hills (5,247sq km) and smallest is South Garo Hills (1,804 sq km).

Population of Meghalaya is only about 30 lakh and it is a less crowded place having about 130 people per sq km. about fifty percent villages are very small having even less than 200 people. Due to hilly terrain

**Fig.-1; District map of Meghalaya**



|                   |                       |
|-------------------|-----------------------|
| West Garo Hills   | : 3,715 sq km         |
| East Khasi Hills  | : 2,820 sq km         |
| East Garo Hills   | : 2,603 sq km         |
| Ri-Bhoi           | : 2,376 sq km         |
| South Garo Hills  | : 1,804 sq km         |
| Jaintia Hills     | : 3,819 sq km         |
| West Khasi Hills  | : 5,247 sq km         |
| <b>Total Area</b> | <b>: 22,429 sq km</b> |

and undulating topography it was difficult to develop road connectivity. In spite of these difficulties the literacy rate of the state is higher than the national rate and more importantly the gender gap in literacy rate is very low unlike national scenario. (table-2) The economy of Meghalaya is basically agrarian as it is rural based with Agriculture playing a predominant role in the state's economy. Since, 70% of the state's population depends on Agriculture, employment and income generation also depends on Agricultural developmental activities to a great extent.

**Table – 2 . Basic Statistics of Meghalaya**

| Particulars                              | India    | Meghalaya  |
|--|----------|------------|
| Geographical area sq km                  |          | 22,429     |
| Population (2011 census) in lakh         | 12101.93 | 29.64      |
| Population density ( per sqkm)           | 382      | 132        |
| Number of inhabited villages             | 593731   | 5782       |
| No of villages with population less than | 200      | 2762 (49%) |
| Sex ratio (per '000 )                    | 940      | 986        |
| Literacy rate (%)                        | 74.04    | 75.48      |
| Gender gap in literacy rate              | 16.68    | 3.4        |
| Birth rate (per '000)                    | 23.1     | 24.4       |
| Death rate (per '000)                    | 7.4      | 8.1        |
| Road density ( per 100sq km)             | 75       | 40.81      |
| Forest cover                             | 21.02    | 77.23      |
| Villages electrified (%)                 | 84.2     | 68         |

## Agro-climate

The State possesses the advantages of an agricultural system that is by tradition, organic, and substantially continues to be so. A sparsely populated hill state, with a favorable land-man ratio, Meghalaya is amongst the highest rainfall areas in the world, predominantly mountainous, lying between the Brahmaputra valley in the North and the Surma valley of Bangladesh in the South. Meghalaya has a monsoon dominant climate (rainfall 900 mm to 12,000

mm per year) with wide variation in temperature ranging from 2°C to 36°C depending upon altitude and physiographic difference of landmass. While the Shillong plateau (600-2000m) has a bracing climate verging towards the temperate type, the lower regions adjoining the Surma and Brahmaputra Valley (100-300m) have a tropical climate. Flood affected areas are mostly on the low altitude areas, bordering Assam and India Bangladesh border. Flash floods have become a regular feature in these areas, due to massive deforestation and unchecked jhum cultivation. The flood water carries huge amount of hill sand, stone, logs and trees, which are deposited in agricultural fields due to inundation of banks in the foot hills, thus causing immense damage to crops. The agro-climatic situation of Meghalaya offers an excellent scope for growing of different types of crops of high economic values. The state has been divided into five zones.

## Soil

The soils of the hills are derived from gneissic complex parent materials. They are dark brown to dark reddish-brown in colour, varying in depth from 50-200 cm. The texture of soils varies from loamy to fine loamy. The soils of the alluvial plains adjacent to the northwest and southern plateau are very deep, dark brown to reddish-brown in colour and sandy-loam to silty-clay in texture. Meghalaya soils are rich in organic carbon, which is a measure of nitrogen supplying potential of the soil, deficient in available phosphorous and medium to low in available potassium. The reaction of the soils varies from acidic

(pH 5.0 to 6.0) to strongly acidic (pH 4.5 to 5.0). Most of the soils occurring on higher altitudes under high rainfall belt are strongly acidic due to intense leaching. The acid soils of Meghalaya are deficient in available Boron and Molybdenum.

## Land Holding

Land Holdings in Meghalaya mean operational holdings, as there is little concept of ownership under traditional land system. The pattern of operational holdings in the state is characterised by the predominance of small and marginal farmers (below 2 ha). About 80 percent of holdings belongs to marginal and small farmers who till almost 53 percent of land area.

## Land use pattern

A sizable proportion of the forest area is under shifting cultivation resulting in depletion of the forest cover. A very meagre proportion of the geographical area (9.75%) is net sown area, including area under shifting cultivation. The potential net sown area could be increased if and when the fallow lands are utilised for cultivation purposes. The cultivable waste land of the state is 20.11% of the geographical area a part of which might be progressively utilised for cultivation purpose in the long run. The cropping intensity of the state is 121%. Broadly the low lying areas were put under paddy during Kharif and with pulses, paddy, vegetables and oilseeds during the Rabi season depending on the availability of residual moisture and irrigation facilities.

**Table-3. Agro-climatic Sub-Zones in Meghalaya**

| SubRegion | Agro-climatic features   | Soils   | Dominant geographic units   |
|-----------|--|---|---|
| I         | Humid and warm with an average rainfall between 1,270 – 2,032 mm   | Light to medium in texture, depth varying between deep to very deep         | Hills and rolling and undulating pediment   |
| II        | Humid and hypothermic moderately cold in winter and warm in summer. rainfall varying between 2,800–4,000mm | Light to medium in texture depth varying from deep to very deep.            | Upper and middle plateau.   |
| III       | Humid and moderately warm summer and severe winter. rainfall between 2,800 – 6,000 mm                      | Light to medium in texture, depth varying from deep to very deep.           | Upper and middle plateau  |
| IV        | Humid and warm high rainfall ranging from 4,000 -10,000 mm   | Light to medium in texture, depth varying from deep to very deep.           | Severely dissected and undulating low hills gentle to steep slope and rolling pediment. |
| V         | Humid and hot, rainfall varying from 2,800–4,000mm   | Light to heavy in texture, depth varying from moderately deep to very deep. | Rolling and undulating pediment and valley land having depression                       |

**Table – 4. Number of Operational Holdings and Area Operated (Census 2001)**

| Class and Size of the holdings | Numbers in '000 | Area in '000 ha | % of Holdings |              | Average Size per holding (ha) |
|--------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|---------------|--------------|-------------------------------|
|                                |                 |                 | Number %      | Area %       |                               |
| Marginal (0.05 – 1.00 ha)      | 114             | 63              | 53.27         | 22.66        | 0.55                          |
| Small (1.00 – 2.00 ha)         | 57              | 83              | 26.64         | 29.86        | 1.45                          |
| Semi Medium (2.00 – 4.00 ha)   | 36              | 91              | 16.82         | 32.73        | 2.58                          |
| Medium (4.00 – 10.0 ha)        | 7               | 36              | 3.27          | 12.95        | 5.41                          |
| Large (above 10 ha)            | Negligible      | 5               | 0.00          | 1.80         | 13.12                         |
| <b>Total</b>                   | <b>214</b>      | <b>278</b>      | <b>100.0</b>  | <b>100.0</b> | <b>1.30</b>                   |

Negligible i.e. less than 500 units per hectare

Gentle slopes up to 20% were put under other crops like wheat, paddy, maize, pulses, oilseeds, vegetables etc, which yield substantial revenue returns per unit of land and labour. On such slopes the concept of watershed management of land and water is encouraged. Horticulture is taken up on slopes above 20% and in areas bordering Assam and Bangladesh, which are traditional horticultural areas.

### Major Field crops

**Rice:** Rice is the main food grain crop and it occupied about 82.40% of the area and 86.42% of the production under food grain. About 76.0 thousand hectares (40.50%) of the total area under rice were estimated to be under HYV.

**Maize:** The second most important food grains crop in the state is Maize which covered an area of about 16.87 thousand hectares with a total production of about 24.00 thousand MT during 2004-05. About 80% of the area under Maize is under high yielding varieties.

**Wheat:** The area under wheat have considerably dropped in recent past. It now occupies an area of only about 863 Ha with a production of 1.56 thousand MT.

**Pulses:** Pulses occupied a smaller share in the area and production under food grain. Among the Pulses, Cowpea, Pea, Lentil, Arhar, Black gram, Bengal gram and Rajma are grown in the area 3426 ha with a production of 2622 MT

**Oilseeds:** Major oilseed crops of the state are Castor, Sesame, Rape & Mustard, Linseed and Soybean. The total area and production of oilseeds is 9924 ha and 6647 MT respectively. The most

important among the oilseed crops is Rape and Mustard, which are grown in Garo Hills,

**Fibre Crops:** There are three fibre crops in the state namely; Cotton, Mesta and Jute grown exclusively in the districts of Garo Hills. These crops have been the traditional cash crops of Garo Hills. The major reasons for stagnated and decreasing yield of Jute and Mesta is un-remunerative price.

### Horticulture:

A wide range of tropical, sub-tropical and temperate crops is grown all over the State. A large variety of vegetables both indigenous and exotic are grown in many places of the State. The high altitudinal places of the State provide good opportunity to grow vegetables including potato, and cole crops during the rainy season. Tuber and root crops such as sweet potato and tapioca and spices crops such as turmeric, ginger, chillies, etc. grow abundantly in the State. Recently, plantation crops such as tea, cashew nut, coconut, arecanut and black pepper have been introduced and are coming up with promise. New foray is also being initiated in growing of strawberry, passion fruit, and ornamental flowers like rose, liliun, anthurium, gerberas, carnations, etc.

**Citrus:** Among the Citrus fruits the most dominant economic crop of the State is Mandarin Orange. Khasi Mandarin is adjudged as an important variety widely known in the North East region and outside.

**Pineapple:** The fruit does well in foot hill up to an altitude of 700 m .Pineapple varieties like Giant Kew and Queen is mostly grown in the Sub Mountainous tract in the Northern part of East and West Khasi Hills as well as in the Northern and Southern part of Garo Hills.



**Banana:** Varieties like Jahaji, Chenichampa, Malbhog and indigenous varieties are commonly grown in the region. Banana commands a considerable economic importance and is grown in the low hill areas of the State.

**Temperate Fruits:** Temperate fruits like plum, peach, pear and apricot are found in the central plateau of East and West Khasi Hills and Jaintia Hills.

**Vegetables:** Meghalaya is known for its vegetables in the northeast. Agro-climatic conditions in Meghalaya favour cultivation of vegetables round the year and fetch good price during off-season. Cabbage, cauliflower, radish, tomato, carrot, squash etc are the major vegetables of the state. Tomato cultivation has become a special feature in the Umsning-Nongpoh belt in the recent past.

**Potato:** Potato has been the most important commercial crop of the Shillong plateau. Potato was introduced very early in Khasi Hills during the British period. The old varieties like Great Scot, Up-to-date and Royal Kidney were till recently the main varieties, which have now been replaced to a great extent by Kufri Jyoti and Kufri Megha

### Horti-Hub :

The concept of Hub and Spoke Model of development is based on the principle of concentration of effort and resources and expanding it through spokes (cultivation clusters) developed around each hub. There are now 11 Horti-hubs in the state. In this model certain Departmental farms are identified as Horti-hubs focused on specific crop. In addition to showcasing the potential of a crop and cultivation technology, they serve as beacons for the farmers and provide a range of services. With their establishment, crop clustering has been reinforced and activities focused on extension, supervision, collection and marketing are carried out from the hub. Schemes of the department are structured and formulated around this model. The model of the Hub-and-Spoke adopted by the State Government is listed as one of the national best practices under the RKVY. Over a period of time, it is proposed to provide functional and administrative autonomy to the hubs so as to develop them as commercial entities and localized centres of excellence.

### Coconut in Meghalaya

Coconut is not a preferred edible in the state. It is not grown in the Khasi Hills and Jayantia hills division and found only in Garo hills. Area under coconut in

Garo hills has increased due to efforts of Coconut Development Board. Under Area Expansion Programme of the Board, implemented since 2000-01 an area of 198 ha has been covered till date. (Table – 5)

There are 22 ‘Horticulture Farm and Nursery (HFN) in the state functioning under the Directorate of Horticulture. About ten years back, coconut was experimentally planted in four HFN’s located at lower altitudes in three districts. HFN Wajain and HFN Pomsutia in East Khasi Hills, HFN Phodkylla in West Khasi Hills and HFN Rangmalgre in West Garo Hills. Those coconut palms established in these farms have started bearing since last few years. As per an estimate of IKP Centre for Advance Agricultural Practices, TNAU, the area under coconut in Meghalaya was 1,700 ha, production 5.21 million nuts and productivity 3,065 nuts per ha during 2004-05. Based on the agro-climatic situation, land use pattern it was estimated that potential area for cultivation of coconut in Meghalaya would be about 50,000 ha. (table – 6).

### Challenges

Although Meghalaya is one of the highest rainfall areas in the world, during dry period however, scarcity of water coupled with lack of assured irrigation is a

**Table-5. Implementation of coconut area expansion programme of Coconut Development Board in Meghalaya**

| Year         | Area covered (ha.) | Subsidy released (Rs lk) |
|--------------|--------------------|--------------------------|
| 1998-99      | 11.00              | 0.330                    |
| 2000-01      | 23.86              | 0.863                    |
| 2003-04      | 10.90              | 0.435                    |
| 2004-05      | 6.37               | 0.245                    |
| 2005-06      | 13.30              | 0.490                    |
| 2006-07      | 9.80               | 0.350                    |
| 2007-08      | 11.32              | 0.445                    |
| 2008-09      | 9.39               | 0.375                    |
| 2009-10      | 11.48              | 0.459                    |
| 2010-11      | 22.48              | 0.890                    |
| 2011-12      | 68.24              | 2.107                    |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>198.14</b>      | <b>8.879</b>             |

problem in the agriculture sector. High labour cost and continuing incidence of shifting cultivation restricts increasing cropping intensity, crop diversification and area expansion. Some of the socio-economic inconvenience of the state includes competing

pressures of mining and mineral based activities and increasing urbanization. Marketing constraints includes underdeveloped agricultural markets, poor transportation infrastructure, monopoly of private traders etc. Success of strawberry cultivation in Meghalaya is an example how these challenges were met adopting project mode approach. In the adopted strategy, emphasis was first placed on the marketability of the produce, building up the forward linkages, converging and bringing together all the critical components required for the successful cultivation of the crop in one location and then building up the backward linkages and tailoring production to the demands of the market. A similar approach could be adopted for coconut as well.

approach concept of Hub and Spoke Model of development might possibly be more useful for coconut in Meghalaya. Given Meghalaya's unique land holding pattern and land tenure system, an agglomeration of small individual holdings aggregated together would provide volumes for economies of scales to operate. Therefore, adopting the cluster approach and facilitating formation of farmers' groups, societies and farmers' associations, to protect farmers against exploitation by market forces as well as to ensure stability of the production systems will have to be considered.

**Table -6. Estimated potential area for coconut in Meghalaya ( area in ha)**

| Land Types \ Districts           | Ri- Bhoi | East Khasi Hills | West Khasi Hills | Jaintia Hills | East Garo Hills | West Garo Hills | South Garo Hills | Total  |
|----------------------------------|----------|------------------|------------------|---------------|-----------------|-----------------|------------------|--------|
| Cultivable Waste                 | 8,767    | 2,870            | 1,097            | 600           | 9,554           | 10,404          | 5,767            | 39,059 |
| Fallow other than current fallow | 986      | 65               | -                | -             | 222             | 2,156           | 506              | 3,935  |
| Net Sown Area (as intercrop etc) | 335      | 1,180            | 744              | -             | 772             | 3,444           | 615              | 7,090  |
| Potential Coconut Area           | 10,088   | 4,115            | 1,841            | 600           | 10,548          | 16,004          | 6,888            | 50,084 |
| Rounded of to                    | 10,000   | 4,000            | 2,000            | 500           | 10,500          | 16,000          | 7,000            | 50,000 |

## Conclusion

Government intervention through Mini Mission II of the Horticulture Mission for North East & Himalayan States (HMNEH) was the catalyst for the paradigm shift in Meghalaya's horticulture. Interventions under the Mission have resulted in area expansion of various crops, creation of horticulture infrastructure, introduction of new crops and technologies, entry of private sector players, emergence of village-level entrepreneurs and farmer groups.

Meghalaya have the potential to attain a prominent place in the coconut map of India. To make this vision a reality, lessons learned from the success stories of Meghalaya horticulture have to be kept in mind while formulating strategies for coconut cultivation in the state.

In place of conventional schematically stereotyped

In this approach it is envisaged that the involvement of the Department of Horticulture and Coconut Development Board would not end at production, but would continue into the realm of providing processing facilities and setting up of marketing linkages through dedicated Horti-Hubs for coconut.

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*1* Director, Coconut Development Board, Regional Office : East & Northeast, Guwahati, Assam

*2* Director, Directorate of Horticulture, Govt of Meghalaya, Shillong, Meghalaya

## MoU executed between Coconut Development Board and Republic of Trinidad and Tobago



*Shri. T.K. Jose IAS and Shri. Pranesh Maharaj*



*Shri. T.K. Jose IAS and Shri. Pranesh Maharaj signing the MoU*

In order to encourage and develop the technical collaboration in coconut sector between the Government of India and the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago for the development of the coconut industry, a memorandum of understanding was executed between the countries. The agreement was executed by the Coconut Development Board on behalf of Government of India and St Patrick Coconut Growers Co operative Society on behalf of Republic of Trinidad and Tobago.

Shri. Pranesh Maharaj, Chairman, St. Patrick Coconut Growers Co operative Society, Trinidad & Tobago visited Coconut Development Board, Headquarters at Kochi on 17<sup>th</sup> May 2012. Shri. T K Jose IAS, Chairman, Coconut Development Board made a presentation on the current strength of the Indian coconut industry as well as the areas of cooperation. Duly signed MoU was exchanged on the occasion by Chairman, CDB and Chairman, St. Patrick Coconut Growers Co

operative Society, Trinidad & Tobago.

In the history of Coconut Development Board this is the first time the Board is entering into an MoU with a common wealth country on transferring of technologies. The thrust areas in the MoU are: identification and supply of 60000 coconut seednuts / seedlings within a period of 2 years, transferring of technologies viz., production and protection, post harvest management and primary processing, production of value added products from coconut and mechanised palm climbing. Skilled and trained manpower outsourcing is also envisaged for short duration.

Based on the discussions, the Board will give technical support to rehabilitate coconut plantation in 10000 acres over a period of 2 years. Nearly 6 lakh superior quality seedlings will be produced. Shipment of seednuts are proposed to commence from 2013 onwards.

Shri. Pranesh Maharaj has requested the Board to send a team of officials to Trinidad to acquire a first hand knowledge on the coconut situation in Trinidad and Tobago and also for formulating a road map for developing the coconut industry.

As a prelude to the visit of Shri. Pranesh, Shri. Chandradath C, High Commissioner, Trinidad and Tobago had held discussions with Shri. A K. Thakur, Additional Secretary, Agriculture & Cooperation and other senior officials of Government of India. Subsequently, the Prime Minister of Trinidad Smt. Kamla Persad Bissessar had also visited New Delhi during January 2012.

During his visit to the country from 17<sup>th</sup> to 26<sup>th</sup> May 2012 Shri. Pranesh Maharaj visited the Technology Development Center of the Board at Vazhakulam and Coconut processing units in Kerala, DSP Farm Mandya, Coir Research Institute, Kalavoor and CPCRI Kasaragod.



## 45<sup>th</sup> COCOTECH will be held at Kochi from 2- 6 July, 2012

Government of India under the auspices of the Coconut Development Board, is hosting the 45<sup>th</sup> Cocotech meeting of the APCC from 2<sup>nd</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> July 2012 Kochi, Kerala. The Asian and Pacific Coconut Community (APCC) headquartered at Jakarta, Indonesia is an intergovernmental organization established with the objective to promote, coordinate and harmonize coconut developmental activities of the Asian Pacific region. The theme of the XLV APCC COCOTECH Meeting is “Inclusive Growth and Sustainable Development of the Coconut Industry”. Along with the

Secretariat, Thiruvananthapuram on 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2012 wherein Shri. K Jayakumar IAS, Chief Secretary, Government of Kerala presided over. Shri. Sanjeev Chopra IAS, Joint Secretary, Government of India and National Liaison Officer (NLO) of India for APCC, Shri. T K Jose IAS, Chairman, Coconut Development Board and Shri. K R Jyothilal IAS, Secretary, Agriculture, Kerala participated in the discussion.

Chief Secretary assured the whole hearted cooperation of the Government of Kerala and all related departments for the smooth conduct of the COCOTECH

delegates during the COCOTECH. Dr. George V. Thomas, Director, CPCRI, Dr. K Prathapan, Director, State Horticulture Mission and Shri. Ajith Kumar, Director, Department of Agriculture, Dr. A.K. Nandi, Secretary, CDB and Dr. Remany Gopalakrishnan, Deputy Director, CDB attended the meeting.

COCOTECH is the permanent panel on coconut technology of APCC member countries which is held in two years. The meeting provides a common platform for producers / progressive farmers, processors, machinery manufacturers, exporters, other stake holders and scientist's and



*A view of the preliminary meeting at Thiruvananthapuram. Seen are Shri. T.K. Jose IAS, Shri. Sanjeev Chopra IAS, Shri. K. Jayakumar, IAS and Shri. K.R. Jyothilal IAS*

meeting a coconut festival will also be organized wherein various value added products, technologies and machineries from member countries will be showcased.

A preliminary meeting on the successful conduct of the 45<sup>th</sup> COCOTECH was convened at

meeting. He opined that this would be an opportunity for the coconut farmers and coconut entrepreneurs of Kerala to avail the technical knowhow of the participating countries. He also suggested to conduct an interactive session of the coconut farmers and the foreign

research workers from member countries. The policy making body of APCC is the APCC session which is held in each calendar year. India has hosted two APCC Sessions (in 1988 in Kochi and 2001 in Bangalore) and 2 COCOTECH meetings (in 1995 at

Kochi and in 2000 at Chennai).

This meeting will cover a comprehensive range of technical sessions/topics on the success stories of model coconut farmers and small to medium-scale coconut processors/entrepreneurs. New technologies and research and development update on coconut based farming systems, product diversification and coconut processing including the medical findings on the health attributes of coconut oil/VCO as well as developments in marketing of coconut products will be discussed in the meeting.

Issues and topics which are related to the global financial crisis, climate change as well as the carbon credit market will also be discussed in the XLV APCC COCOTECH Meeting. Experts from the scientific field and from the corporate sector will be invited as resource speakers.

The meeting is open to public and related agencies on payment of registration fee. The registration fee is US\$300 for non-government sector participants from APCC member countries and US\$200 for government sector participants/NGOs from APCC member countries. APCC stimulates regional cooperation across national boundaries. The APCC is consisted of 16 regular members namely; Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, India, Indonesia, Kiribati, Malaysia, Marshall Islands, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Tonga, Vanuatu and Vietnam and 2 Associate Members (Jakarta and Kenya). India is one of the founder members.

## Thengu Mane, Stay cool with varied flavours

Thengu Mane specialising only in products made of coconut located in Rajajinagar provides coconut lovers a range of cool items starting from tender coconut water to delicious coconut ice-creams including neera. Thengu Mane's hot favourites are the 'coconut burfis and holiges, which are made fresh everyday. The water is removed from the nuts with the aid of a machine, which is designed by the owner M. Vinod and comes with an equally innovative cooling system.



*Shri. T.K. Jose IAS, Chairman, CDB at Thengu Mane*

Vinod is a coconut farmer and all the coconuts they use in their products are from their own farm. Vinod is proud that he is giving people fresh and hygienic coconut water along with other products which people may not have tasted or experienced before.

One such innovative product is the coconut apple locally known as Goobu. Coconut milk ice-cream is another item available here. No preservatives or colour is added to the ice cream. Vinod's wife Anita herself is preparing the ice cream. Coconut Souffle is another item available at Thengu Mane. What makes Thengu Mane really exciting is the fact that it introduces a coconut lover to a range of products that are a treat to the palette.

Shri. T K Jose IAS, Chairman, Coconut Development Board visited the Thengu Mane on 5<sup>th</sup> May 2012 and appreciated the activities of Thengu Mane for the product diversification and value addition of coconut products.

## 38<sup>th</sup> PAC clears 41 projects of Rs.27.49 crores



*A view of the 38<sup>th</sup> PAC meeting*

The 38<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Project Approval Committee (PAC) on Technology Mission on Coconut (TMOC) was held at Coconut Development Board, Kochi on 18<sup>th</sup> May 2012 under the Chairmanship of Shri.T.K. Jose IAS, Chairman, Coconut Development Board. The Project Approval Committee cleared 41 projects at a cost of Rs.27.49 crores. Board expects that these projects would trigger the processing and product diversification, market research and promotion as well as the other emergent requirements of the coconut sector.

Projects on Pest and Disease Management, Development of technology for Processing and

Product Diversification, Adoption of technology for Processing and Product Diversification, Market Promotion, and Technical Support, External Evaluation and Emergent Requirements were approved at a cost of Rs.27.49 crores.

Dr. George. V. Thomas, Director, CPCRI, Kasaragod, Shri. Ravindranathan P.C, Additional Director, Department of Agriculture, Government Secretariat, Thiruvananthapuram, Sri. K.B Dundi, Joint Director of Hort, (Plantation Crops & Plant Protection), State Horticulture Dept., Karnataka, Shri. V. Rajaraman, Manager, Kerala RO, NABARD Trivandrum, Shri.

M.M. Jose, Senior Marketing Development Officer, Directorate of Marketing & Inspection, Kochi, Mr. Sathishkumar. D, Senior Manager (RRO) & Shri. T. Sivashanmugam, Asst. Manager, Indian Overseas Bank, Regional Office, Ernakulam, Shri.M. Thomas Mathew, Chief Coconut Development Officer, Coconut Development Board and Dr.K. Muralidharan, Director, Coconut Development Board attended the meeting. Dr.M.Aravindakshan, Co-ordinator, Amritha School of Environmental Studies, Ettimedai, Coimbatore & former Chairman of Coconut Development Board attended the meeting as invited expert.

### CPS permitted to supply copra to the procurement agencies by producing registration certificate of the Board

The Government Order (MS) No.91/2012AD dated 10<sup>th</sup> April 2012 of the Department of Agriculture (NCA), Government of Kerala permits CPS to supply copra to the designated State level procuring agencies viz. Kerafed and Marketfed with out the certificate of the Agriculture Officer. Earlier the farmers had to produce the certificate of the Agriculture officer. The Board had

requested the Government of Kerala to exempt Coconut Producer's Societies registered with the Board from producing certificate of the Agriculture Officer and to accept the registration certificate issued by the Coconut Development Board as a proof of document under the Price Support Scheme.

This order is expected to benefit

around one lakh farmers who are members of the 1158 CPSs registered with the Board.

Apart from this, CPS are also eligible for service charge @ Rs.51 per quintal and the incidental expenditure of Rs.25. CPSs are also eligible for the cost of bag and the transportation cost on par with the primary cooperative societies designated for PSS operation.



**THE XLV APCC COCOTECH MEETING & COCONUT FESTIVAL**  
**WATER FRONT HALL, THE GATEWAY HOTEL**  
**2 - 6 JULY 2012, KOCHI, INDIA**

**Theme: "Inclusive Growth and Sustainable Development of the Coconut Industry"**

**REGISTRATION FORM**

Name : .....  
Title : .....  
Organization/Company : .....  
Address : .....  
Tel/Fax/E-Mail : .....

**REGISTRATION FEES:**

Category:

- 1) Non-government sector participants from non-APCC member countries ... US\$500
- 2) Government sector participants from non-APCC member countries..... US\$400
- 3) Non-government sector participants from APCC member countries \*..... US\$300
- 4) Government sector participants from APCC member countries\*..... US\$200  
(Except the Head of Delegation or plenipotentiary delegate)

Cancellation fee is 25% of the amount paid.

Payment of the registration fee will entitle the participants to all luncheons and A.M. and P.M. snacks during the 5-day Conference plus some dinners as indicated in the Programme. The registration fee will also cover participation in the field trip and electronic copies of conference materials. All registered participants shall be provided with an LD. card which should be worn throughout the duration of the Conference including social functions, luncheons and dinners.

Payment for registration fee is payable to the APCC Secretariat and may be done by **cash**, or **draft cheque** on behalf of the "ASIAN & PACIFIC COCONUT COMMUNITY", or by **Telegraphic Transfer** to APCC's bank account at CITIBANK, Landmark Building, Jl. Jend. Sudirman, Jakarta, Indonesia, A/C No.: 0-500093-528, Swift Code: CITIIDJX, or by **American Express Card**.

Registration fee for Indian participants can be made in Indian Rupee at the Dollar rate equivalent (as of the day of transaction) by demand draft in favour of Asian **Pacific Coconut Community**. Registration form duly filled in can be emailed to APCC.

**Please send this registration form by fax or e-mail to the:**  
**APCC SECRETARIAT**  
**Fax. No.: (62-21) 5221714 and E-Mail: [apcc@indo.net.id](mailto:apcc@indo.net.id)**

Please specify number of: ( ) Participant/s  
Registration fee/s = US\$..... (Total)

Term of payment:

- ( ) Cash ( ) A draft cheque enclosed  
( ) Charge to my American Express ( ) Bank transfer

Name : .....  
Card No. : .....  
Card ID : .....  
Expiry Date : .....

**Hotel Room Reservation Request:**

No. of Rooms : \_\_\_\_\_       Single       Twin  
Date of Arrival : \_\_\_\_\_  
Date of Departure : \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
**NAME & SIGNATURE**

- APCC Member Countries: F.S. Micronesia, Fiji, India, Indonesia, Jamaica, Kenya, Kiribati, Malaysia, Marshall Islands, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Tonga, Vanuatu, and Vietnam

# Monthly operations in coconut gardens

## June

### Andaman & Nicobar Islands :

Open basins around palms of a radius of 2m from the base of the palm. Apply 25 to 50 kg of cattle manure or compost and 10-20 kg of ash per tree and cover the basins with soil. Remove the weeds in the nursery.

### Andhra Pradesh:

Continue manure application if not done during June. Plant seedlings in the main field. As a prophylactic measure against the infestation of rhinoceros beetle, fill the youngest three leaf axils with a mixture of 250g powdered marotti/ neem cake with equal volume of sand or place naphthalene balls(12g/palm) and cover them with sand thrice a year. If the attack of the mite is noticed, spray neem oil - garlic – soap emulsion 2 percent (20 ml neem oil +20 g garlic emulsion + 5 g soap in 1litre water) or commercial botanical pesticides containing azadirachtin 0.004 per cent @ 4ml per litre on bunches, especially on the perianth region of buttons and affected nuts or root feed neem formulations containing azadirachtin 5 per cent @ 7.5 ml with equal quantity of water.

**Assam:** Do not allow rain water to accumulate in the pits of transplanted seedlings. Clean the crowns of the palms. If stem bleeding disease is noticed, (1)

remove the affected tissues of the stem and apply 5 percent calixin on the wound. When this is dry apply warm coal tar (2) root feed the affected palm with 5 ml calixin in 100 ml water per palm at quarterly intervals (3) apply 5 kg neem cake per palm per year along with the organic manure during the post monsoon period (4) regulate field regime by providing proper drainage during rains and irrigating the palms during summer. If bud rot disease is noticed, remove and clean the infected tissues and apply Bordeaux paste on the affected portion. The treated portion should be given a protective covering to prevent washing out of the paste during rains. Spray the neighbouring plants with 1 percent bordeaux mixture. Adopt plant protection measures when the weather is clear. Remove the weeds from the nursery.

### Bihar / Madhya Pradesh/ Chhattisgarh :

Provide proper drainage; do not allow rain water to accumulate for a long time in the pits. Transplant selected good quality seedlings in the already prepared and half filled pits. Drench the basins of transplanted seedlings with 0.05 percent chlorpyrifos twice at 20 to 25 days interval against the attack of termites. Apply 2 kg bone meal or

single superphosphate in the pit before planting. Open the basins around the palm of a radius of 2m upto a depth of 15-20 cm, and apply manures and fertilizers and cover with soil. During this month apply 30-50 kg farmyard manure/ compost per palm in the basin before the application of fertilizers. In irrigated and well maintained gardens apply the fertilizers @ 275g of urea, 500g single super phosphate and 500g muriate of potash. In rain fed gardens apply the first dose (1/3 of the recommended dose) of fertilizers i.e. 250g urea, 350g single superphosphate and 400 g muriate of potash, per adult palm and cover with soil. The gaps caused by the death of seedlings (previous year's planting) should be filled up, preferably with polybag seedlings. Similarly, remove all unhealthy and defective seedlings and replant with healthy seedlings. Check the palms for bud rot. If bud rot is found, remove the affected parts and apply bordeaux paste. Spray the neighbouring palms/ seedlings with 1 per cent bordeaux mixture.

**Karnataka :** Open circular basins around the palm, of a radius of 2m. Take appropriate control measures if attacks of rhinoceros beetle and red palm weevil are noticed. Keep the garden free of weeds. Give a

prophylactic spray with 1 per cent bordeaux mixture if not given during the last month. Seedlings can be planted during this month. If the attack of the mite is noticed, spray neem oil - garlic - soap emulsion 2 percent (20 ml neem oil + 20g garlic emulsion + 5g soap in 1 litre water) or commercial botanical pesticides containing azadirachtin 0.004 per cent @ 4ml per litre on bunches, especially on the perianth region of buttons and affected nuts or root feed neem formulations containing azadirachtin 5 per cent @ 7.5 ml with equal quantity of water.

**Kerala/Lakshadweep:** Open basins around the palms, of a radius of 2 m and fill them with green manure cuttings or green leaves @ 25kg per palm or bulky organic manures like cowdung, compost, etc. @ 50kg per adult palm and close the basins partially, if not done in June. Clean the pits in which seedlings have been planted. Search the crowns of trees for rhinoceros beetle, red palm weevil and also for bud rot disease. Take steps to check them. Clean the crown of the palm. If the attack of the mite is noticed, spray neem oil - garlic - soap emulsion 2 percent (20 ml neem oil + 20g garlic emulsion + 5g soap in 1 litre water) or commercial botanical pesticides containing azadirachtin 0.004 per cent @ 4ml per litre on bunches, especially on the perianth region of buttons and affected nuts or root feed neem formulations containing azadirachtin 5 per cent @ 7.5 ml

with equal quantity of water. Remove the weeds from the nursery.

**Maharashtra/ Goa/ Gujarat:** Bury husk in trenches between palms with concave side up. A prophylactic spray with 1 per cent bordeaux mixture may be given against fungal diseases.

**Orissa:** As a prophylactic measure against the infestation of rhinoceros beetle, fill the youngest three leaf axils with a mixture of 250g powdered marotti/ neem cake with equal volume of sand or place naphthalene balls(12g/palm) and cover them with sand thrice a year. Hook out the rhinoceros beetles. Manure vegetables and other crops. Give a prophylactic spray with 1 per cent bordeaux mixture against fungal diseases.

**Tamil Nadu/ Puducherry:** Open basins around the palms. Keep the garden free of weeds. Give the palms a prophylactic spray with one per cent bordeaux mixture to prevent bud rot and other fungal diseases. Apply the first dose of fertilizers i.e. 300g urea, 500g single superphosphate and 500 g muriate of potash per adult palm if not applied during last month. Search for rhinoceros beetle on the crowns of the palms with the beetle hook and kill the beetles. As a prophylactic measure against the infestation of rhinoceros beetle, fill the youngest three leaf axils with a mixture of 250g powdered marotti/ neem cake with equal volume of sand or place naphthalene balls (12g/ palm) and

cover them with sand thrice a year. Planting of seedlings in the main field can be done during this month. Search palms affected by Thanjavur wilt and take appropriate management practices. If the attack of the mite is noticed, spray neem oil - garlic - soap emulsion 2 percent (20 ml neem oil + 20g garlic emulsion + 5g soap in 1 litre water) or commercial botanical pesticides containing azadirachtin 0.004 per cent @ 4ml per litre on bunches, especially on the perianth region of buttons and affected nuts or root feed neem formulations containing azadirachtin 5 per cent @ 7.5 ml with equal quantity of water.

**Tripura:** Basin around the palm should be cleaned by removing the weeds. Green manure crops sown in May if any, should be ploughed and incorporated during the month. As a prophylactic measure against the infestation of rhinoceros beetle, fill the youngest three leaf axils with a mixture of 250g powdered marotti/ neem cake with equal volume of sand or place naphthalene balls (12g/ palm) and cover them with sand thrice a year. Collected seed nuts may be sown in seed beds without delay by taking advantage of the rain.

**West Bengal:** Apply green manure at the rate of 25 kg per palm. Keep the garden free of weeds. Start planting of seedlings in the main field. A prophylactic spray of 1 percent bordeaux mixture against fungal diseases may be given.



# Market Review April 2012

## Highlights

- ◆ The price of milling copra, ball copra and coconut oil expressed a mixed trend at all the major markets during the month under report.
- ◆ The international price of coconut oil expressed a downward trend during the month under report. The domestic price of coconut oil at Kochi market was 8 percent lower than that of the international price.

The prices of copra and coconut ruled below the Minimum support Price in major producing states and procurement activities were initiated by the Government machinery under Price Support schemes.

### COCONUT OIL

The price of coconut oil quoted at all the major marketing centres in the country expressed a mixed trend during the month under review. The weekly average prices expressed an upward trend during the second week and thereafter expressed a downward trend.

The monthly average price of coconut oil at Kochi was Rs. 6502/- per quintal. The price of coconut oil at Alappuzha market also moved

in tune with the price behavior of Kochi market. The monthly average price was Rs. 6494/- per quintal. The monthly average price of coconut oil at Kozhikode market was Rs. 6575/- which was the highest average price recorded in Kerala markets during the April 2012. The prices at Kochi and Alappuzha markets were marginally lower than the prices prevalent in March 2012.

### MILLING COPRA

The monthly average prices of FAQ copra recorded at Kochi market was Rs.4456/- per quintal. The monthly average prices of Rasi copra at Alappuzha market was Rs. 4410/- per quintal. The prices at Kochi was marginally higher than

that of the previous month while the price of copra at Alappuzha and Kozhikode were 3-4 percent lower than that of the previous month. The procurement operations under Price Support Scheme have already been initiated in Tamilnadu and Kerala by TANFED and NAFED respectively. The Minimum support price of milling copra has been fixed at Rs. 5100/- per quintal for 2012 season. A total quantity of 3917 MT of copra was procured by Nafed through Tanfed in Tamilnadu and 208 MT was procured in Kerala by Nafed through Kerafed and Marketfed. The procurement under the Price Support Scheme was 660 MT in Andhra Pradesh and 2395 MT in Lakshadweep. The total procurement of copra under PSS is 7180 MT.

The monthly average prices of milling copra at Ambajipeta market in Andhra Pradesh was Rs.4008/- per quintal compared to Rs. 3853/- recorded during the previous month.

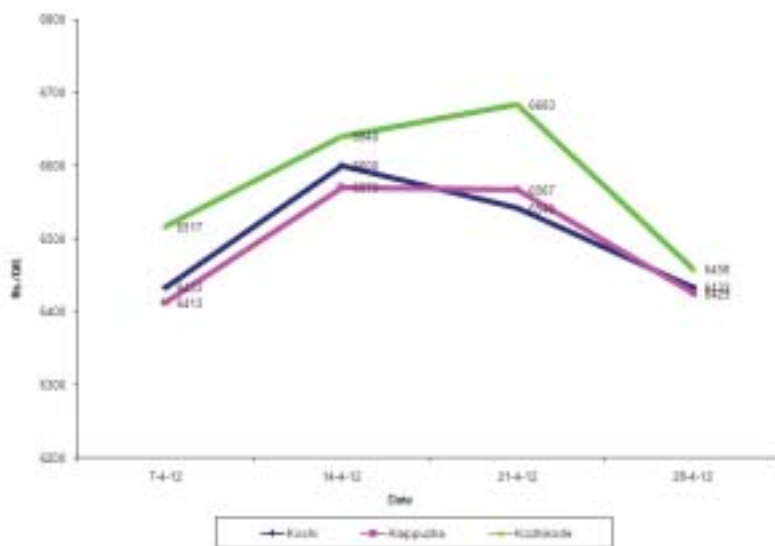
### EDIBLE COPRA

The monthly average prices of Rajapur copra at Kozhikode market was Rs. 5970/- per quintal, which was marginally lower compared to the price in previous month.

The monthly prices of ball copra at Kozhikode market averaged at Rs. 5373/- per quintal.

The monthly prices of ball copra at APMC market Tiptur, in Karnataka averaged at Rs. 5581/- per quintal in March 2012 while it was Rs 5300/- in Bangalore and Rs. 5535/- in Arsikere.

The Minimum support price of edible copra has been fixed at Rs. 5350/- per quintal for 2012 season.



Price behaviour of coconut oil during April 2012

## DRY COCONUT

The monthly average price of dry coconut was around Rs. 4957/- per thousand nuts at Kozhikode market which was 15 percent lower than that of the previous month.

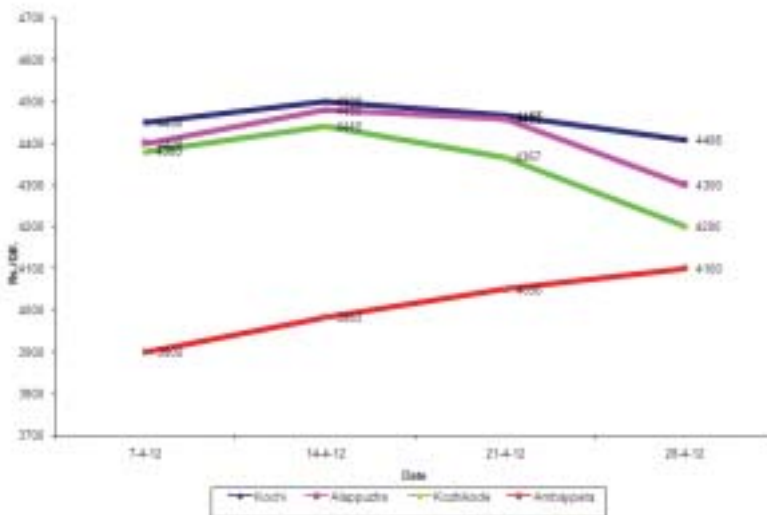
## COCONUT

The monthly average price of Rs.5500/- per thousand nuts for dehusked coconut at Nedumangad market was 13 percent lower than that of the previous month. Arsikere APMC market recorded an average of Rs. 6288/- for thousand partially dehusked nuts which was 8 percent lower than that of previous month. The monthly average prices of partially dehusked coconut at Bangalore APMC market was Rs. 6675/- which was marginally lower than that of previous month. The monthly average price of partially dehusked coconut Grade-1 quality at Mangalore APMC market improved to Rs.9813/- per thousand nuts which was 3 percent higher than the previous month.

The Government of India have declared the Minimum Support price of dehusked mature coconut with water at Rs. 14/- per kg.

## TENDER COCONUT

Prices of tender coconut at



Price behaviour of milling copra during April 2012

Kochi market ranged from Rs.20-25/- per nut.

## INTERNATIONAL PRICE

The monthly average price of US \$1353 per MT for coconut oil in Europe (C.I.F. Rotterdam) for the month of April 2012 was marginally lower when compared with the price in previous month and lower by about 35 percent compared to that of the corresponding month last year. The monthly average price of US\$ 888 per MT for copra was marginally lower than that of the previous month and about 38

percent lower than that of the corresponding month last year. The domestic price of US\$1248 for coconut oil at Kochi market was about 8 percent lower than that of the international price.

The domestic price of coconut oil during the month of April 2012, in Philippines was US\$1308 per MT and in Indonesia; the price was US\$1165 per MT. The international price of Palm oil, Palm kernel oil and Soybean oil were US\$1179, US\$1422 and US\$ 1301 per MT respectively.

## Market Price

| Date           | Coconut Oil |             |             | Milling Copra |                        |             |             | Edible Copra | Ball Copra  |             |             |             | Dry coconut | Coconut     | Partially dehusked coconut |             |                     |  |  |
|----------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|---------------|------------------------|-------------|-------------|--------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|----------------------------|-------------|---------------------|--|--|
|                | Rs./Qtl.    |             |             |               |                        |             |             |              |             |             |             |             |             |             |                            |             | Rs./1000 nuts       |  |  |
|                | Kochi       | Alappuzha   | Kozhikode   | Kochi (FAQ)   | Alappuzha (Rasi Copra) | Kozhikode   | Karkala     | Kozhikode    | Kozhikode   | Tiptur      | Bangalore   | Arsikere    | Kozhikode   | Nedumangad  | Arsikere                   | Bangalore   | Mangalore (Grade-1) |  |  |
| 7-4-12         | 6433        | 6413        | 6517        | 4450          | 4400                   | 4380        | 3900        | 6055         | 5455        | 5517        | 5200        | 5480        | 5500        | 6000        | 6300                       | 7000        | 9500                |  |  |
| 14-4-12        | 6600        | 6570        | 6640        | 4500          | 4480                   | 4440        | 3983        | 6040         | 5465        | 5583        | 5200        | 5543        | 4760        | 6000        | 6150                       | 6167        | 9783                |  |  |
| 21-4-12        | 6542        | 6567        | 6683        | 4467          | 4458                   | 4367        | 4050        | 6013         | 5425        | 5608        | 5200        | 5550        | 4917        | 5000        | 6350                       | 6533        | 10000               |  |  |
| 28-4-12        | 6433        | 6425        | 6458        | 4408          | 4300                   | 4200        | 4100        | 5771         | 5146        | 5614        | 5600        | 5568        | 4650        | 5000        | 6350                       | 7000        | 9967                |  |  |
| <b>Average</b> | <b>6502</b> | <b>6494</b> | <b>6575</b> | <b>4456</b>   | <b>4410</b>            | <b>4347</b> | <b>4008</b> | <b>5970</b>  | <b>5373</b> | <b>5581</b> | <b>5300</b> | <b>5535</b> | <b>4957</b> | <b>5500</b> | <b>6288</b>                | <b>6675</b> | <b>9813</b>         |  |  |

Source: Kochi: Cochin Oil Merchants Association and Chamber of Commerce, Kochi - 2, Kozhikode: The Mathrubhumi daily  
Alappuzha: The Malayala Manorama daily, Arsikere : APMC, Arsikere  
Price quoted for office pass copra at Kozhikode and Rasi copra at Alappuzha markets. NT : No transaction