

The Ceylon Coconut Planters' Review

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EDITORIAL

COCONUT PRODUCTION AND LOW PRICES

The fall in price of copra which commenced in the latter half of 1960 has come to stay and coconut producers have to adjust themselves to a price level of about Rs. 140/- for a candy of copra.

Factors affecting world production, trade, utilisation and prices of coconut and coconut products were discussed at the Fourth Session of the F.A.O. Group on Coconut and Coconut Products at Trivandrum last December, a report of which is published in this number.

In U.K. and Netherlands, coconut oil in margarine had been replaced by marine oil, which has begun to offer strong competition to coconut oil with its low prices and increasing supplies; at the same time increased production of soya bean oil in U.S.A. and the U.S.A. price support scheme for soya bean oil has had a marked effect on International trade in copra and coconut oil.

Fortunately coconut production in Ceylon in 1961 reached a record of 2786 million nuts and realised the cumulative effects of the subsidised manure scheme and favourable rainfall. It should therefore be the endeavour of all coconut producers to maintain this level of production and even step up yields still further. High yields mean low costs of production per 1,000 nuts, and producers, both small holders and estate owners, must avail themselves of the facilities offered by the subsidised manure scheme. It is gratifying to note that in spite of the fall in copra prices 39,000 tons of manure have been utilised in 1961 compared to 42,000 tons in 1960. It is hoped that this level of manuring will be maintained.

Similarly every endeavour must be made to step up the demand for D.C. as high price of D.C. has a marked effect on the local price of nuts offered by Millers. Efforts made by the Government to reorganise D.C. Factories have been commendable ; D.C. Millers on their part have been co-operative.

The collapse of the Coir Fibre Market is also unfortunate. In 1960 Coconut husks fetched Rs. 16/- per thousand, but today fibre millers offer no more than Rs. 4/-.