

# THE COCONUT INDUSTRY 1972

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## GENERAL

Contrary to what was expected in planting circles, 1972 has been a good year for coconut from the point of view of production. It is true that a decline in crop was evident during the latter part of the year, but this has not made a perceptible impact on overall production.

The estimated production of coconut for 1972 is 3,073 million nuts representing an increase of 9.8% over the preceding year (2,799 million nuts) and an increase of 15.0% over the average production (of 2,672 million nuts) for the past 5 years. Ceylon's peak production estimated at 3,148 million nuts was recorded in 1964. The 1972 figure is only 2.4% short of the all time record.

The reflection of the increase in production in 1972 (over the preceding year) on the volume of exports amounts to 23.5%. In terms of the average for the past five years, the exports are higher by 30.0% but lower by 22.6% in relation to the 1964 record.

As regards the value of exports, they have been low in 1972 as a 1,000 nuts have averaged only Rs. 212/79. The record for prices amounting to Rs. 302/62 was registered in 1968. In relation to this, the figure for 1972 is lower by 29.7%, and also lower by 22.6% in comparison with the previous year. The average value of coconut products for the past five years has been Rs. 256/88. The 1972 figure is lower than this by 17.2%.

The new coconut leaf-miner beetle pest—*Promecothea cumingi* which posed a major threat to the coconut industry was brought under effective control during the year by biological means. The services of Dr. P. R. Dharmadikari—F.A.O. Entomologist were secured in November 1972 to pursue the work on *Promecothea* and the biological control of other coconut pests.

## Coconut Fertilizer Subsidy Scheme

As in previous years the Commissioner of Coconut & Cocoa Rehabilitation was responsible for the operation of the Coconut Fertilizer Subsidy Scheme until 72.05.05 on which date the Coconut Cultivation Board took over the duties of the Department. The Coconut Cultivation Board is one of the Boards established under the provisions of the Coconut Development Act. No. 46 of 1971.

The response to the Coconut Fertilizer Subsidy Scheme since its inception has been encouraging. Prior to the introduction of this scheme in 1956, the quantity of fertilizer used on coconut lands was 10 to 12 thousand tons. This has progressively increased to 60,000 tons under the Subsidy Scheme.

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Details pertaining to the issue of fertilizer under the subsidy scheme to permit holders during 1970, 1971 and 1972 are given below. The 1972 figure in respect of quantity of fertilizer actually drawn is tentative and is based on information so far received from the Ceylon Fertilizer Corporation.

Details pertaining to Fertilizer Distribution	Estates (Over 20 acres)			Small holders (Under 20 acres)			Co-operative Societies		
	1970	1971	1972	1970	1971	1972	1970	1971	1972
No. of Permit Holders	2537	2557	2149	13,387	18,429	15,015	645	600	729
Acres in respect of which applications were received	222,162	215,744	184,542	97,119	98,244	80,495	35,213	34,974	24,587
Quantity of Fertilizer (Tons) applied for	48,975	49,183	46,336	30,712	32,058	28,304	11,967	10,506	7,065
Quantity of Fertilizer (Tons) actually drawn	32,926	27,323	21,544	18,956	15,330	15,636	8,197	6,027	5,028

It is observed that the drought which prevailed during the course of the year 1972, the uncertainty over the ceiling on land, the falling prices of nuts, contributed to the decline in the use of Fertilizer during the year which amounted to 42,208 tons. However, the Coconut Cultivation Board has established fertilizer stores in coconut growing areas of the Island such as Chilaw, Kuliyaipitiya, Kurunegala, Veyangoda and Ambalangoda to enable small holders to draw their requirements in their own areas.

In outstations, arrangements were made for Coconut Development Officers to issue fertilizer permits for small holders of 5 acres and less in extent.

As an encouragement to the small holder, the lower limit of land or number of palms for which a fertilizer permit was issued was reduced from  $\frac{1}{2}$  an acre to  $\frac{1}{4}$  acre or 60 palms to 30 palms.

These steps that were taken have given promising results, but it is yet to be seen whether the demand will increase with the passage of time.

The prices of the C.R.I. Standard Fertilizer mixtures issued during the year under the Subsidy Scheme were as follows:—

Fertilizer Mixture	Price per ton
General Mixture for young palms	Rs. 482.00
C.R.I. Mixture 'A'	Rs. 493.00
C.R.I. Mixture 'B'	Rs. 498.00
C.R.I. Mixture 'C'	Rs. 502.00

As an alternative to these Standard C.R.I. Mixtures, 3 'U' mixtures containing Urea as a source of Nitrogen were also made available to the public.

Their prices were as follows :—

Name of Mixture	Price per ton
'U' 1 Mixture	Rs. 584.00
'U' 2 Mixture	Rs. 592.00
'U' 3 Mixture	Rs. 598.00

As in previous years, the policy under this Scheme has been for the Government to meet half the cost of the fertilizer used on coconut lands regardless of the size class of holding.

#### Desiccated Coconut

With the establishment of the new Boards in May 1972, under the provisions of the Coconut Development Act. No. 46 of 1971, the laboratory of the Ceylon Coconut Board which was set up for the quality control of desiccated coconut was transferred to the Coconut Processing Board and continued to function as before. During 1972, 77 mills applied for registration, but only 69 of them complied with the conditions necessary for registration. Therefore, towards the latter half of the year only 69 mills were functioning.

108.2 million lbs. of desiccated coconut were manufactured during 1972. This was less than the quantity manufactured in 1970 and 1971. All the desiccated coconut manufactured was subjected to sampling on a 10% basis.

A total of 15,178 samples of desiccated coconut were examined in the bacteriological laboratory of the Board during the year and *Salmonella* contaminations were detected only in about 0.7% of them. Eleven serotypes of *salmonella* were identified in the samples examined.

A total of 14,000 routine samples were tested in the quality laboratory of the Board during the year. They were examined for moisture content, parings and specks, colour, odour, grading and oil separation. Out of the samples tested, 2,858 were found to be sub-standard in respect of one or more of the quality requirements. Approximately 20% of the routine samples examined for physical quality were subsequently resampled on a higher percentage on account of being found defective on first examination.

#### COCONUT PRODUCTION IN 1972

1. Production	Nut Equivalent
1. Production in 1972	3,073 million
2. Production in 1971	2,799 "
3. Aver. Production last 5 years	2,672 "
4. Previous Production record (1964)	3,148 "
5. Increase over 1971	9.8%
6. Increase over last 5 years' average	15.0%
7. Decrease from previous record	2.4%
2. Exports—by Volume	
(a) Amount	
1. Exports in 1972	1,257,728,084
2. Exports in 1971	1,018,616,628
3. Aver. for last 5 years	967,516,429

4. Previous production record (1964)	1,625,806,000
5. Increase over 1971	23.5%
6. Increase over last 5 years, average	30.0%
7. Decrease from previous record	22.6%

(b) Distribution

	C'Oil	Copra	D.C.	Fresh nuts
1972	55.2%	17.4%	26.6%	0.8%
1971	55.4%	8.5%	35.3%	0.8%

Exports—by value

(a) Amount

	Rs.
1. 1972	267,636,141
2. 1971	279,952,182
3. Average for last 5 years	249,841,654
4. Previous record (1964)	333,819,816
5. Decrease over 1971	4.4%
6. Increase over last 5 years average	7.1%
7. Decrease from record	19.8%

(b) Distribution

	C'Oil	Copra	D.C.	Fresh nuts
1972	49.5%	19.3%	29.6%	1.6%
1971	53.1%	8.6%	36.9%	1.4%

3. Average Value of Coconut Products

	Rs. per 1000 nuts
1. 1972	212.79
2. 1971	274.84
3. Average for last 5 years	256.88
4. Previous record (1968)	302.62
5. Decrease over 1971	22.6%
6. Decrease from last 5 years average	17.2%
7. Decrease from record	29.7%

4. Exports of Coconut Products 1972

Item	Quantity	Value (Rs.)	Nut Equivalent
Fresh nuts	10,560,741 (No.)	4,350,815	10,560,741
D.C.	971,274 (Cwt.)	79,307,018	335,089,530
Coconut Oil	1,708,610 (Cwt.)	132,306,186	694,122,813
Copra	871,820 (Cwt.)	51,672,122	217,955,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,551,704 (Cwt.)</b>	<b>267,636,141</b>	<b>1,257,728,084</b>

	Nil	Nil	Nil
C. Poonac			
Mattress Fibre	1,315,020 (Cwt.)	29,403,918	—
Bristle Fibre	531,274 (Cwt.)	30,552,228	—
Coir Yarn	36,710 (Cwt.)	2,787,200	—
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,883,004</b>	<b>62,743,346</b>	<b>—</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>5,434,708</b>	<b>330,379,487</b>	<b>1,257,728,084</b>

5. Percentage Distribution of all products by value

	C'Oil	Copra	D.C.	Fresh nuts	Fibre
1972	40.0%	15.7%	24.0%	1.3%	19.0%
1971	44.5%	7.2%	30.9%	1.1%	16.3%

6. Copra Sales

	Sales (Candies)
Total copra sales 1972	707,118
Total copra sales 1971	589,207

Conversion Rates

1 Ton of copra	=	5,000 nuts
1 Ton of C'Oil	=	8,125 nuts
1 Ton of D.C.	=	6,900 nuts
1 Candy	=	560 lbs.

RAINFALL (STATIONS IN COCONUT GROWING AREAS) 1972

Month	Chilaw	Madampe	Puttalam	Kurumegala	Lanuwila
January	2.64	0.37	0.49	0.27	0.00
February	5.15	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
March	16.26	1.70	1.22	3.61	2.79
April	7.02	7.39	5.99	16.18	6.14
May	0.00	11.27	11.31	21.13	19.65
June	0.89	0.63	0.04	6.19	4.44
July	0.00	0.64	0.33	4.89	2.37
August	13.70	0.38	0.06	1.77	0.50
September	4.22	8.04	2.92	5.35	7.67
October	2.13	13.33	24.21	28.91	21.33
November	0.08	4.93	10.79	19.50	9.31
December	0.29	4.62	7.00	7.59	4.52
<b>Total</b>	<b>4.37</b>	<b>4.44</b>	<b>5.36</b>	<b>9.62</b>	<b>6.56</b>

**MONTHLY AVERAGE PRICES OF COCONUT PRODUCTS 1972**

Month	COPRA Per Candy		COIL Per Ton		D.C. Per lb.	
	1971	1972	1971	1972	1971	1972
	Rs. Cts.	Rs. Cts.	Rs. Cts.	Rs. Cts.	Rs. Cts.	Rs. Cts.
January	250.53	192.10	1,545.24	1,250.00	0.64	0.54
February	244.17	183.29	1,535.00	1,204.74	0.56	0.54
March	237.31	191.27	1,526.00	1,170.24	0.52	0.59
April	214.60	184.58	1,469.44	1,152.06	0.52	0.65
May	211.10	184.97	1,392.20	1,114.28	0.56	0.62
June	205.67	171.37	1,329.75	1,054.28	0.59	0.59
July	211.30	167.66	1,388.60	924.25	0.65	0.59
August	210.38	199.77	1,414.77	951.82	0.67	0.63
September	207.24	228.74	1,405.68	1,076.32	0.61	0.66
October	203.75	214.26	1,359.50	1,248.40	0.55	0.67
November	186.75	211.09	1,285.00	1,226.00	0.52	0.57
December	174.95	228.94	1,251.00	1,250.00	0.54	0.66
Average	213.15	196.50	1,408.49	1,135.20	0.58	0.61
% departure		-7.81%		-19.40%		+5.17%