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# BULLETIN

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**THE INDIAN CENTRAL COCONUT COMMITTEE**

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# COCONUT CULTIVATION

OF the coconut palm it may truly be said that it is the king of the vegetable kingdom Not only in grace and stature, but in its boundless generosity it is truly royal. There is not a single part of it which is not useful to man.

The roots of the palm, though of no great commercial importance, are still used by village smiths as furnace fuel and by Ayurvedic physicians as ingrediant in the preparation of certain medicines. Its seasoned trunk provides material for building houses and making furniture, while its leaves, when closely plaited, furnish fine weather-proof thatching for roofs. The tender coconut supplies the cleanest and one of the most wholesome drinks known to man while the mature nuts yield copra from which is extracted coconut oil, the basic material for many a big industry. The coconut oil cake is unsurpassed as cattle feed. The shells, the fibre of the husks and even the midribs of the leaves have their many uses too. The shells, now utilizel mainly as fuel, bid fair to become the raw material for a growing chemical industry while on the fibre of the husk is already built a flourishing mats and matting industry.

Verily the ancients who christened the coconut palm as *Kalpa Vriksha* knew what they were about.

But even a *Kalpa Vrîksha* when once it has elected to grow on earth

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has to submit to various earthly limitations. It cannot afford to grow to its fullest stature and give of its gifts in utmost abundance unless it happens to be planted in congenial soil and surroundings and is properly ministered to.

The coconut tree thrives best on the loose soil of the sea coast and the shores of the backwaters. Its multitudinous roots can freely penetrate this type of soil and bring up the nourishment it needs. The laterite soil of the interior hill slopes also is good enough for coconut cultivation, and high yields in these areas are made possible by applying the right kind of manure to the trees. This is proved by the coconut gardens reared on hill slopes in the Cochin Government's Farm at Ollukara and the Madras Government's Farm at Pilicode and gardens elsewhere.

*Different Varieties*

Coconut trees are of various types. The dwarf variety which yields gold-red nuts is more an ornamental palm than a tree of economic importance. The nuts from this variety are small in size and the oil content of the kernel is very low. The dwarfs do not live for more than 30 years and easily fall a prey to pests and diseases.

The ordinary tall variety which so gracefully and majestically dominates the landscape in various parts of the country lives up to 80 years. Growers should cultivate the best strains from this variety, if they want copra of first quality. The F. M. S. variety gives nuts which are large in size and have thick-set kernels. The hookah palm is another type. It gets its name from the fact that its nuts are long and narrow and the shells are used for making hookahs.

In the Vyttila Farm of the Cochin Government, several foreign varieties are grown for experimental purposes. Two of these-Guinaring and E. B. 139-are good yielders. In the Madras Government's Farm at Kasaragod also many exotic varieties are grown. Some of these are noted for the extra-ordinary size of their nuts, some for the very large number of nuts that grow in a bunch and others for sheer beauty of appearance.

*Parent Trees.*

There is a Malayalam proverb prescribing the age of certain trees for purposes of collecting their seeds. The seed of the jack should be collected from trees which are young, that of the areca from palms which are old and that of the coconut from trees of middle age. Coconut trees whose age varies from 25 to 30 years are best suited for selection as parent trees. They must be high yielders, giving annually a hundred or more nuts. The trunks of parent trees should be of fairly uniform growth and free from any defects. Such trees should have compact spherical crowns having a large number of leaves situated close together. They should have sturdy, stout leaf stalks and short fruit bunch stalks.

Parent trees should be such as bear nuts which are spherical in shape with husks of medium thickness.

*Seednuts.*

Seednuts harvested during the months of Kumbham (February—March), Meenam (March — April)

and Medom (April—May) are considered to be the best. They should be allowed to mature on the tree and while harvesting them the bunches should be lowered with a rope and not allowed to drop. The water inside seednuts should not be allowed to dry up. They should be stored in sand in an upright position in a cool room.

*Sowing Seednuts*

After selecting a convenient plot for the nursery bed, dig it up and scorch the loosened soil by burning on it dried leaves and such other rubbish. Add to it some common salt, sand and margosa oil cake. This is done to prevent white ant attacks. Plant the seednuts one foot apart and in a slanting position. For 15 days prior to planting, the seednuts should be kept in a tank or well and the planting should be done at the angle indicated by the water line on the nuts. The angle at which the nut floats on water is said to be the natural angle at which it should be planted for germination. More modern opinion prescribes for planting the upright position with the stalk end up. An expert from F M. S. who was recently here said that both views are strongly held by growers in his own country. More than half the nut should be under the soil surface. If so, it will begin to germinate in about 3 months The germination will be complete in another two months Ninety to ninety five per cent of the nuts planted germinate. Those which germinate late may be said to lack in vitality. Until they are transplanted, the seedlings should be watered regularly and, during the Summer months, protected from the heat with shades made of coconut leaves.

*Transplanting.*

Seedlings from the nursery could be transplanted at any time up to two years. But one-year old seedlings are deemed to be the best for purposes of transplantion. Early splitting of leaves into leaflets indicates a healthy and vigorous seedling. Seedlings should be planted in pits which are 3 ft. square and deep and two-thirds filled with a mixture consisting of surface soil, a basket of wood ash and a measure of common salt. The pits should be deeper in elevated localities and shallow in low-lying areas. In very low-lying regions seedlings are planted on mounds of heaped earth. The roots of coconut trees which have been planted deep are not exposed to heat during the summer months. As roots sprout up to a height of 2 to 3 ft. from the base this portion should be completely under the soil surface when the tree attains full growth. If coconut trees are planted too close to each other their yield will suffer. The leaves of neighbouring trees should not touch. Agricultural experts are of the view that the space between tree and tree should be at least 30 ft By adopting the triangular method of planting the maximum number of trees to an acre could be planted.

In the Cochin Government's Farm at Vyttila an area of 3 acres has been set apart for spacing experiments. In one acre 60 trees have been planted, in the second 72 and in the third 90. All are manured on a uniform basis. But the maximum yield is from the first plot which has the minimum number of trees. The trees in this plot are more healthy and vigorous and are better yielders.

*(Continued on page 6)*

# Area and Production of Coconuts in India

IT may generally be stated that the statistics of coconut acreage in India are of doubtful accuracy. They began to be published in the Agricultural Statistics of India only from 1920-21 and relate mainly to Madras, Bengal, Bombay and Orissa and Travancore, Cochin, Mysore and Pudukkotta. The 11,88,098 acres of coconut in India in 1920-21 increased to 12,93,924 acres in 1925-26, to 13,84,487 acres in 1930-31 and to 14,66,411 acres in 1935-36. The gradual and steady increase continued up to 1940-41 but decreased in the the following year when the acreage was reported at 14,45,823 acres. The area during the five years ending 1945-46 is indicated below:-

## Area in Acres.

| Province State. | 1941-42 | 42-43 | 43-44 | 44-45 | 45-46 | Average. | Percentage. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Madras | 5,96,147 | 5,98,054 | 6,05,764 | 6,15,518 | 6,13,997 | 6,05,896 | 40.4 |
| 2 Orissa | 29,510 | 29,000 | 28,420 | 10,950 | 10,949 | 21,766 | 1.4 |
| 3. Bengal | 30,000 | 12,700 | 12,700 | *58,871 | *58,871 | 34,628 | 2.3 |
| 4. Bombay | 28,547 | 29,197 | 28,154 | 25,070 | 24,675 | 27,128 | 1.8 |
| 5. Sind | 29 | 25 | 21 | 20 | 20 | 23 | .... |
| 6. Assam | 5,000 | 3,579 | 3,686 | 3,646 | 3,700 | 3,922 | 0.3 |
| 7. Travancore | 5,50,000 | 5,66,880 | 5,73,184 | 5,75,673 | 5,75,673** | 5,68,282 | 37.8 |
| 8. Cochin | 67,061 | 67,082 | 66,682 | 66,642 | 64,988 | 66,491 | 4.4 |
| 9 Mysore | 1,65,766 | 1,65,616 | 1,68,596 | 1,70,180 | 1,75,796 | 1,69,191 | 11.3 |
| 10. Pudukottai | 1,386 | 1,708 | 1,459 | 1,492 | 1,569 | 1,523 | 0.1 |
| Others | 1,000 | 1,000 | 1,000 | 1,000 | 1,000 | 1,000 | 0.1 |
| Total | 14,74,446 | 14,74,841 | 14,89,666 | 15,29,062 | 15,31,238 | 14,99,850 | |

* Includes 16,448 acres in West Bengal.
** Estimate.

About 84% of the area under coconut in the Madras Presidency is concentrated in the districts of Malabar, South Kanara, East Godavari and Tanjore, Malabar alone accounting for about 60%. Although coconut is grown throughout Travancore the bulk of the area is situated in the lowland and midland regions of the State. In Cochin State the typical coconut area is found in the narrow strip of sandy tract near the sea, intrespersed with numerous canals, backwaters and lagoons,

although it has spread out fairly well to other regions also. In Mysore State the districts of Tumkur, Hassan and Mysore together account for more than three-fourths of the area under coconut. In Orissa, coconuts are grown chiefly in the districts of Puri and Cuttack and in Bombay in the districs of Ratnagiri and North Kanara.

The number of coconut trees in an acre varies considerably. The average number of trees per acre in the Madras Presidency is 80 with about 75 in Malabar and South Kanara districts, 55 in East Godavari, and 150 in Tanjore. In Travancore, Cochin, Mysore, Orissa, Bombay and Bengal the average number of trees per acre is of the order of 70, 75, 47, 65, 105 and 50 respectively. The yield per tree also varies from garden to garden and area to area, the average for Madras Travancore, Cochin, Mysore, Bombay and Bengal being 28, 30, 30, 50, 24 and 30 nuts respectively. On the basis of the above figures the annual production of coconuts in the Provinces and States concerned during the last five years is as given below:-

## Production in 1,000 nuts.

| Province State. | 1941-42 | 42-43 | 43-44 | 44-45 | 45-46 | Average. | Percentage. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Madras | 14,70,500 | 14,76,100 | 14,21,800 | 14,83,100 | 15,36,400 | 14,77,580 | 44.4 |
| 2. Orissa | 47,229 | 46,400 | 53,160 | 21,900 | 19,073 | 37,552 | 1.1 |
| 3. Bengal | 19,050 | 19,050 | 19,050 | *88,305 | *88,305 | 58,440 | 1.7 |
| 4. Bombay | 55,200 | 53,000 | xx53,000 | xx53,000 | xx53,000 | 53,440 | 1.5 |
| 5. Sind | 145 | 105 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 110 | .... |
| 6. Assam | 76,997 | 57,980 | 60,253 | 59,605 | 59,940 | 62,955 | 1.8 |
| 7. Travancore | 11,70,992 | 11,90,448 | 12,03,686 | 12,08,913 | xx 12,08,913 | 11,96,590 | 35.6 |
| 8. Cochin | 1,37,790 | 1,34,164 | 1,33,364 | 1,33,284 | 1,29,976 | 1,37,716 | 4.1 |
| 9. Mysore | 3,25,166 | 3,25,964 | 3,27,400 | 3,29,444 | xx 3,29,444 | 3,27,484 | 9.7 |
| 10 Pudukottai | 139 | 171 | 146 | 149 | 157 | 152 | .... |
| Others | 2,000 | 2,000 | 2,000 | 2,000 | 2,000 | 2,000 | 0.1 |
| Total | 33,05,208 | 33,05,382 | 32,73,959 | 33,79,800 | 34,27,308 | 33,54,019 | |

* Includes 22,205,000 nuts produced in West Bengal.
xx Estimate.

The annual average production of coconut is estimated at about 3,355 million nuts. About 46% of these are used in the preparation of copra. Of the copra produced, about 79% is consumed in the mills. It is estimated that in 1945-46 about 176,000 tons of copra were used in the country in the preparation of coconut oil. The annual consumption of coconut oil in India is estimated at 1,58,000 tons which are made up as follows:—

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 176,600 tons Indian copra yield | — | 108,000 tons of coconut oil |
| 75,000 tons of Ceylon copra yeld | — | 50,000 do. |
| Total | .... | 158,000 tons of coconut oil. |

(The reported posibility of imports of copra and coconut oil from other foreign countries has not been taken into account as they have not yet materialised).

The coconut oil available in the country is distributed asfollows:—

| | | Tons |
|---|---|---|
| Soap industry | .... | 36,000 |
| Toilet & toilet articles | .... | 47,000 |
| Edible purposes | .... | 70,000 |
| Other uses | ... | 5,000 |
| Total | .... | 158,000 |

The oil available falls short of Indian requirements and the consumption may be stepped up further if larger quantities could be had. The consumption of coconut oil in the next five years may well increase as a result of the possibility of wider expansion on the part of the soap manufacturing and other related industries. The requirements of coconut oil in the country during the next five years may be estimated as follows:—

| | | Tons of oi |
|---|---|---|
| Soap industry | .... | 60,000 |
| Toilet & domestic uses | .... | 60,000 |
| Edible purposes | .... | 80,000 |
| Other uses. | .... | 10,000 |
| Total | .... | 210,000 |

The annual production of oil from Indian copra is of the order of 108,000 tons.

There is, therefore, a deficit of 102,000 tons between our demand for coconut oil and its production from Indian copra. This deficit can only be made up by extending our production or by larger imports.

With proper organisation, planning and research it is possible to increase our coconut production by at least 50% and that should be sufficient to wipe out the deficit. An all-out effort to increase production by manuring and intercultivation seems to be called for not only because of our deficit but also of the considerable short supplies of oils and fats in the world. This is the problem of problems that confronts the industry and urgent steps need to be taken to tackle it so that the industry may be able not only to stand on its own legs but also be free from the nightmare of foreign competition.

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(*Continued from page 3*)

The most recent opinion is that not more than 56 trees should be planted in an acre.

Before the seedlings are planted the plot should be fenced round. They should be regularly watered until they take firm root in the soil. During the Summer, too, they should be watered. Watering on alternate days during the first year and twice a week for the next five years is a good prescription.

*(To be continued)*

(From an article by Mr. K. Gopala Marar, Economic Botanist, Cochin State).

# Diseases of the Coconut and How to Control Them

PART II

(*Dr. K. P. V. Menon, Plant Pathologist, Quilon*)

*LEAF BLIGHT.* This is a disease of the mature leaves of coconut palm and generally occurs on the outer whorls of leaves. This appears first as yellowish spots on the leaflets of older leaves. The spots gradually enlarge in size and several of them coalesce and form larger diseased patches. In severe cases of infection the outer whorls present a partially burnt appearance.

The affected portion on examination may be found to have innumerable minute wart-like bodies spread over the leaf surface. These contain the fruit bodies of the fungi responsible for the infection. This disease is primarily caused by the fungus *Pestallozia palmarum*. Species of *Diplodia* and *Helminthosporium* are also sometimes found to be associated with the disease. The spores of the fungus get blown about in the wind thus helping the spread of the disease.

The fungi causing this disease are weak parasites and they are capable of severely infecting the palms only when the normal health of the latter is impaired. In Travancore and Cochin they are generally met with on the leaves of palms affected with root disease. In such cases they may even be observed on some of the inner whorls of leaves. The blight disease may therefore be considered as a secondary disease following in the wake of conditions that adversely affect the normal health of the coconut palm. They, however, tend to serve as effective pointers to indicate that the coconut palms in the locality are growing under unhealthy conditions and that speedy remedial measures are called for to restore their normal health. The leaf blights constitute a menace to coconut nurseries and so spraying with Bordeaux Mixture has to be adopted as routine practice in nurseries. The blights are occasionally to be found in young plantations also and here also they can be kept in check by judicious spraying with Bordeaux Mixture.

*STEM BLEEDING DISEASE.* This disease affects the stem of the coconut palm and is found most frequently in closely planted estates. The chief symptom of this disease is the exudation of a kind of reddish brown liquid which oozes out through cracks in the stem. This liquid trickles down the stem for a distance of several feet. A single tree can have two or three points of infection. In some cases they coalesce and form large patches on the stem of the coconut palm. If the stem is cut open below the bleeding point the tissue inside will be found to be rotting. In the case of young trees the disease may be able to kill them outright. In older trees the palms get gradually degenerated, the yield is considerably reduced and in the end they die. The disease is caused by the fungus *(Thielaviopsis ceratostomella) paradoxa*. Generally on the stem of the coconut palm vertical cracks can be

seen arising out of the splitting of the rind as the tree grows old. As a rule these cracks are lined with cork cells but sometimes they exhibit fresh, soft tissue of the inside of the stem. If a spore happens to fall into a crack showing fresh soft tissue it at once germinates and initiates infection. The fungus responsible for this disease is essentially a wound parasite. If there are no cracks on the stem no infection can take place. So the main precaution to be taken with regard to the control of this disease is that the coconut stem should not be deliberately wounded by careless use of the cutlass by climbers and workmen on the estate. Natural cracks that occur on the palms are unavoidable. They depend on the severity and duration of the dry season and the degree of suddenness of the opening rains. Thus drastic and sudden changes in soil moisture promote cracking of the stem. Therefore all measures to conserve soil moisture in dry months and to prevent water logging during the monsoons should be taken to ward off the disease.

Surgical treatment is resorted to for controlling this disease. The rotted portion of the stem should be cut out thoroughly, care being taken to see that nearly an inch more of the healthy tissue also is cut away to ensure that all fungal mycelia that might have penetrated into the peripheral tissue are also eliminated. All infected and discoloured tissue within should be removed. After this is done the cavity thus produced should be so smoothened out that no rain water is able to collect within it. It should then be painted over with tar or crude oil. Some persons advocate the use of hot tar. Tar applied hot scorches the stem tissue. This scorched tissue acts as a suitable medium for reinfection and growth of the fungus. Therefore it is advisable not to apply tar hot. The stem tissue and chips cut out should be carefully collected and burned on the spot.

*(To be continued)*

# Vaikom-Shertallai Copra Marketing Co-operative Society No. 2515

The above society was started on the 1st January 1946, under a 3-year scheme for the development of the co-operative marketing of copra, jointly sponsored by the Government of Travancore and the Indian Central Coconut Committee. The total recurring expenditure on the scheme sanctioned for the period is Rs. 16,560/-. Half of this is borne by the Government of Travancore and the other half by the Committee. The society has a membrship of 74 and has collected share capital of the value of Rs. 4360/-. It has borrowed for its working an amount of Rs. 45,000/-.

When the society first began its activities there was at Vaikom little or no trade in copra. But thanks to vigorous propaganda, the society has succeeded in making considerable headway and two copra crushing mills have been started in the lacality by private individuals.

*(Continued on next page)*

The society has up till date dealt in copra of the aggregate value of Rs 7 lakhs and according to the audit report for 1121 M. E. (1945-46) declared a dividend of 7½ p. c. and granted a bonus of 2 cash (16/19 pie) for every rupee worth of copra sold to the society.

The copra purchased by the society is usually found to be dried insufficiently. As the keeping quality of copra and its market value depend upon a minimum of moisture in it, the society undertakes to dry the copra properly before the stuff is marketed The loss due to drying is about 50 lbs. for every candy of copra. Not only does the society dry the copra before it is sold, but it classifies it into the different grades such as edible cup and rasi.

Most of the copra purchased by the society is sold at Alleppey, although limited quantities are disposed of at Cochin, Kottayam and Shertallai too.

The copra that is brought for sale to the society is paid for at the Alleppey market rates. Proper drying and grading, however, enable the society to earn a small profit when it, in its turn, sells the copra But when there are sudden falls in prices the society has to incur losses too.

The secret of success in the copra trade depends on the quality of the commodity. The copra made in the monsoon months in crude smoke chambers always sells at a discount. It is hoped that with the construction, on the premises of the society, of a modern hot air copra drying kiln by the Indian Central Coconut Committee, the handicap caused by the monsoon rains could be overcome and quality copra made during the wet season also.

The society has always regarded as one of its primary duties the demonstration of successful copra making. Accordingly it purchased about 3 lakhs of nuts and made copra for about 6 months. But the fall in the prices of coconuts and the adverse weather conditions made it a losing business But the society hopes to resume copra making under more favourable conditions when the kiln mentioned above is set up and prices look up.

When the society took up copra making it started the retting of husks also. The society's location near the backwaters enable it to have retting facilities. Retting takes about 8 months. When the green husks sold at Rs. 25/- per thousand the retted husks fetched Rs 50/-. At present the former sells at Rs 17/- and the latter at Rs. 35/-. The society had buried for retting about 80,000 husks. They are now being exhumed and sold, while fresh husks are put into the retting pits. The society has under consideration the question of coir-making also. The coir trade is now in the hands of middlemen and if the coir workers are co-operatively organised the profits now earned by middlemen will go to them.

A background picture of the

# NEWS & NOTES

Elsewhere in this issue appears an article on coconut cultivation in which the author makes a passing reference to the uses to which almost every part of the coconut tree could be put. That reminds us of a beautiful old legend told of a king of ancient India most probably one ruling on the West Coast, who sent an all-coconut gift to a brother monarch. The king having consulted his ministers regarding the nature of the gift to be sent was advised to build a ship with the products of the coconut palm only, freight it with the various substances manufactured from the palm and send this unique vessel to his royal friend.

Here is the rest of the story as told by Mr. W. V. D. Pieris of Ceylon.

"Thereupon the king's shipbuilders set out to build the ship. With the wood of the seasoned palm they got ready all the planks and spars. A tall slender trunk served for the mast. Instead of nails to hold the ship together, they used stiff, steel-like pegs made from the hard wood. The cables and cordage were made of the wave-resisting and resilient fibre obtained from the husk. The sails were woven with the fine fibres of the husk and the fibres of the bracts that protect the bases of the leaves The awnings were made of interlaced fronds The sea chests and the ship's furniture, long chairs and couches, were all made and upholstered with the various portions of the trunk, the leaves and the fruit. The eating vessels and the drinking vessels were carven, polished shells.

"The fair ship being ready, they proceeded to merchandise it with dried kernels and oil, cut kernels from the broken nut and whole kernels from the entire nut; water-clear oil from the ripe green coconut, to be used for cooking, and oil set like snow from the King Coconut, perfumed and unperfumed, to be used as an unguent for the hair. They brought to the ship wine and sweet spirits made from the nectar of the coconut flowers, and jars of fiery drink. In one part of the ship were the various articles made from the fibres of the husk, ropes and cordage of different thicknesses, strong and elastic; carpets, mats

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society has been attempted to be given in the above paragraphs. It is proposed to publish in subsequent issues of this "Bulletin" a succinct account of the monthly progress and transactions of the society which it is hoped, will bring home to coconut growers the advantages of co-operative marketing of their produce

*(From a note by Mr. K. V. Punnen, B. Ag., Manager-Secretary, Vaikom-Shertallai Copra Marketing Co-operative Society.)*

and rugs; brooms and brushes; stiff woven fabrics and sacking. There were boxes and baskets made from the smooth, white midribs of the leaves and a hundred other things too numerous to mention, things that could be eaten and drunk and things with manifold uses.

"And when the ship was fully laden, she sailed away."

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The 6th meeting of the Indian Central Coconut Committee has been fixed to be held at Bombay on the 28th November 1947. The various Sub-Committees will meet on the previous two days. Sirdar Bahadur Sir Datar Singh, Vice Chairman, Indian Council of Agricultural Research will preside over the meetings.

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It will be recalled that in the last issue of the "Bulletin", when describing the activities of the Committee, mention was made of arrangements being in train to establish a Central Coconut Research Station at Kasaragod, in South Kanara District for fundamental research and that the nucleus of this station would be the Madras Government's Coconut Research Station there, which that Government had agreed to sell to the Committee. The station will be taken over by the Committee November with all available facilities such as buildings, equipment etc. The value of the station at current market rateshas been fixed at Rs. 1,30,000.

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The first annual report of the Committee covering the period 16th February 1945 (the date of inception of the Committee) to 31st March 1946 has just been published. It is a priced publication and can be had from the Committee's office at one rupee a copy. The second annual report (1946-47) is under print and will also be issued shortly. An interesting feature of the first annual report is the review it contains of the coconut research work already done in Provinces and States.

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The following methods of controlling the Rhinoceros beetle is advocated in Mysore:-

(1) Exposing poisoned bait of fermented castor cake mixed with a small quantity of calcium arsenate, and

(2) Exposing a mixture of bran and sodium silicofluoride.

The above methods are said to have given satisfactory results under laboratory conditions but have not been tried out under field conditions for confirmation and practical utility.

Enterprising growers may, however, take the tip and see how the methods work.

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# MARKET REPORT

*(OCTOBER 1947)*

## Cochin, Alleppey and Calicut.

OCTOBER 1947 has been a pretty bad month for the copra and coconut oil trades. The market conditions for September 1947 as described in our last issue steadily worsened during the month under report. Trading was on a very small scale.

The Cochin Oil Market which had closed down since the 26th September re-opened on the 1st October but there was little business put through. The Executive Committee of the Oil Merchants' Association had met four days earlier and decided to recommend to the general body that in no transaction should the price of oil be below Rs 1364 per ton or above Rs. 1875-8-0 per ton. This decision was endorsed by the general body of the Association on the afternoon of the 30th September. At about 5 p. m. on the same day some business was reported to have been done at Rs. 1398 per ton.

The prices of coconuts, copra, coconut oil and coconut oil cake on the 1st October for the Cochin, Alleppey and Calicut markets were quoted as follows :—

| *On 1-10-1947* | *Cochin* | | | *Alleppey* | | | *Calicut* | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Rs | As. | Ps. | Rs. | As. | Ps. | Rs. | As. | Ps. |
| Coconut per 1,000 | 118 | 0 | 0 | 112 | 8 | 0 | 120 | 0 | 0 |
| Copra (per ton) | 1,016 | 3 | 0 | 1,008 | 14 | 0 | 1,136 | 0 | 0 |
| Coconut Oil ( „ ) | 1,381 | 0 | 0 | 1,308 | 2 | 0 | 1,440 | 0 | 0 |
| Coconut Oil Cake ( „ ) | 295 | 0 | 0 | 273 | 10 | 0 | 216 | 0 | 0 |

The decision of the Cochin Oil Merchants' Association to transact business in oil, only at prices ranging between Rs 1364 and Rs. 1875-8-0 per ton could not be implemented as the price of oil ruling in the Alleppey market was as low as Rs. 1231. Consequently business came almost to a standstill two days after the market re-opened. The prices of copra and coconuts also steadily declined.

Mills were anxious to sell but the Oil Merchants' Association had fixed the minimum price at Rs 1364 per ton and the depression in the Alleppey market made it difficult for any such price being offered in the Cochin market. There were even reports of a rival Oil Merchants' Association being proposed to be formed to break the impasse and resume transactions.

The prices quoted on the 8th October were as follows:—

| *On 8-10-1947* | *Cochin* | *Alleppey* | *Calicut* |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Rs. As. Ps. | Rs. As. Ps. | Rs. As. Ps. |
| Coconut (per 1000) | 118 0 0 | 115 0 0 | 107 8 0 |
| Copra (per ton) | 971 14 0 | 866 11 0 | 1,040 0 0 |
| Coconut oil ( „ ) | 1,364 0 0 | 1,188 7 0 | 1,280 0 0 |
| Coconut oil cake ( „ ) | 289 14 0 | 256 8 0 | 224 0 0 |

On the 9th October all outstanding dues in the Cochin market which had stood in the way of business were almost completely settled.

Prices, however, registered a steady downward trend in all the three markets.

The price position on the 15th October was as follows:-

| *On 15-10-1947* | *Cochin* | *Alleppey* | *Calicut* |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Rs. As. Ps. | Rs. As. Ps. | Rs. As. Ps. |
| Coconut (per 1000) | 110 0 0 | 112 8 0 | 117 0 0 |
| Copra (per ton) | 903 10 0 | 872 2 0 | 960 0 0 |
| Coconut oil ( „ ) | 1,364 0 0 | 1,162 13 0 | 1,296 0 0 |
| Coconut oil cake ( „ ) | 279 10 0 | 282 2 0 | 224 0 0 |

On the 21st October an extra-ordinary meeting of the Cochin Oil Merchants' Association was held when it was decided to rescind the resolution passed on the 30th September fixing maximum and minimum prices for coconut oil bought and sold in Cochin and to permit freedom of market in regard to prices.

The prices stood as follows on the 22nd October:—

| *On 22-10-1947* | *Cochin* | *Alleppey* | *Calicut* |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Rs. As. Ps. | Rs. As. Ps. | Rs. As. Ps. |
| Coconut (per 1000) | 115 0 0 | 127 8 0 | 111 0 0 |
| Copra (per ton) | not quoted | 991 13 0 | 1008 0 0 |
| Coconut oil ( „ ) | 1,381 1 0 | 1,368 0 0 | 1,368 0 0 |
| Coconut oil cake (per ton) | 306 14 0 | 324 14 0 | 272 0 0 |

The first four days of the last week of the month under report saw the prices of oil and copra looking up slightly. On the 25th October oil was quoted at Cochin at Rs. 1398-2-0 per ton and copra at Rs. 920-11-0 per ton. But this was followed by a fall on the succeeding days and on 29-10-1947 the price position stood as follows:—

| *On 29-10-1947* | *Cochin* | *Alleppey* | *Calicut* |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Rs. As. Ps. | Rs. As. Ps. | Rs. As. Ps. |
| Coconut (per 1000) | 120 0 0 | | 125 0 0 |
| Copra (per ton) | 920 11 0 | 974 11 0 | 1,008 0 0 |
| Coconut oil ( „ ) | 1,346 15 0 | 1,248 5 0 | 1,344 0 0 |
| Coconut oil cake ( „ ) | 358 1 0 | 331 12 0 | 256 0 0 |

The collapse in oil prices witnessed for the better part of the month is attributable to many factors of which the most important is the still worsening position in regard to caustic soda supplies for the soap industry. Absence of exports to East and West Bengal and North India generally has contributed to take the edge off the market. The ring which used to buy for export to Calcutta stopped purchasing consequent on the migration of their principals from Calcutta to Chittagong. The latter port, situated in East Bengal (Pakistan) is not in a position to increase its handling capacity immediately. Exports to Chittagong will necessarily be limited and will not be anything like the volume of exports to Calcutta, at any rate for some time to come.

Towards the 3rd week of the month, however, there was improvement in the matter of railway transport facilities and there was a thin stream of export to North India, Bombay and Calcutta. Prices began to look up. Another factor influencing an appreciation in prices was no doubt the comparatively small arrivals of copra and coconut oil in the market, a feature characteristic of the present season.

The month was closing with a collapse practically in the Oil market. There were no buyers as transport facilities were not available. The closing rate for oil on the 29th October was Rs. 1261-10-0.

## TIPTUR AND ARSIKERE

(MYSORE)

The following report has been received from the Chief Marketing Officer in Mysore:—

The coconut and copra market at Arsikere and Tiptur was rather dull during the first week of this month owing to the continuance of the Mysore railway strike. The prices also had gone down. Arrivals to the market were poor and the demand little. The rates gradually increased in the second week after the railway booking was resumed.

The month opened with the prices quoted as follows.—

| | *Tiptur* | *Arsikere* |
|---|---|---|
| Coconuts per 1,100 | Rs. 160 to 180 | Rs. 125 to 150 |
| Copra - One satta of 10 Mds. or 315 lbs. | Rs. 290 to 295 | Rs. 280 to 300 |
| Coconut oil per md. of 24 lbs. | | |
| 1st variety edible .... | Rs. 30 | |
| II .... | Rs. 21 | |
| III .... | Rs. 17 | |

The following week registered a rise in prices. The level of prices on 7-10-47 was as follows:—

| | | *Tiptur* | *Arsikere* |
|---|---|---|---|
| Coconuts per 1,100 | | Rs. 170 to 180 | Not received |
| Copra per satta of 10 mds or 315 lbs. | | Rs. 330 | |
| Coconut oil per Md. of 24 lbs. | I variety | Rs 25 | |
| | II ,, | Rs. 17 | |
| | III ,, | Rs. 14 | |

There was a further improvement in the tone of the market during the second week. The prices increased slightly in the case of coconuts and oil and a decrease in the case of copra was noticed.

The prices were reported to be as follows:—

| | | *Tiptur* (15-10-1947) | *Arsikere* (18-10-1947) |
|---|---|---|---|
| Coconuts per 1,100 | | Rs. 185 to 190 | Rs. 180 to 200 |
| Copra per satta of 10 Mds. or 315 Ibs. | | .....Rs. 300 | Rs. 290 to 300 |
| Coconut oil per Md. of 24 lbs .... | I variety | Rs. 26—4—0 | |
| | II ,, | Rs. 18—2—0 | |
| | III ,, | Rs. 15—0—0 | |

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