The Cocommunity

Monthly Newsletter of the International Coconut Community

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THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SPEAKS

"Coconuts: From Knowledge to Action—Driving Progress in the Global Coconut Industry"

The coconut industry stands at a crossroads, driven by groundbreaking scientific discoveries, global recognition, and the pressing need to modernize aging plantations. This edition of COCOMUNITY celebrates these milestones and emphasizes the call for transformative action to harness the full potential of this extraordinary crop.

With ongoing research, coconuts continue to reveal invaluable insights into their health benefits, environmental applications, and market versatility. One compelling innovation is the creation of biodegradable, sustainable leather alternatives from coconut water. This remarkable product offers a vegan, eco-friendly solution that decomposes within 150 days and replicates the durability of traditional leather—all without the use of aggressive chemicals. However, for such innovations to make a meaningful impact, their production must be economically feasible, ensuring accessibility and affordability for both industries and consumers. Achieving this balance is critical to unlocking the true potential of coconut by-products in addressing global sustainability challenges.

The recent celebration of Coconut Day reaffirmed the importance of this "tree of life" in global agriculture and industry. This occasion honored the contributions of farmers, researchers, and stakeholders, while serving as a reminder of our collective responsibility to sustain and enhance the coconut sector. It is also a time to reflect on the blessings of this versatile palm and the necessity of fostering its progress.

Recognizing the challenges posed by aging plantations, several countries are taking bold steps to secure the future of their coconut industries. High-yielding, disease-resistant varieties are being developed, and replanting initiatives are gaining momentum. The Philippines, for instance, has launched an ambitious program through the Philippine Coconut Authority (PCA), aiming to plant 1 million hectares of new coconut palms by 2028. Such programs reflect a strong commitment to revitalizing the sector, meeting market demands, and unlocking the full potential of the coconut economy.

However, innovation alone is not enough. To ensure the industry's success, robust support for research and development, farmer empowerment, and market expansion is essential. These efforts must be underpinned by effective strategies, collaborations, and tangible actions that translate ideas into impactful results. As we move forward, the time for planning has passed—it is now time for action. From cutting-edge research to on-the-ground implementation, every stakeholder has a role to play in building a resilient, innovative, and sustainable coconut industry.

This issue of COCOMUNITY explores these themes in detail, highlighting the latest advancements, sharing success stories, and providing practical steps to drive meaningful progress. Together, let us turn knowledge into action and secure a brighter, more sustainable future for the global coconut community.

DR. JELFINA C. ALOUW
Executive Director

PREVAILING MARKET PRICES OF SELECTED COCONUT PRODUCTS AND OILS

In August 2024, the prices of various coconut-related products witnessed a significant rise across major producing countries, including the Philippines, Indonesia, India, and Sri Lanka. Coconut Oil (CNO) prices increased in all four nations, while Desiccated Coconut (DC) also saw price hikes across these key markets.

COPRA: In August 2024, copra prices in Indonesia surged to USD 841 per metric ton, marking a substantial increase from USD 746 per metric ton in the preceding month and a remarkable rise of USD 225 per metric ton compared to the same period in the previous year. Similarly, the Philippines witnessed an uptick in copra prices, climbing from USD 680 per metric ton in July 2024 to USD 780 per metric ton in August 2024. This increase represented a USD 143 per metric ton advantage over the corresponding period in the prior year, which recorded prices at USD 637 per metric ton.

COCONUT OIL: In August 2024, coconut oil prices demonstrated a coordinated upward trend across major producing countries, including India, Indonesia, the Philippines, and Sri Lanka. In the European market (C.I.F. Rotterdam), the average price surged to USD 1,610 per metric ton, marking a 46% increase compared to the previous year. Similarly, the Philippines reported a local market price of USD 1,543 per metric ton, reflecting a USD 406 rise from the same period in 2023. Indonesia experienced a significant price increase as well, with local prices reaching USD 1,530 per metric ton in August 2024, up from USD 1,390 per metric ton in July 2024, and representing a USD 433 increase compared to August 2023.

COPRA MEAL: In August 2024, the average domestic price of copra meal in the Philippines declined to USD 94 per metric ton, marking a decrease from the previous month and a significant drop of USD 172 per metric ton compared to the same period in the previous year. In contrast, Indonesia experienced an increase in its average domestic copra meal price, reaching USD 251 per metric ton in August 2024. However, despite this rise, the price remained USD 16 per metric ton lower than the corresponding period in 2023.

DESICCATED COCONUT: In August 2024, the average Free on Board (FOB) price of Desiccated Coconut (DC) in the USA rose to US$2,124 per metric ton, reflecting an increase compared to the previous month. Sri Lanka saw a rise in its domestic price of DC, reaching US$2,367 per metric ton, while the Philippines maintained a stable domestic price at US$2,039 per metric ton. Indonesia's FOB price for DC also increased, reaching US$2,030 per metric ton, surpassing the previous year's price of US$1,400 per metric ton.

COCONUT SHELL CHARCOAL: In August 2024, the average price of coconut shell charcoal in the Philippines rose to US$381 per metric ton, reflecting an increase of US$11 per metric ton compared to the previous month. In Indonesia, the average price reached US$515 per metric ton during the same period, showing an uptick from the prior month. Meanwhile, Sri Lanka experienced a significant price increase, rising to US$415 per metric ton from US$381 per metric ton.

COIR FIBRE: In August 2024, the domestic trade of coir products in Sri Lanka reported a price of US$68 per metric ton for mixed fiber, while bristle fiber ranged between US$425 and US$693 per metric ton. During the same period, Indonesia maintained a price of US$116 per metric ton for mixed raw fiber, reflecting an increase from the previous year's price of US$90 per metric ton.

Price of Coconut Products and Selected Oils (US$/MT)

Products/Country	2024 Aug	2024 Jul	2023 Aug	2024 (Annual Ave.)
Dehusked Coconut				
Philippines (Domestic)	146	137	124	142
Indonesia (Domestic, Industry Use)	196	180	138	192
Sri Lanka (Domestic, Industry Use)	301	274	193	240
India (Domestic Kerala)	478	478	394	476
Copra				
Philippines (Dom. Manila)	780	680	637	667
Indonesia (Dom. Java)	841	746	616	717
Sri Lanka (Dom. Colombo)	1,312	1,297	964	1,171
India (Dom. Kochi)	1,254	1,216	1,016	1,190
Coconut Oil				
Philippines/Indonesia (CIF Rott.)	1,610	1,473	1,102	1,357
Philippines (Domestic)	1,543	1,406	1,137	1,280
Indonesia (Domestic)	1,530	1,390	1,097	1,289
Sri Lanka (Domestic)	2,314	2,288	1,783	2,065
India (Domestic, Kerala)	2,047	1,931	1,628	1,885
Desiccated Coconut				
Philippines FOB (US), Seller	2,124	2,012	1,690	1,921
Philippines (Domestic)	2,039	2,039	2,039	2,039
Sri Lanka (Domestic)	2,367	2,257	1,574	2,035
Indonesia (FOB)	2,030	1,950	1,400	1,958
India (Domestic)	1,883	1,742	1,522	1,764
Copra Meal Exp. Pel.				
Philippines (Domestic)	94	116	266	177
Sri Lanka (Domestic)	298	299	271	301
Indonesia (Domestic)	251	240	267	249
Coconut Shell Charcoal				
Philippines (Domestic), Buyer	381	370	350	366
Sri Lanka (Domestic)	415	381	321	375
Indonesia (Domestic Java), Buyer	515	462	459	463
India (Domestic)	435	436	338	400
Coir Fibre				
Sri Lanka (Mattress/Short Fibre)	68	64	51	64
Sri Lanka (Bristle 1 tie)	425	420	404	429
Sri Lanka (Bristle 2 tie)	693	684	602	652
Indonesia (Mixed Raw Fibre)	116	110	90	111
Other Oil				
Palm Kernel Oil Mal/Indo (CIF Rott.)	1,480	1,365	998	1,209
Palm Oil Crude, Mal/Indo (CIF Rott.)	933	896	861	893
Soybean Oil (Europe FOB Ex Mill)	1,031	1,079	1,127	989

Exchange Rate

Aug 31, '24 1 US$ = P56.24 or Rp15,452 or India Rs83.88 or SL Rs299.19

1 Euro = US$ 1.11 n.q. = no quote

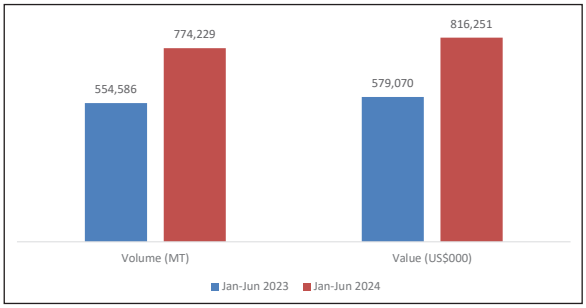
MARKET REVIEW OF COCONUT OIL

In 2024, the global market for lauric oils experienced significant price increases, mainly driven by constrained supply. Between January and August, the price of palm oil rose sharply from US$978 per metric ton (MT) to US$1,480 per MT, while coconut oil prices increased from US$1,126 per MT to US$1,610 per MT over the same period. These trends underscore the tight supply conditions and escalating demand that continue to shape the market, with further price increases anticipated in the coming months.

The supply dynamics in key producing countries during the first half of 2024 reflected varying performances. The Philippines, as a leading exporter of coconut oil, reported a significant increase in exports. Data from the United Coconut Association of the Philippines showed that exports reached 774,229 tons, generating US$816.3 million in revenue, a 44.8% increase in volume compared to the same period in 2023. This surge was fueled by heightened global demand and improved supply. Major destinations for these exports included the Netherlands, the United States, and Malaysia.

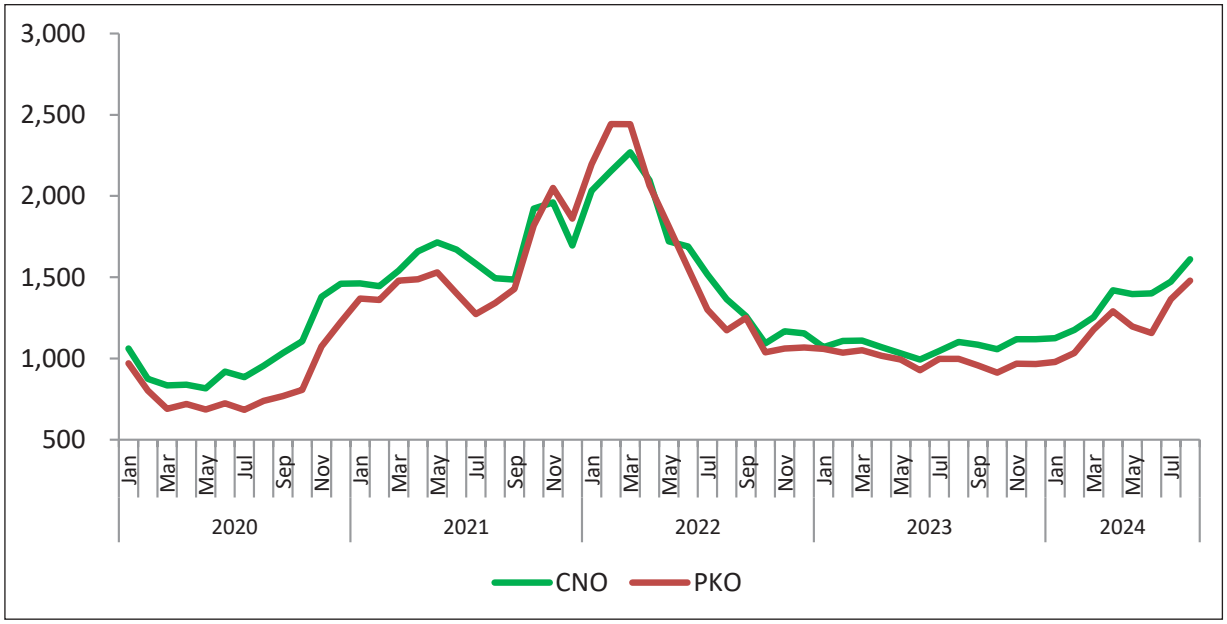
In contrast, Indonesia faced challenges in maintaining its coconut oil export volumes. Shipments decreased by 10.6%, totaling 392,541 MT during the first seven months of 2024. Despite this decline, export earnings rose to US$458 million from US$439.8 million, reflecting higher unit prices. Key export markets included the Netherlands, China, Sri

Figure 2. Philippines' Export of Coconut Oil, January-June 2023/24



Source: UCAP & ITC

Figure 1. Price of Lauric Oils, January 2019 – August 2024, (USD/MT)



Source: ICC

Table 1. Exports of Lauric Oils from Indonesia

		Jan-Jul 2023	Jan-Jul 2024	Change (%)
Coconut Oil	Volume (MT)	439,119	392,541	-10.6
	Value (USD'000)	439,769	458,016	4.1
Palm Kernel Oil	Volume (MT)	571,065	894,796	56.7
	Value (USD'000)	563,305	857,285	52.2
Lauric Oils	Volume (MT)	1,010,184	1,287,337	27.4
	Value (USD'000)	1,003,074	1,315,301	31.1

Source: BPS-Statistics Indonesia

Table 2. European Union (EU28) Imports of Lauric Oils

		Jan-Jul 2023	Jan-Jul 2024	Change (%)
Coconut Oils	Volume (MT)	603,818	612,868	1.5
	Value (USD'000)	859,222	878,280	2.2
Palm Kernel Oils	Volume (MT)	456,445	428,708	-6.1
	Value (USD'000)	658,362	566,450	-14.0
Lauric Oils	Volume (MT)	1,060,263	1,041,576	-1.8
	Value (USD'000)	1,517,584	1,444,730	-4.8

Source: ITC

Table 3. US Imports of Lauric Oils

		Jan-Jul 2023	Jan-Jul 2024	Change (%)
Coconut Oils	Volume (MT)	663,275	652,365	-1.6
	Value (USD'000)	900,240	931,933	3.5
Palm Kernel Oils	Volume (MT)	517,545	499,993	-3.4
	Value (USD'000)	710,636	582,970	-18.0
Lauric Oils	Volume (MT)	1,180,819	1,152,358	-2.4
	Value (USD'000)	1,610,877	1,514,903	-6.0

Source: The U.S. Census Bureau, Economic Indicators Division

Lanka, Philippines, Malaysia, and the United States. The decrease in export volume was primarily due to limited raw material availability, with reduced coconut production affecting copra supplies. This shortage led to a significant rise in the prices of coconuts and copra, further straining supply chains.

Demand in major markets such as Europe and the United States also exhibited notable changes during this period. In Europe, lauric oil imports declined by 4.8% between January and July 2024, primarily due to a 6.1% reduction in palm kernel oil imports. However, demand for coconut oil rose by 1.5%, reflecting a shift in preference driven by the anticipated implementation of the European Union Deforestation Regulation (EUDR), which targets commodities like palm oil.

In the United States, lauric oil imports decreased by 2.4% during the same period, influenced by a 3.4% drop in palm kernel oil imports and a 1.6% decline in coconut oil imports. The economic slowdown in the United States was a significant factor contributing to this decrease, as reduced economic activity dampened overall demand.

The developments in the lauric oils market during 2024 highlight a complex interplay of supply constraints, price volatility, and shifting consumption patterns. While the Philippines leveraged strong global demand to achieve record export volumes, Indonesia faced production challenges that constrained supply. Meanwhile, evolving regulatory frameworks and economic conditions in Europe and the United States are reshaping global trade flows, favoring certain oils over others. As the year progresses, these factors are expected to continue influencing the market, with prices likely to remain on an upward trajectory.

COMMUNITY NEWS

COCONUT FESTIVAL 2024: PROMOTING SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE AND CIRCULAR ECONOMY IN INDIA'S COCONUT SECTOR

Dr. Jelfina C. Alouw, Executive Director of the International Coconut Community (ICC), and Mr. Alit Pirmansah, Market and Statistic Officer, participated in the Coconut Festival 2024, held at the Anna Auditorium of Tamil Nadu Agricultural University (TNAU) in Coimbatore, India. The event was a collaborative effort between TNAU, the Parachute Kalpavriksha Foundation, and the Coconut Development Board (CDB), featuring a symposium, exhibition, and an awards ceremony honoring key stakeholders for their significant contributions to India's coconut sector.

The event was inaugurated by Coimbatore Collector Kranthi Kumar Pati, who emphasized the importance of mechanization in coconut farming. He encouraged farmers to adopt technologies such as harvesters, coconut peeling machines, and fertilizer-spraying drones to enhance productivity and reduce costs, particularly in light of the current labor shortages.

Dr. Jelfina C. Alouw delivered the keynote address. She said that this year, we are celebrating the coconut festival under a timely and visionary theme "Coconut for a Circular Economy & Partnership for Maximum Value." This theme reflects the essence of what the coconut industry must aspire to in the years ahead—a sustainable, inclusive, and innovative approach that maximizes the value of every part of the coconut, from the tree to the fruit, and beyond. She expressed the ICC's commitment to fostering partnerships and supporting initiatives that drive the transition to a circular economy. Other distinguished speakers included Dr. V. Geethalakshmi, Vice-Chancellor of TNAU, Nitin Kathuria, Director of the Parachute Kalpavriksha Foundation; Kamatchi Chellammal, recipient of the 2024 Padma Shri Award and Dr. Hanumantha Gowda, Chief Coconut Development Officer at CDB.

The symposium was divided into two sessions. The first session underscored the importance of collaboration within the coconut industry to promote sustainable agriculture, featuring nine speakers, including Dr. Alouw, who shared insights on global opportunities and partnerships within the coconut industry. The second session, with eight speakers, focused on the role of coconuts in a circular economy, highlighting innovations aimed at fostering a sustainable future. *(ICC News)*

ICC EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR APPLAUDS ADVANCEMENTS IN COCONUT TISSUE CULTURE AT INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY, HO CHI MINH CITY

Dr. Jelfina C. Alouw, Executive Director of the International Coconut Community (ICC), visited the International University, part of Vietnam National University Ho Chi Minh City (VNU-HCMC), to observe the cutting-edge research being conducted in coconut tissue culture. This visit, part of her ongoing efforts to strengthen collaborations within the coconut industry, was particularly focused on the developments at the university's Applied Biotechnology for Crop Development (ABCD) Research Unit.

Dr. Jelfina was warmly welcomed by TS. Lê Thị Vân Anh, a Researcher at the Center for Infectious Disease Research, and Tran Binh-Minh, BSc., a Researcher specializing in Plant Tissue Culture and Germplasm Conservation. Mr. Minh, who was invited by the ICC to present at the Tissue Culture Training Program at Central Plantation Crops Research Institute (CPCRI), Kasaragod, India, in 2022, provided Dr. Jelfina with an in-depth presentation on the progress of coconut tissue culture in the university.

The ABCD Research Unit, under the leadership of Associate Professor Nguyễn Phương Thảo, who is also the Director of the Research Center for

Infectious Diseases (RCID), has made significant strides in coconut tissue culture, particularly in the development and enhancement of Coconut Axillary Meristems (COAXIM) technology. This technology was originally developed and patented by Dr. Bartolomeus Panis and his team in Belgium to support the replanting program of senile palms and production improvement. Dr. Panis has shared this technology to all participants of the ICC-COGENT tissue culture workshop, funded by ACIAR and DFAT. This achievement is a critical advancement for the mass production of high-quality coconut seedlings, which is essential for enhancing the genetic diversity and resilience of coconut crops. The unit's research also focuses on cryopreservation and germplasm conservation, ensuring that valuable coconut varieties are preserved for future generations.

Dr. Jelfina expressed her satisfaction with the progress and positive results achieved by the team at the ABCD Research Unit. She highlighted the importance of this research for the future of the coconut industry in Vietnam and other ICC member countries. Mr. Minh's involvement, as a young and talented researcher, signals a bright future for the industry, with innovative approaches to improving crop resilience and productivity through tissue culture techniques.

The visit underscored the pivotal role that research and development play in the sustainability and growth of the coconut industry. With the continued efforts of researchers like Mr. Minh and the support of institutions like the ICC, the future of coconut cultivation in Vietnam and beyond looks promising. *(ICC News)*

FP UNS LECTURER RESEARCHES KOPYOR, UNIQUE INDONESIAN COCONUT FAMOUS WORLDWIDE

Mercy Bientri Yunindanova, S.P., M.Si., a lecturer from the Faculty of Agriculture (FP) at Universitas Sebelas Maret (UNS) Surakarta, has successfully identified the unique compounds in Kopyor coconut, a distinctive coconut native to Indonesia. Mercy, a lecturer in the Agrotechnology Study Program, is currently pursuing her doctoral studies at Osaka University, Japan.

Mercy said she was drawn to Kopyor by its uniqueness and exclusivity in Indonesia.

"She is motivated by the ambition to globally promote Kopyor." "In this research, I am guided by Professor Eiichiro Fukusaki, Dr. Sastia Prama Putri, and Prof. Henky Novarianto," Mercy explained.

Her research is in collaboration with the National Research and Innovation Agency (BRIN) of Indonesia and is funded by research grants from the Indonesia Endowment Fund for Education (LPDP). The Kopyor samples were obtained through cooperation with the government of Pati Regency, Central Java, and local Kopyor farmers in Pati.

"Kopyor is a unique coconut from Indonesia, one of the largest coconut producers in the world. Globally, there are other unique coconuts like Macapuno from the Philippines and Curd Coconut from Thailand," she added.

Unlike regular coconuts, kopyor coconuts have a soft endosperm or flesh. Despite being one of the most popular coconuts worldwide, limited research exists on its properties, including sensory attributes and metabolite profiles.

Mercy studied the characteristics of Kopyor using sensory evaluation, metabolomics approaches, and multivariate analysis. Sensory evaluation involves testing the sensory properties of Kopyor, including taste, flavor, aroma, aftertaste, mouthfeel, texture, and color of both the water and flesh. Metabolomics is the comprehensive identification of metabolites (compounds in biological samples) in plants and fruits using specific instruments such as GC-MS (Gas Chromatography-Mass Spectrometry) and LC-MS (Liquid

Chromatography-Mass Spectrometry), along with multivariate analysis.

The research revealed that Kopyor has distinctive characteristics compared to normal young and mature coconuts. The water and flesh of Kopyor have a more complex taste compared to regular young and mature coconuts. This study is the first to analyze the sensory attributes and metabolomics of Kopyor. Metabolomics analysis showed that Kopyor contains a wider variety of metabolites, including higher levels of amino acids, organic acids, and sugars, than normal coconuts of the same age.

“Based on differential and orthogonal regression analysis, Kopyor water is characterized by the accumulation of compounds related to taste, such as amino acids and organic acids, which contribute to its sensory complexity,” Mercy stated.

Mercy’s research highlights the significant potential of Kopyor as a functional food source, supporting the sustainability of Indonesia’s coconut industry. Additionally, her research can be a reference for studies on other unique coconuts worldwide. Her findings were published in the Journal of Bioscience and Bioengineering in 2024, under the title “Characteristics of Kopyor coconut (Cocos nucifera L.) using sensory analysis and metabolomics-Based Approach.” *(UNS News)*

MINISTER HASAN SENDS OFF COCONUT PRODUCT EXPORTS WORTH US$1.5 MILLION

The Indonesian Trade Minister, Zulkifli Hasan, released export consignments of Lampung-produced coconut derivative products, with a total value reaching Rp25.3 billion (around US$1.5 million), to Australia, the Netherlands, China, and Tanzania.

Speaking in South Lampung District, Lampung Province, Hasan stated that the exported products included coconut water, coconut milk, and desiccated coconut.

Hasan stated that the government would continue helping domestic businesses export Indonesian goods to countries that cannot produce them.

"As a coconut-producing country, we wield a comparative advantage of having the capacity to send coconuts to non-producing countries," he affirmed.

The minister also spoke highly of Indonesia's downstreaming policy, which has pushed the country to boost the value of its commodities.

"Through downstreaming processes, we can now process more coconuts into various derivative products besides copra, such as coconut flour, coconut milk powder, liquid coconut milk, coconut water, and nata de coco (coconut gel)," he stated.

Moreover, he affirmed that the downstreaming policy encourages people to ensure that no part of the coconut is wasted. In this context, Hasan said that coconut shells can be processed into activated carbon while coconut fiber can be used as a material for vehicle seats.

Meanwhile, Agus Susanto, a representative for the exporting company PT Sari Segar Husada, remarked that his side would make the send-off activity a routine.

"Today, we dispatched 1,500 metric tons of export consignments for the August period. We will make this activity a routine," he remarked.

Susanto further stressed that his company will maintain product quality to keep importing countries' trust.

"We have received demands from other countries as well, such as France, the United States, and the Philippines. Coconut drinks, desiccated coconuts, and coconut milk have been the most demanded products," he remarked. *(Antara)*

COCONUT FARMWORKERS EQUIPPED WITH GOOD AGRICULTURAL PRACTICES IN SIARGAO, PHILIPPINES

In an effort to boost agricultural productivity and improve the livelihoods of local coconut farmworkers, the International Labour Organization (ILO) is equipping these workers with the knowledge and skills necessary to enhance their farming methods. Through a cash-for-work initiative, the ILO is providing training on Good Agricultural Practices (GAP), which will enable farmworkers to adopt more sustainable and effective techniques in coconut planting and cultivation.

This initiative not only aims to improve the quality and yield of coconut production but also ensures that farmworkers receive immediate financial support through the cash-for-work programme implemented by the ILO's Rebuilding better coconut economy project in partnership with the Government of Japan. By integrating capacity building with economic support, the ILO is fostering both short-term relief and long-term development in Siargao's coconut farming communities.

With the support of the Philippine Coconut Authority (PCA), significant steps are being taken to boost the coconut farming sector in Siargao. As part of a comprehensive capacity-building initiative, high-yielding and improved coconut varieties will be planted in selected beneficiary farms located in San Isidro, Pilar, and Del Carmen. These new varieties, known for their sweeter taste, are particularly suited for green coconut consumption—a key element in supporting Siargao's shift towards a tourism-driven economy.

The theoretical part of the training was held at the Tropical Academy in San Isidro and the practical and hands-on training was done on the field of a partner coconut farmer. The farm owner will later continue the lay-outing, staking, holing and planting, building on the work done during the training. The owner has cleared the field of the debris from the typhoon, enabling faster movement of workers and flow of materials.

The training team was composed of partner government agencies led by five PCA agriculturists assigned to the different municipalities in the island of Siargao and supported by three personnel from the municipal agriculture office of Del Carmen and Pilar. *(ILO News)*

CEYLON CHAMBER OF COCONUT INDUSTRIES INAUGURATED TO REINVIGORATE SRI LANKA'S COCONUT INDUSTRY

Marking a new beginning for Sri Lanka's coconut industry, the Ceylon Chamber of Coconut Industries (CCCI) at the National Chamber of Commerce was inaugurated this week, with a mid-term target to boost the annual production to 4.5 billion nuts and generate US $ 3-4.5 billion export revenue.

The CCCI has garnered support from key industry associations, bringing together a total of eight founding members committed to advancing Sri Lanka's coconut industry. These associations include the Coconut Growers Association of Sri Lanka, Exporters Association of Coconut Based Substrates, Sri Lanka Virgin Coconut Oil Manufacturers Association, Coconut Product Manufacturers and Exporters Association, Ceylon Desiccated Coconut Manufacturers Association, Ceylon Coir Fiber Manufacturers Association, Coconut Milk Manufacturers Association and All-Ceylon Coconut Oil Manufacturers Association.

As the first organization of its kind in Sri Lanka, the CCCI aims to harness the vast potential of the nation's coconut industry. The industry contributes significantly to the economy, with annual export revenues exceeding US $ 800 million. By fostering collaboration across all industry sectors, the CCCI aspires to elevate the Sri Lankan coconut products' quality and global competitiveness, targeting an export revenue of US $ 1.5 billion.

Notably, the formation of the CCCI has been facilitated by the United Nations Industrial Development Organisation within the scope of the European Union-funded BESPA-Food project and Ernst & Young. This collaboration is poised to propel Sri Lanka's coconut sector to new global heights of prosperity.

The chamber's initiatives include developing a 10-year strategic plan, advocating for coherent national policies and supporting research and development efforts to ensure the industry's long-term success. With a strategic focus on sustainability, value addition and technology integration, the CCCI is positioning Sri Lanka as a leader in the global coconut industry. *(Daily Mirror)*

MODI TO RELEASE 2 NEW COCONUT AND COCOA VARIETIES DEVELOPED IN KARNATAKA

The unveiling will take place at the Bharat Ratna C Subramaniam Auditorium, NASC Complex in New Delhi. These varieties will be part of the 109 crop varieties developed by ICAR which will be released by the PM.

The varieties to be released are coconut varieties— Kalpa Suvarna and Kalpa Shatabdi.

A release from CPCRI, Kasaragod, said the Kalpa Suvarna is a dwarf, high-yielding, dual-purpose coconut variety with green-coloured, oblong fruits, with sweet tender coconut water and good quality copra. It is an early flowering variety (30-36 months after planting), suitable for processing for tender coconut water and copra production. The variety yields 108-130 nuts/palm/year, under good management and it is recommended for cultivation in Kerala and Karnataka.

The Kalpa Shatabdi is a tall, dual purpose coconut variety, with large fruits, suitable for copra and tender nut production. It bears greenish-yellow fruits with greater volume (612 mL) of good quality tender nut water. It yields high copra content (273 g). The variety yields 105-148 nuts/palm/year, under good management and is suitable for cultivation in Kerala, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu. *(Deccan Herald)*

8 INNOVATIVE VENTURES TURNING THE HUMBLE COCONUT INTO VALUABLE ECO-CONSCIOUS PRODUCTS

In a joint family setting, coconut slices were a popular snack at gatherings and festivals due to the combination of crunchy brown shell and soft white flesh. Additionally, coconut water is known for its refreshing taste. Coconuts have been integrated into daily life for generations, providing various benefits. In India, a transformation is taking place amidst the coconut palm groves and the soothing sounds of the sea.Numerous entrepreneurs are creating a ripple with valuable coconut-based products, creating their own unique blends of tradition, sustainability, and innovation. Here are eight such stories of transforming this humble staple into something extraordinary.

Purvina

When the COVID-19 lockdown brought Jaya Avnoor's various businesses to a standstill, she and her daughter Parvathy saw an opportunity to revive a cherished family tradition and create something meaningful. Together, they launched Purvina in Malappuram, Kerala, focusing on ventha velichenna—virgin coconut oil crafted through a meticulous, labour-intensive process.

The inspiration came from Parvathy's grandfather, whose Alzheimer's symptoms were eased by this traditional remedy. "Beyond selling, our dream is to educate people about the benefits of ventha velichenna and make Purvina synonymous with this magic oil," says Parvathy. Extracting just 250 ml of oil from 10 coconuts, the process is painstaking, but the purity is unmatched.

This versatile oil serves as a moisturiser, makeup remover, wrinkle preventer, and even a salad dressing. With 100% of their workforce being

women, Purvina now sells 350 litres monthly, gaining recognition across India for its authenticity.

Cancrie

"It took us almost 10 to 12 years before we started selling. It gives me immense contentment that we have brought this product to such a level," reflects Akshay Jain. Alongside Mahi Singh, Akshay co-founded Cancrie, a Jaipur-based startup pioneering the use of coconut shells to produce nanocarbon for batteries.

Their patented nanocarbon not only boosts battery efficiency by 125% but also extends the lifespan and range of batteries, reducing the environmental impact.

Their journey began during their academic years in Singapore, where they researched upcycling agricultural waste. "We're using waste to make nanocarbons, increasing efficiencies and reducing mining for rare earth metals," explains Akshay. As the startup sets new standards in energy storage, over 11,000 batteries with Cancrie nanocarbon have made it to the domestic market in Delhi, Navi Mumbai, and Pune.

Greenaura

Sumila Jayaraj, a homemaker from Engandiyur, Kerala, found her path to entrepreneurship after her children left for studies and her husband moved abroad for work. With no prior business experience, Sumila joined a local company manufacturing virgin coconut oil and discovered a deep passion for coconut-based products. This experience laid the foundation for her own venture, Greenaura, launched in 2021.

The brand offers 13 organic coconut products, including cold-pressed virgin coconut oil, made using a nutrient-preserving centrifugal method. Despite challenges, Sumila now earns Rs 20 lakh monthly, with customers spanning the United States, the United Kingdom, Australia, and Malaysia.

"I couldn't even have thought about this life. Certainly, it was a fulfilling journey," she shares. Today, she's a sought-after speaker at universities and international exhibitions, inspiring others with her unexpected journey from homemaker to successful entrepreneur.

Tengin

As Madhu Kargund grew up helping his farmer father in the fields, he saw the dark side of farming where the life of a farmer is completely dependent on climate and rain patterns. After eight years as a software engineer, his farming roots in Arsikere, Karnataka, drew him back in 2018, inspiring him to launch his startup, Tengin, aimed at helping farmers earn fair profits by transforming coconut parts into a range of products.

"It's not just about selling products; we're also sharing the stories of the hardworking farmers behind them," he says. Madhu ensures zero waste by utilizing every part of the coconut—from shell to coir. In doing so, he advocates for the circular economy approach, an innovative concept that addresses coconut waste challenges while promoting economic growth.

He works with over 20 farmers, along with nearly 15 women from Self-Help Groups to create several coconut-based products, including virgin coconut oil, soaps, scrubs, and crockery. Earning monthly revenues of Rs 5 lakh, he also educates customers about the origins of these products, positioning Tengin as a brand that supports local livelihoods while promoting environmental responsibility.

Thenga

"It has been my childhood dream to start a business of my own, but I did not have an idea about what it could be," says Maria Kuriakose, who is now the founder of Thenga, which was launched in 2019. Inspired by the waste she saw at a coconut oil mill, Maria decided to repurpose discarded coconut

shells into eco-friendly products. With her father's help, she developed low-cost machinery to craft bowls, teacups, and candles.

Since 2020, Thenga has stood as a model of sustainability, saving over 5,25,000 coconuts from going to landfills. They sell an average of 11,500 products monthly and employ 20 local artisans from Thrissur, Kottayam, and Wayanad to handcraft the products. Maria has expanded her product range and grown her business across Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, and Kerala.

Sunbird Straws

Saji Varghese, a 55-year-old English professor at Christ University, Bengaluru, developed an innovative way to combat plastic pollution by creating biodegradable straws from discarded coconut leaves. Inspired by the waste he observed on campus, Saji harnessed the natural properties of coconut leaves to make straws that are hydrophobic and anti-fungal.

With support from organizations like Accenture and HCL, he launched Sunbird Straws and set up production units in Tamil Nadu and Kerala, employing 107 women. "The straws have been able to prevent the burning of coconut leaves, have helped reduce the usage of plastic straws and have empowered women in rural communities. All of this from a straw worth Rs 3. I think that is the kind of impact we must all strive for," says Saji.

Today, Sunbird Straws caters to 68 hotels in Bengaluru and exports to 10 countries, including Spain and the UK. The company manufactures 30,000 straws per day, making a significant environmental and social impact.

Evlogia Eco Care

Building on the success of coconut leaf straws, another eco-friendly innovation has emerged from Bengaluru. Evlogia Eco Care, founded by Manigandan Kumarappan in 2018, produces 'Kokos Leafy Straws' from discarded coconut leaves. These straws are crafted through a detailed process that starts with women from Self-Help Groups in Tamil Nadu collecting and preparing the leaves. They also produce eco-friendly cutlery like plates and spoons.

At the Bengaluru production unit, local women roll the leaves into sturdy straws that can last up to six hours in cold beverages. Initially producing just 100 straws a day, the startup now manufactures 10,000 daily, supplying to countries like Canada, UAE, and Germany. "The coconut leaf straw is sturdy and does not get soggy like paper straws," says Nakul, who purchases straws from Evlogia Eco Care for his cafe in Chikmagalur.

Malai Biomaterials Design

Zuzana Gombosova and Susmith C Suseelan co-founded Malai Biomaterials Design Pvt Ltd in Kerala, creating a sustainable leather alternative from coconut water. This innovative material, known as Malai, is produced through a unique fermentation process using coconut water, banana fiber, and natural dyes. The result is a vegan, biodegradable material that decomposes within 150 days and mimics the properties of leather. The best part? There are no aggressive chemicals used in the entire process.

Malai has been tested for durability and water resistance, earning certifications and recognition at international design events. With a production capacity of 200 square meters per month, Malai is gaining popularity among eco-conscious consumers and prestigious clients in Europe and the US. The PETA-approved company aims to expand its reach, making this eco-friendly alternative more accessible in the Indian market. *(The Better India)*

HONORING THE TREE OF LIFE DURING THE COCONUT WEEK

The nation celebrates Coconut Week this August, a long-standing tradition that recognizes the immense value of the coconut, often referred

to as the "tree of life." The Philippine Coconut Authority (PCA) leads the celebration with the theme Molding the Filipino Coconut Farmer: The Path to Economic Upliftment and a Prosperous New Philippines." This annual event highlights the crucial role that the coconut industry plays in the country's economy, culture, and the daily lives of millions of Filipinos, particularly coconut farmers.

Coconut Week is more than just a celebration; it's a time to reflect on the past, present, and future of the coconut industry. Various activities showcase the versatility and sustainability of coconut-based products throughout the week.

This year's theme emphasizes the support of coconut farmers, who are the backbone of the industry. Through the PCA, the government is committed to empowering these farmers through a variety of programs aimed at improving their livelihoods. These initiatives include distributing high-yield coconut seedlings, promoting intercropping practices, and providing financial assistance to help farmers recover from the challenges posed by climate change and other adversities.

A notable addition to this year's Coconut Week celebration is the involvement of Negosyo Advocates, an association of entrepreneurs promoting locally made products and encouraging consumers to "#buyfilipino" and "#buylocal". Negosyo Advocates hosted a roundtable discussion where entrepreneurs shared their experiences, challenges, and aspirations as micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) that use coconuts as their product base. They also organized "Good Food Sundays" in Mandaluyong City, showcasing coconut products and foods from various entrepreneurs and culinary enthusiasts. The event included an insightful discussion about the coconut industry and entrepreneurs' role in promoting coconut-based products for farmers.

The culmination of Negosyo Advocates' activities was a coconut culinary show at the PCA grounds. During the event, chefs prepared coconut-inspired recipes using high-quality coconut ingredients, providing nutritious and delicious food for PCA officials and employees to enjoy. The event highlighted the need for more entrepreneurs to advocate for coconut-based products, especially in the food industry.

The history and cultural heritage of the Philippines deeply embed coconuts. When Magellan's remaining ships reached Leyte Gulf, they discovered the coconut tree, which they called the "Tree of Life." They were amazed by how the natives used the tree for food, nutrition, medicine, shelter, and many other purposes. Today, modern technology has expanded the uses of coconuts, producing essential products such as soap, medicine, shampoo, jet fuel, cooking oil, and countless others.

Prior to Indonesia overtook it as the world's leading coconut producer, the Philippines boasted the greatest land area in the world planted with coconuts.

The coconut represents the Philippines' natural competitive advantage over other nations, with 69 out of the country's 82 provinces producing coconuts. Remarkably, just three countries, including the Philippines, account for over 80 percent of the world's coconut supply.

It's astonishing to learn that, according to PCA data, there are 345 million bearing coconut trees in the Philippines, producing 15 billion nuts annually. Yet, it's uncertain whether the country is fully utilizing this resource or merely scratching the surface of its potential.

Traditional coconut products, like coconut oil, are a major export from the Philippines to 57 countries. The country is the world's second-largest exporter of coco shell charcoal and supplies coco shell-based activated carbon to 99 international markets. Non-traditional products like coconut water are also significant, with exports reaching 78 countries. The Philippines is the top exporter of virgin coconut oil globally, further solidifying its natural competitive advantage.

Despite these achievements, more than 2.5 million coconut farmers in the Philippines face significant challenges. Unfortunately, despite the abundance of coconuts and success in both local and international markets, 90 percent of coconut farmers live below the poverty line, as stated in the Philippine Coconut Industry Roadmap 2021-2040. The coconut value chain appears to have overlooked coconut farmers. While businesses and entrepreneurs have grown wealthy, coconut farmers continue to struggle in poverty. With the average age of Filipino farmers between 57 and 59 years old, there is a growing concern that future generations may abandon farming altogether, leading to the conversion of agricultural lands for commercial and residential use, further threatening the nation's food security. Reports indicate that many farmers no longer wish their children to inherit the farming lifestyle, as it often leads to a life of hardship.

President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr.'s administration has committed to planting 100 million more coconut trees to replenish the country's coconut supply. However, Philippines must synchronize this initiative with efforts to develop and open more markets for both traditional and non-traditional coconut products. Additionally, there is a growing need to promote coconut-based foods and condiments developed by entrepreneurs in both domestic and international markets.

Now in its 38th year, the celebration of Coconut Week is a testament to the enduring importance of the coconut industry in the Philippines. It honors the ingenuity, hard work, and dedication of the millions of Filipinos who have made the coconut a vital part of the nation's heritage and future. We encourage every Filipino to honor the Tree of Life and ensure that it continues to thrive for generations to come. *(Philippine News Agency)*

ILOCOS TOWN HITS HALF OF 50-HA COCONUT PLANTATION TARGET

The municipality of Currimao has achieved 50% of its goal to establish a 50-hectare coconut plantation, which is intended to generate additional income for its residents.Engineer Erickson Biag, municipal agriculturist and environment and natural resources officer, told the Philippine News Agency on Wednesday that they have accomplished half of the town's coconut revolution bid after planting seedlings in 25 hectares of at least 50-hectare target.

He said they intend to plant coconut seedlings in idle lots and mountainous areas, and the target will be achieved after a partnership with the Philippine Coconut Authority (PCA), which will provide the seedlings to individuals or groups.

"If this becomes successful, this will benefit our coconut juice makers as they have been getting their coconut supply from Cagayan province," he added.

Biag mentioned that there is a high demand for coconut juice at the town's beautiful beaches, especially at Gaang Beach Cove. This beach is known for the Pangil Rocks Formation and a 2.8-kilometer seawall boulevard, which continue to attract tourists even at night. He said distribution of free Laguna variety coconut seedlings is ongoing and interested individuals or groups may visit the municipal agriculturist office.

The PCA, an agency under the Department of Agriculture (DA), is spearheading the planting of more coconut trees nationwide as part of the country's poverty alleviation program.

The agency said hybrid coconut has the potential to yield 150 to 300 nuts per year by utilizing hybrid technology with good agricultural practices.

Next to Indonesia, the Philippines is the second biggest coconut exporting country in the world as it accounts for about 43 percent of the country's total agricultural exports because of coconut oil and water.

In support of the national government's plan to have 100 million coconut trees planted by the

end of the Marcos administration, more local government units here such as in Pagudpud, Piddig, and Batac have included coconut in their greening programs while engaging other people's organizations with integrated social forestry projects to intercrop their existing crops such as coffee, banana, and pineapples with hybrid coconut trees.

For this year, the PCA aims to replant 8.5 million coconut seedlings in 59,744 hectares of land and fertilize 2.8 million trees in 28,341 hectares nationwide.

Philippine Statistics Authority (PSA) data showed that coconut production in Ilocos Region was estimated at 47,226.90 metric tons in 2022. The region contributed 0.32 percent to the national production of 14,931.16 thousand metric tons that year. *(Philippine News Agency)*

COCOGROW PROJECT LAUNCH: REVITALIZING SARANGANI'S COCONUT INDUSTRY FOR SUSTAINABLE FUTURE

The CocoGrow Project, a groundbreaking initiative by Cargill and ASSIST supported by the Philippine Coconut Authority, officially launched on August 22, 2024, at Barangay Bagacay, Alabel, Sarangani Province. This project aims to rejuvenate Sarangani's coconut industry by planting 75,000 coconut seedlings across three key municipalities: Alabel, Malapatan, and Malungon.

Focused on revitalizing coconut production, the project will introduce faster-growing, high-yield coconut varieties to replace aging, low-yield trees, and those damaged by recent natural calamities. Spanning 535 hectares of coconut farms, this initiative will directly benefit 500 smallholder farmers, with 50% of them being women.

In addition to replanting, the project promotes sustainable agricultural practices designed to boost local economies and increase farmer incomes. Given the coconut's critical role in the Philippines—contributing approximately 3.6% to the country's gross value-added (GVA) and solidifying its position as a leading global producer (PSA 2019, Lapina and Andal 2017)—this project offers both immediate and long-term benefits. The CocoGrow Project will not only secure the future of Sarangani's coconut industry but also support the economic resilience and sustainability of its communities.

At the heart of the project's success are seven dedicated farmers' cooperatives and associations, recognized as essential stakeholders.These groups will actively engage in capacity-building workshops to enhance their skills in critical areas such as improving consolidation processes, strategic and business planning, financial management, and cooperative governance. These efforts are aimed at strengthening the cooperatives' business acumen and governance, including policy formulation and access to credit facilities.

Jonathan Sumpaico, Cargill's Copra and Palm Origination Commercial Director, stated that, "We are honored to partner with ASSIST in strengthening Sarangani's coconut industry. This project reflects Cargill's unwavering commitment to building resilient agricultural communities and helping farmers thrive where we operate. Through this partnership, we aim to improve the livelihoods of Sarangani's coconut farmers in a safe, responsible, and sustainable manner, while also meeting the growing demand for sustainable coconut oil."

Francis Macatulad, ASSIST Executive Director, added, "We are taking a significant step towards revitalizing our cherished coconut industry. The launch of this project is more than just planting seedlings; it's about fostering hope, creating opportunities, and building a sustainable future for our communities. Through our partnership with Cargill, and with the invaluable support of the Philippine Coconut Authority, we are committed to nurturing the coconut industry while empowering farmers to harvest more opportunities, ultimately transforming the economic landscape of Sarangani Province."

Emily Lorion, Philippine Coconut Authority Region XII General Manager, expressed support, "Launching the CocoGrow Project is a great initiative. It will help enhance coconut tree cultivation in Sarangani Province, support farmers and stakeholders, and boost our economy by helping in strengthening the crucial coconut industry in the Philippines, particularly in Sarangani. We support Cargill, ASSIST and the CocoGrow project. Our office in the Philippine Coconut Authority, which has a mandate to continue to improve and develop our industry, will always be here to extend assistance through planting, fertilization, and other intercropping for our farmers. The same goes for our training, so that they can earn more and their livelihoods can progress further."

Supporters and stakeholders are encouraged to join this project in securing the future of the Philippine coconut industry and uplifting local communities. By backing sustainable agriculture and replanting initiatives, stakeholders can help farmers increase their incomes, strengthen the economy, and preserve the Philippines' status as a global leader in coconut production. Together, we are planting the seeds of positive change and fostering a thriving future for the coconut industry and generations to come. *(Food Tech Biz)*

PBBM OKAYS MORE BUDGET FOR COCONUT INDUSTRY'S 100 MILLION TREES PLANTING, FERTILIZATION PROGRAMS

President Ferdinand R. Marcos Jr. has approved an additional budget for the massive planting/ replanting and fertilization programs of the coconut industry for fiscal year (FY) 2025, amounting to Php1 billion and Php2.5 billion, respectively.

Under the Philippine Coconut Industry Development Plan 2024-2034 (PCIDP 2024-2034), the Philippine Coconut Industry aims to plant 100 million coconut trees by 2028.

To fully implement the project, the President also approved the proposal of the Philippine Coconut Authority (PCA) to increase the fertilization program budget to Php2.5 billion in 2025.

It was the President's response to his directive in October last year, made this approval on Tuesday, during a sectoral meeting in Malacañang for a detailed plan to develop the coconut industry across all areas of the value chain, along with the necessary funding and timeline to accomplish its targets.

"So that's why I'm focusing on the production side, and that's what we have to increase. The critical part of that is the replanting," the President said.

PCA Administrator Dexter Buted stated that the additional Php1 billion budget for the planting and replanting program will enable the planting of 15.3 million trees in 2025.

Under the program, the PCA will plant/replant a total of 100 million coconut seedlings on 700,000 hectares of land nationwide by 2028, aiming to increase coconut production by 4.7 billion nuts, valued at Php33.1 billion by 2034.

For this year, the PCA plans to plant 8.5 million seedlings, followed by 15.3 million in 2025, and 25.4 million annually from 2026 to 2028.

The President emphasized the importance of the replanting program due to the industry's significant potential. "That's why we still maintain our very high position in terms of coconut products exports because despite the fact that we have neglected the coconut industry over so many years, we still, I think the number one production," President Marcos said.

"And despite the fact that we are really working with very limited raw material because there hasn't been replanting, so our trees are all old. That's why this replanting is important," he added.

According to the President, there is a significant market for coconut products, and

he expects the private sector to purchase all the supply "because the market is so large and growing," and the industry has not yet reached the market's limit on coconut product demand.

The Department of Agriculture (DA) will also implement intercropping while farmers wait for the trees to become productive. Among the crops that will be planted are coffee, cacao, and bananas.

In order to successfully carry out the extensive planting/replanting initiative, the President further instructed the PCA to collaborate closely with the Cooperative Development Authority in order to unite farmers' associations and groupings.

The 10-year PCIDP plan was developed to address critical constraints, such as the low growth rate of the coconut industry in terms of production, low nut yields due to the aging coconut tree population, natural calamities, pests and diseases, poor farming practices, and insufficient budget allocation.

To implement the plan, the PCA has proposed a budget of Php102.02 billion over the 10-year period to cover the implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of the PPAs.

Farmers currently earn meager incomes due to their limited participation in the coconut value chain and inability to diversify into other coconut products aside from copra.

Current programs and projects in the industry include the development of hybrid coconut seed farms, nurseries for planting and replanting, research, training of farmers and their families, marketing and promotion, crop insurance, credit programs, infrastructure development, a scholarship program and a health and medical program.

There are also efforts for farm improvements through diversification and/or intercropping, shared facilities for processing, as well as the empowerment of coconut farmers' organizations and their cooperatives.

The Philippine coconut industry contributed US$3.22 billion to the country's export earnings in 2022, representing 43 percent of the country's total agricultural exports. *(Presidential Communications Office)*

AUSTRALIA BACKS GOVERNMENT'S FOCUS ON THE PRODUCTIVE SECTOR WITH NEW COCONUT PROCESSING FACILITY

Coconut downstreaming in the Solomon Islands is poised for expansion, with Australia investing in a new cutting-edge processing facility, operated by Islands' Own, in West Guadalcanal.

Islands' Own is a local company that processes and manufactures a range of products using coconuts sourced from local farmers. Through its private sector initiative, Strongim Bisnis, Australia has been investing in Islands' Own since 2022 to meet the growing demand for value-added products in the coconut sector.

Islands' Own has secured substantial annual orders of desiccated coconut and coconut cream from major retailers Bulkshop and Hot Bread Kitchen. These retailers have also announced their intention to exclusively procure coconut products from Islands' Own and discontinue all imports.

To facilitate increased production to meet these orders, Australia is assisting Islands' Own in constructing and operationalizing a new coconut collection and processing centre in Visale, West Guadalcanal.

Strategically located between coconut plantations in Lambi and the company's primary processing plant in Honiara, the facility will enhance the company's processing and packaging of coconut products and boost local employment.

Coconut processing equipment will be upgraded, and a diesel generator, off-grid

solar system, and battery-operated forklift will be procured, ensuring efficient and environmentally friendly operations.

Once the Visale facility is operational, Islands' Own expects to double its current number of employees from 18 to around 40.

His Excellency Rod Hilton, the Australian High Commissioner to the Solomon Islands, commended the extended partnership agreement with Islands' Own to strengthen the local coconut sector.

"This coconut processing facility in West Guadalcanal will enable Islands' Own to ramp up its production of quality coconut products, and meet domestic and export market demands, growing more Solomon Islands jobs and the local economy," Mr Hilton said.

As the Visale facility is located closer to coconut farmers, transportation costs are expected to be reduced.

Farmers will also benefit from increased income through more harvesting and coconut sales.

Once the processing center is operational, Islands' Own aims to expand its coconut sourcing from 30,000 to 40,000 coconuts per week.

Ezra Tan of Islands' Own expressed enthusiasm for this new phase of company's expansion, with the support of the Australian Government through Strongim Bisnis.

"The new processing facility at Visale will not only streamline and improve our production capability but also strengthen ties with coconut farming communities," Mr Tan said. *(Solomon Islands Broadcasting Corporation)*

COCONUT SHOWCASE SEEN TO HELP FARMERS INNOVATE

The Philippine Coconut Authority (PCA) is confident that showcasing new coconut products will inspire more farmers to produce beyond copra.PCA Eastern Visayas Regional Manager Joel Pilapil admitted that copra remains the primary product from coconut in the region.

"Copra has an unstable price in the market, which makes it hard for coconut farmers to earn and improve their living conditions. We hope that through this activity, coconut farmers will have an idea that they can produce more than just copra from coconut, considering the potential of tree of life," Pilapil said in an interview Wednesday.

The movement of copra prices has been affecting 367,234 coconut farmers in the Eastern Visayas region. Copra is the dried meat or kernel of the coconut.

As of first week of July 2024, the average farmgate price of copra per kilogram in the region is PHP24.27.

Premium oil is extracted from copra. It also yields coconut cake after oil extraction, which is mainly used as feed for livestock.

The PCA has no available data on the current copra production in the region.

At the Coconut Creations showcase in Region 8, various coconut-based products were displayed, including tuba bahalina (fermented coconut wine), coconut vinegar, virgin coconut oil, and coconut sugar."These are marketable products and have a better price in the market," Pilapil said.

At least 22 exhibitors joined the exhibition at the People's Center on Aug. 27 to 28. Their products have been developed with assistance from the Department of Trade and Industry.

Pilapil said that, in order to catch a wider market for coconut-based products, the Department of Tourism (DOT) is helping them promote the industry by introducing them to local and foreign guests.

DOT Eastern Visayas Regional Director Karina Rosa Tiopes shared that during visits of expedition cruise ships in the region, coconut is one of the products they promote to foreign visitors.

In Capul Island, Northern Samar, locals demonstrated to the guests how to plant, harvest, and the various uses of the coconut, as well as cooking various dishes mixed with coconut.

"Let us look at the coconut with fresh eyes, see it not just as a product but as a source of inspiration. A testament to what we can achieve when we unite our efforts across different sectors," Tiopes said in a separate interview.

Pilapil said that currently, the region is harvesting more than 1.7 billion nuts every year, but this is still way lower than the more than 2 billion nut harvested before Super Typhoon Yolanda struck the region in 2013.

Eastern Visayas is in the 5th rank among the coconut-producing regions in the country. An estimated 65,601,699 coconut trees are planted in the region. *(Philippine News Agency)*

TRADE NEWS

INDUSTRY PERSPECTIVE

High prices continued to prevail in the vegetable oils market.

Coconut oil in Rotterdam market eventually reported a trade this week after five weeks of hibernation; business was concluded at $1,600/MT CIF. The market started off this week mixed with offers for nearby positions lower and forwards unchanged, ignoring palm oil gains. Levels stood at $1,607.50-1,617.50/MT CIF. Thereafter prices headed higher, interrupted only midweek, on spillover strength from palm oil to settle at close firm at $1,640-1,660.

The palm kernel oil market likewise saw action at $1,465/MT CIF after staying quiet for two weeks. Opening sellers posted firmer offers influenced by palm oil gains with levels at $1,435-1,445/MT CIF for positions from August/September through to November/December. Prices after that continued to track higher mirroring palm oil and closed at $1,460-1,490/MT CIF.

The price premium of coconut oil over palm kernel oil tightened significantly this week after hitting the $200-mark last week per position. The weekly average slumped to $160.49/MT after nearly reaching $200 last week at $199. This is the eighth week where coconut oil price premium has stayed under $200. Premium per position are shown following: August/September $139.50 ($202.50 last week); September/October $175.50 ($208.00); October/November $161.75 ($185.50); November/December $165.20 ($200).

At the CBOT soya complex market, soybean futures were firmer this week with USDA reporting flash sales of US soybeans destined for China and Mexico. Short covering and technical buying also added support to the market as well as concerns over the near-term weather forecasts indicating warmer and drier conditions for parts of the crop growing areas which may affect yield.

At the palm oil section, in a reversal from the prior week's softer tone, the market tracked higher this week. A short-lived fall was noted around midweek in response to cargo surveyors' report about a 17 percent decline in Malaysia palm oil export for the period August 1-20 compared to same time last month. Bargain hunting sparked a positive start for the week overwhelming a weak vegetable oils market. Higher CBOT soybean oil helped sustain gains as did renewed market optimism amid slowing output. Moreover, Indonesia announced plans to increase the biodiesel blending ratio to 40 percent from the current 35 percent by 2025.

Prices of tropical oils for nearest forward shipment continued to show mixed trends with lauric oils on the upside. Coconut oil climbed $15 from the prior week at $1,610 to $1,625/MT CIF in the present week; palm kernel oil bounced back from last week's fall with a leap of $42.00 from $1,407.50 to $1,449.50/MT CIF. Palm oil, on the other hand, fell $11.50 from $1,051.50 to $1,040.00/MT CIF. As a result, the price premium of coconut oil shrank vis-à-vis palm kernel oil to $175.50/MT from last week at $202.50. Price premium over palm oil, however, continued to widen and has remained above $500 at $585.00/MT from $558.50 previously. *(UCAP Bulletin)*

MARKET ROUND-UP OF COCONUT OIL

The coconut oil market in Rotterdam finally saw action earlier this week at $1,600/MT CIF for August/September delivery. The market continued to track higher this week and closed firm with offers at $1,660 for August/September. $1,650 for September/October; $1,640 for October/November; and $1,645/MT CIF for November/December. Buyers showed interest only in last quarter positions asking at close at $1,595 for October/November and November/December. *(UCAP Bulletin)*

COCONUT SUPPLY SHORTFALL THREATENS SRI LANKA'S DOMESTIC AND EXPORT MARKETS: CCCI

The newly inaugurated Ceylon Chamber of Coconut Industries (CCCI) has warned that the current coconut supply is insufficient to meet both the local and growing export demands, due to the significant challenges faced by the sector.

Coconuts are currently cultivated on approximately 1.1 million acres of land, producing about three billion coconuts annually. The CCCI's first President Jayantha Samarakoon emphasized the need to boost the productivity of the existing coconut palms, replant the unproductive lands and expand cultivation in suitable areas.

"We need to increase the annual production from three billion to 4.5 billion coconuts within the next five years, to support domestic consumption and the export industry," Samarakoon said.

Sri Lanka's coconut yield remains unsatisfactory at 2,750 coconuts per acre, trailing behind India's yield of more than 6,000 coconuts per acre. Increasing the yield is critical for Sri Lanka, especially given its limited arable land, while competitors like India, the Philippines and Indonesia can allocate more land for coconut cultivation.

Despite the existence of three dedicated government agencies—the Coconut Development Authority, Coconut Cultivation Board and Coconut Research Institute—there has been no significant breakthrough in the yield and production in the sector.

Samarakoon also announced that the chamber is seeking funds to launch a geographic information system (GIS) project to gather the necessary data for preparing a national plan for the industry.

"To implement a national plan, either by the government or through public-private partnerships, we need accurate geographic and demographic data on the coconut-growing sector. That is why we are seeking funding for a GIS initiative," he added.

With the livelihoods of an estimated 800,000 coconut-growing families at stake, the chamber is seeking the support of the key government agencies to work together in this sector.

"The chamber and government should collaborate to provide the much-needed support for more than 800,000 coconut-growing families, most of whom own less than five acres, which account for 80 percent of the coconut land in Sri Lanka. This marks a new beginning for Sri Lanka's coconut industry," Samarakoon said.

Meanwhile, the CCCI's first General Secretary and Ernst & Young Senior Partner Anil De Saram cautioned that the coconut prices could rise to Rs.270 per coconut, if no action is taken to reverse the current trend. *(Daily Mirror)*

EXTRA-EU COCONUT IMPORTS WORTH €146 MILLION

In 2023, EU members imported 105 104 tonnes of coconuts from extra-EU countries, valued at €146.0 million. Two-thirds (67%) of these imports were desiccated coconuts (70 330 tonnes), while the remaining one-third (33%) consisted of fresh coconuts, either shelled or peeled (20 328 tonnes), or in the inner shell 'endocarp' (14 447 tonnes).

Coconut imports from countries outside the EU primarily came from 5 extra-EU partners, accounting for 86% of all coconut imports. The Philippines was by far the largest supplier, providing 41 944 tonnes, which represented 40% of the total extra-EU coconut imports. This was followed by Indonesia (17 992 tonnes, 17%), Côte d'Ivoire (14 642 tonnes, 14%), Sri Lanka (8 206 tonnes, 8%), and Vietnam (8 065 tonnes, 8%).

The Netherlands stood out as the largest importer of coconuts among EU countries in 2023, importing nearly half of the EU imports (48 937 tonnes, or 47% of all coconut imports from extra-EU countries). Germany was the second largest importer with 15 400 tonnes, accounting for 15% of all extra-EU coconut imports, followed by Spain (10 743 tonnes, 10%), France (7 793 tonnes, 7%) and Italy (4 643 tonnes, 4%). These 5 EU countries contributed to nearly three quarters (83%) of the total EU import of coconuts from countries outside of the EU. *(Eurostat)*

FRESH COCONUTS APPROVED FOR EXPORT TO CHINA

Earlier in August, protocols were signed for fresh coconuts, frozen durian, and crocodiles to be officially exported to China.

The Plant Protection Department under the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (MARD), assessed that fresh coconut exports will bring economic benefits and create momentum for Vietnam's coconut industry to develop sustainably and improve product quality to meet international standards.

Vietnamese localities and businesses are excited as the market of 1.4 billion people opens up.

Chairman of Ben Tre Coconut Investment JSC, said, "China's current demand for coconut imports is very large. Vietnam currently ranks seventh in coconut production worldwide. Our advantage is proximity to China, so if this market opens up, coconut exports will see a breakthrough."

Dang Huynh Uc My, chairwoman of BenTre Import Export JSC stated, "With abundant supply, when Vietnamese coconuts are exported to China, the product will have the opportunity to surpass the $1 billion mark, contributing to increasing income for people and promoting more professional and standardized domestic coconut production."

If businesses exploit their advantages well, the coconut industry can earn an additional $300 million from the Chinese market, said Dang Phuc Nguyen, general secretary of the Vietnam Fruit and Vegetable Association. "In a few years, Vietnam's coconut industry may catch up with Thailand. Moreover, official exports can push the prices of fresh and dry coconuts in our country's growing regions to higher and more stable levels," Nguyen said.

While opportunities and potential are evident, the fresh coconut industry currently faces numerous challenges.

Nguyen Quoc Manh, deputy director of the Department of Crop Production under the MARD, emphasized that the area of linked coconut cultivation remains quite low due to small-scale and fragmented planting.

"Most coconut areas in Vietnam are cultivated by individual households, making it difficult to organize linkages as each household has different cultivation and harvesting processes," Manh said.

Additionally, the industry lacks effective cooperatives or linkage models. Infrastructure and supporting technologies are not advanced. These shortcomings hinder the collection, processing, and transportation of coconuts, as well as the development and expansion of coconut cultivation areas.

To overcome these issues and capitalize on the opportunity of the Chinese market opening, Manh suggested that businesses and localities should immediately invest in deep processing, brand building, strengthening cooperation, and applying new technologies. These steps will help increase the value of processed coconut products and create a solid foundation for the sustainable development of Vietnam's coconut industry.

The MARD will continue to work closely with Chinese authorities to ensure smooth implementation while supporting Vietnamese businesses and farmers in maximizing opportunities from these protocols.

The Vietnam Coconut Association forecasts that the export turnover of coconut products this year will reach $1 billion. Despite challenges, with efforts to invest in production development, the coconut industry should not find it difficult to achieve this figure. The potential strengths of coconut trees will be further promoted as the official export market for this industrial crop continues to expand. *(Vietnam Investment Review)*

DESICCATED COCONUTS: PHILIPPINE EXPORTS RECOVER

Resilient coconut oil

As the experts at T.M. Duché report, April was an excellent month for Philippine coconut producers, with export volumes more than doubling compared to last year. According to the Philippine Statistics Authority, a total of 279,265 mt of coconut products were exported, an increase of 145.8% year-on-year. As a result, revenue also rose considerably, namely by 121.2% to just under USD 254.8 million.

The growth is particularly evident in coconut oil exports, which reached a record high of 160,214 mt - 170% more than in the same period last year. Coconut oil prices have stabilized in recent weeks and have risen to up to USD 1,600/mt CIF Rotterdam, which is also due to a recovery in palm oil prices. The experts at T.M. Duché emphasize that this trend underlines the resilience of coconut oil in the face of general pressure on the market.

Freight costs down slightly

Exports of other coconut products such as desiccated coconuts and copra have also increased significantly, reflecting the robust demand for Philippine coconut products on the global market. Copra is the nutritive tissue of coconuts, which forms the basis for coconut oil production, but can also be used for the production of shredded coconut. The Philippines is by far the largest supplier here. The market is relatively tight as copra supply is limited due to heavy rainfall, causing sellers to refrain from transactions, according to the market experts.

However, high freight costs continue to pose a major problem for exporters. The Drewry World Container Index (WCI) has continued its downward trend this week. As a result, a 40'FCL currently costs USD 5,428 and has therefore fallen by a further 2% compared to its peak in mid-July. Nevertheless, T.M. Duché emphasizes that the WCI is still significantly higher, namely 282% above the average value for 2019 before the pandemic, which must be reflected in export prices. *(Mundus Agri)*

OTHER VEGEOIL NEWS

INDONESIA AND MALAYSIA TO PROTECT PALM OIL INDUSTRY AGAINST EUDR IN BRUSSELS TALKS

Indonesia is intensifying its efforts to counter the European Union's Deforestation-Free Regulation (UEDR), which aims to block products linked to deforestation from entering the European market.

Indonesia and Malaysia, two of the biggest palm oil producers, will send a delegation to Brussels in September 2024 to negotiate with the EU, addressing concerns that the regulation unfairly targets Indonesian palm oil and other forestry products.

Eddy Martono, Chairman of the Indonesian Palm Oil Association (GAPKI), underscored that Indonesia will not stand idly by.

"The government is fully supporting us to ensure that the implementation of the EUDR does not place an undue burden on us. We are set to travel to Brussels in September for a Joint Task Force (JTF) meeting with the European Union and Malaysia," Martono told Beritasatu.com in Bangka Belitung.

With the EUDR scheduled to come into effect by the end of December 2024, time is of the essence. The forthcoming Joint Task Force meeting on Sept. 12, will be the third such meeting, following prior discussions on Aug. 4, 2023, and Feb. 2, 2024, with Indonesia, Malaysia, and the EU.

GAPKI highlighted that although the domestic palm oil industry has yet to feel the regulation's impact, small-scale farmers will be disproportionately affected once it is enforced.

"If implemented, small farmers will be the first to suffer. They may be pushed out of the supply chain because, unlike large companies already subject to a total moratorium under Presidential Instruction No. 5/2019, small farmers have not faced similar restrictions," Martono explained.

Europe remains Indonesia's third-largest export market after China and India, with an annual volume of 4.2 to 4.3 million tons. Besides palm oil, other Indonesian forestry commodities like cocoa, coffee, rubber, and wood products are also at risk of being impacted by the EUDR. *(Jakarta Globe)*

GLOBAL VEGETABLE OIL PRODUCTION CONTINUES TO GROW

World production of vegetable oils is growing, as is demand.

Commodities like palm and soybean oil are likely to be significantly more abundant in 2024/25 - more than offsetting the decline in sunflower oil.

The US Department of Agriculture (USDA) expects global production of vegetable oils in the current crop year to hit a record level at 224.2 million tonnes.

This would translate to a 2.7 million tonne rise year-on-year. Consumption is estimated at 221.7 million tonnes, up 5.3 million tonnes on the previous year.

Given this, ending stocks are expected to be lower than last year's total of 29.6 million tonnes, which is also below the historical norm.

According to Agrarmarkt Informations-Gesellschaft, palm oil production is set to reach yet another record volume in 2024/25.

Although the USDA lowered its earlier forecast of 80 million tonnes, the expected 79.8 million tonnes are still up 0.8 million tonnes on the 2023/24 output.

Given the ample supply of feedstock, supply of soybean oil is likely to grow just less than 3.2 million tonnes, hitting a new record at 65.5 million tonnes.

Production of rapeseed oil is also set to reach a record level at 34.2 million tonnes.

However, the USDA expects sunflower oil production to plummet in 2024/25, especially due to a more than 1 million tonne decline in production in Ukraine.

The world forecast was lowered almost 1 million tonnes month-on-month to 20.6 million tonnes, sliding just under 2 million tonnes below the previous year's volume. This would be the lowest output since 2021/22.

The Union zur Förderung von Oel- und Proteinpflanzen (UFOP) has stated that global supply of vegetable oils for human consumption is fundamentally secure.

The association has emphasized the important advantage that rapeseed, sunflower and soybean oil are nutritionally interchangeable in food preparation. The same applies to processed products such as fat spreads. *(Biofuels International)*

CARBON INTENSITY OF VEGETABLE-BASED OILS MUST FULL ACCOUNT FOR CROSS-MARKET SUBSTITUTION EFFECTS

Congress sought to prevent the expansion of global palm oil use by enacting section 45Z. Palm oil itself will not qualify for the 45Z credit, as its total lifecycle assessment (LCA) is far too high. For example, CORSIA puts the carbon intensity of palm oil between 76.5 and 99.1 g CO_2e/MJ, and EPA has determined that the carbon intensity of palm oil-based biodiesel is 80.7 g CO_2e/MJ and 86.7 g CO_2e/MJ for palm oil-based renewable diesel. But because palm oil is the cheapest available vegetable oil globally, it is often used to backfill gaps in other vegetable oil markets when those oils are shifted to the energy sector.

One such example is in the case of palm fatty acid distillates (PFADs). PFADs are a byproduct of palm oil that are removed during the refining process, comprising about 4% of crude palm oil by mass. PFADs are often referred to as waste or residue, but there is non-energy demand for PFADs from producers of oleochemicals, soaps, and animal feed. Use of PFADs as an energy feedstock creates supply gaps that are typically backfilled by vegetable oils—especially palm oil. And if this gap "results in more palm oil being used for oleochemicals, soaps and animal feed, then the net outcome may be similar to simply using the palm oil directly for biofuel production in the first place." Given the high LCA of palm oil, such a result would be counter to the clear requirements of section 45Z.

To address this potential loophole, section 45Z prohibits the use of PFADs to make SAF. By banning PFADs, Congress demonstrated clear concern over indirect substitution impacts of diverting PFADs to transportation fuels, which causes greater demand for primary oils like palm oil to fill the gap. Similarly, Treasury must ensure that its 45Z guidance does not indirectly drive demand for palm oil as a backfill for other vegetable oils. For example, when soy oil is shifted from non-energy sectors to energy sectors (such as for making transportation fuel), palm oil is the marginal product on global market that fills that gap. In the U.S., there is evidence that the production of "soy biodiesel is driving increased consumption of palm oil," as the figure below illustrates. To prevent an increase in palm oil production, Treasury must ensure that the models used to determine the carbon intensity of vegetable oil-based fuels identify and fully account for the emissions that result from cross-market substitutions. *(Clean Air Task Force)*

HEALTH NEWS

THE SURPRISING SCIENCE OF COCONUT WATER: NATURE'S QUIRKY COCKTAIL

Coconut water, the clear liquid sloshing inside young green coconuts, is not just a trendy

beverage – it's an intriguing mixture of chemicals with unexpected biological properties.

A thorough analysis of this natural cocktail that was published in the journal Molecules has shown a special combination of substances that may have significant impacts on both plant and human health.

The Chemical Cornucopia of Coconut Water

Dr. Samantha Patel, lead author of the study and researcher at Nanyang Technological University in Singapore, and her team scoured the scientific literature to piece together the complex composition of coconut water. They found that this seemingly simple beverage contains an array of:

- Phytohormones – plant growth regulators like auxin, cytokinins, and gibberellins
- Inorganic ions – essential minerals like calcium, magnesium, and potassium
- Vitamins – vital nutrients like vitamin B6 and folate
- Amino acids, enzymes, and other organic compounds

"This unique combination of compounds suggests that coconut water is more than just a refreshing drink," says Dr. Patel. "It has the potential to impact multiple biological processes in plants and possibly in humans as well."

From Plant Growth to Human Health

The phytohormones in coconut water, such as cytokinins like kinetin and trans-zeatin, have long been used to promote growth in plant cell cultures. But recent studies hint that these compounds could also have anti-aging, anti-cancer, and anti-inflammatory effects in humans.

Dr. Marcus Kahn, a collaborator on the study, explains, "Cytokinins like kinetin have been shown to protect human skin cells from oxidative stress and delay certain cellular aging processes. This suggests that coconut water could be a potential source of anti-aging compounds."

The high mineral content of coconut water, particularly potassium, has also drawn attention for its potential health benefits. Dr. Patel's team cites studies showing that coconut water consumption could help lower blood pressure, prevent kidney stones, and possibly even protect against heart disease.

Harnessing Coconut Water's Potential

While the diverse array of compounds in coconut water is intriguing, the authors caution that more research is needed to fully understand their effects in the human body. Dr. Kahn notes, "Many of these compounds are present in small amounts, and we don't yet know how well they are absorbed and utilized when people drink coconut water."

However, the potential applications are broad, from developing new plant growth supplements to creating functional beverages with targeted health benefits. Dr. Patel and her team are now working on identifying the factors that influence the chemical composition of coconut water, such as the age of the coconut and the growing conditions of the tree.

"By better understanding what influences the levels of these beneficial compounds, we may be able to optimize coconut water's composition and enhance its potential as a natural source of bioactive ingredients," says Dr. Patel. *(Journee-Mondiale)*

COCONUTS AND CITRUS PLANTS CAN HELP COMBAT GUM DISEASE

Periodontal disease, otherwise known as gum disease, is a serious inflammatory condition caused by infection with periodontal pathogenic bacteria. Impacting both oral and internal health, good oral care is essential for prevention.

Nevertheless, a lot of over-the-counter personal hygiene solutions include disinfectants, which can cause severe irritation. They are therefore inappropriate for the elderly and young children, who are most susceptible to the illness. This has made room for a more sustainable and natural answer, which may be found in citrus and coconut plants.

Professor Shigeki Kamitani from Osaka Metropolitan University's Graduate School of Human Life and Ecology led a research team to find an antibacterial agent that is universally safe and effective ijn targeting gum disease. Seven compounds were tested, including prunin laurate (Pru-C12) and its analogues, against the periodontal pathogen, Porphyromonas gingivalis.

The results were promising. Several compounds inhibited bacterial growth, but Pru-C12 stood out with the highest antimicrobial effect. Pru-C12 is be derived from biomass sources such as citrus plants and coconut components, making it a natural and sustainable option.

Professor Kamitani highlighted the benefits of Pru-C12. "Pru-C12 is tasteless and hypoallergenic," he stated. "If its safety in humans is confirmed in the future, it could be an inexpensive antimicrobial solution."

The findings, published in the journal Foods, suggest that Pru-C12 could be a game-changer in preventing periodontal disease. This is particularly important for those most at risk, such as young children and the elderly.

The potential of this compound as a safe and effective antibacterial agent is significant. It could revolutionize oral care by offering a natural, non-irritating solution to replace harsh disinfectants currently on the market.

If research successful, this compound could become a widely used antibacterial agent, providing an effective means of preventing periodontal disease across all age groups. *(New Food)*

CAN COCONUT OIL COMBAT MOUTH CANCER? HERE'S WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW

While it is an oil that has been traditionally used in South India for cooking and beauty care, coconut oil has drawn flak from various quarters, time and again, accusing it of components that are not good for health. However, a recent study shows that aromatic oil has powers even to prevent certain cancers. A recent study conducted by the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) has shown that coconut oil can prevent mouth cancer and control its initial stages. A 12-week study involving 62 patients was led by Dr Amit Ghosh, Dr C. Pritam, Dr Saurav Sarkar, Dr Ashok Kumar Jena, and Dr Suvendu Purkayasth of AIIMS Bhubaneswar. The research found that virgin coconut oil contains several components that are effective in controlling the disease. Research is currently underway to develop an oral ointment based on coconut oil.

The study concluded that virgin coconut oil can completely prevent oral lesions from becoming cancerous and can halt the progression of cancers in stages 1 and 2. In the study, 62 participants consisting of people suffering from cancer and those with cancer-prone lesions, were divided into two groups. One group was instructed to swish virgin coconut oil in their mouths four times a day. This group experienced faster healing of their lesions. Moreover, those in the initial stages of cancer showed a significant reduction in the progress of the disease. The study was supported by the Central Coconut Development Board.

High in cholesterol?

A common accusation is that coconut oil contains harmful cholesterol. However, numerous research have now disproved such misconceptions. Harvard University claims that although coconut oil comprises trace amounts of vitamins, minerals, and plant sterols, it does not contain cholesterol.

"Plant sterols have a chemical structure that mimics blood cholesterol, and may help to block the absorption of cholesterol in the body. However, the amount found in a few tablespoons of coconut oil is too small to produce a beneficial effect," according to Harvard University. That said, the oil should be used with caution to ensure that the best quality oil is used for cooking and on the skin, to avoid health issues. *(Onmanorama)*

COCONUT RECIPE

COCONUT LADOO AND PANJIRI

Coconut Ladoos:

Ingredients
- Condensed milk caramelised – 1 cup
- Cardamom – ½tsp
- Dried desiccated coconut – 2 cups
- Vanilla extract – 1 tsp

Method
Add caramelised condensed milk in a bowl with desiccated coconut, cardamom powder, and vanilla extract. Mix everything together and shape them in the form of small ladoos. Dunk them in dried coconut and serve.

Besan panjiri:

Ingredients
- Besan – 250 gms
- Powdered sugar – 150 gms
- Almonds chopped — 2 tbl spn
- Cinnamon powder – 1 tsp
- Gaund – 40gms
- Oil – 100ml
- Char magaz – 2 tbl spn
- Makhana – 1/2 cup
- Orange rind (chopped) – 1/4th cup

Method
Heat oil and add gaund – when it puffs up, then crush it. Fry the makhanas and remove them. Then, after they puff up. In the oil, add almonds and charmagaz and remove them after they turn light brown. Add the besan and cook in low flame till it emits a good aroma. Add the gaund, makhana, almonds, char magaz, and powdered sugar. Mix with orange rind and the cinnamon powder, and serve.

(Hindustan Times)

STATISTICS

Table 1. Indonesia's Monthly Exports of Coconut Oil (in MT), 2022 - 2024

Month	2022		2023		2024	
	Volume (MT)	Value (FOB) US$'000	Volume (MT)	Value (FOB) US$'000	Volume (MT)	Value (FOB) US$'000
January	35,466	66,919	54,436	55,216	58,053	59,761
February	48,846	92,391	74,419	74,978	64,023	68,231
March	71,557	141,348	74,970	76,473	49,013	54,648
April	53,869	110,772	57,695	57,515	58,675	68,580
May	61,688	119,515	55,397	56,651	59,821	75,878
June	57,845	104,471	70,092	67,749	35,258	44,850
July	82,040	133,063	52,109	51,187	67,699	86,068
August	56,776	83,469	61,594	58,845		
September	61,498	76,363	41,572	42,876		
October	61,949	68,485	57,262	57,270		
November	46,880	49,688	64,079	65,429		
December	69,256	71,664	58,894	60,942		
Total	**707,671**	**1,118,147**	**722,517**	**725,130**	**392,541**	**458,016**

Source: BPS-Statistics Indonesia

Table 2. Philippines's Monthly Exports of Coconut Oil (in MT), 2020 – 2024

Month	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
January	115,346	52,302	97,009	98,519	126,579
February	59,757	53,704	123,579	64,696	101,570
March	91,762	72,143	97,741	137,097	118,377
April	53,629	58,555	123,835	59,347	160,064
May	61,034	51,927	113,696	110345	143,687
June	92,625	65,092	87,170	64785	
July	19,161	78,441	112,646	119766	
August	85,963	80,111	104,713	90380	
September	83,382	82,649	78,818	77995	
October	58,911	93,100	109,769	103608	
November	63,150	95,115	83,684	64676	
December	55,353	97,947	87,132	98974	
Total	**840,073**	**881,086**	**1,219,792**	**1,090,188**	**506,590**

Source: Philippine Statistics Authority

Table 3. International Prices of Selected Oils, September 2021 - August 2024, (US$/MT)

Year	Month	Coconut Phil/Indo (CIF. Rott.)	Soybean Oil Dutch (FOB ex-mill)	Palm Oil Malaysian (CIF. Eur.)	Palm Kernel Oil (CIF. Rott.)	Sunflower Oil EU (Fob. NW. EU)
2021	September	1,486	1,399	1,181	1,427	1,310
	October	1,867	1,483	1,307	1,807	1,421
	November	1,939	1,440	1,348	2,069	1,416
	December	1,782	1,411	1,270	1,861	1,362
2022	January	2,033	1,470	1,345	2,196	1,412
	February	2,153	1,596	1,522	2,443	1,499
	March	2,269	1,957	1,777	2,441	2,361
	April	2,097	1,948	1,683	2,064	2,276
	May	1,720	1,963	1,717	1,811	2,079
	June	1,688	1,752	1,501	1,555	1,885
	July	1,517	1,533	1,057	1,301	1,557
	August	1,364	1,599	1,026	1,173	1,496
	September	1,261	1,548	909	1,249	1,305
	October	1,094	1,576	889	1,039	1,359
	November	1,167	1,652	946	1,062	1,347
	December	1,155	1,409	940	1,067	1,234
2023	January	1,071	1,352	942	1,060	1,218
	February	1,107	1,243	950	1,037	1,159
	March	1,111	1,113	972	1,052	1,075
	April	1,069	1,030	1,005	1,017	1,035
	May	1,031	988	934	993	962
	June	993	1,007	817	928	911
	July	1,047	1,136	879	998	1,039
	August	1,102	1,127	861	998	989
	September	1,084	1,112	830	958	895
	October	1,058	1,134	804	912	910
	November	1,118	1,118	830	968	944
	December	1,118	1,062	814	966	944
2024	January	1,126	971	845	978	943
	February	1,175	912	857	1,034	925
	March	1,254	965	943	1,177	951
	April	1,420	959	936	1,290	971
	May	1,396	988	859	1,196	1,006
	June	1,400	1,011	874	1,156	1,043
	July	1,473	1,079	896	1,365	1,069
	August				1,480	1,049

Source: Cocommunity and Oil World

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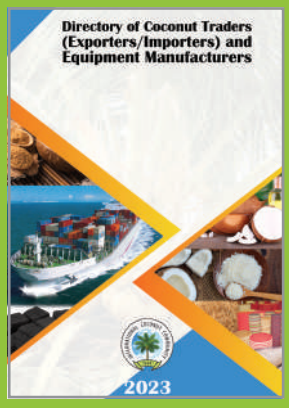

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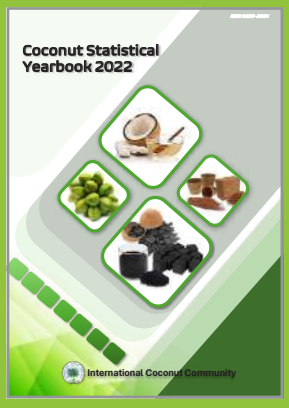

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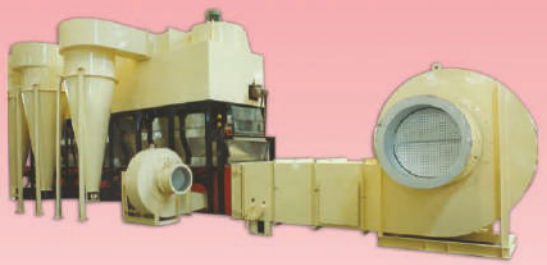

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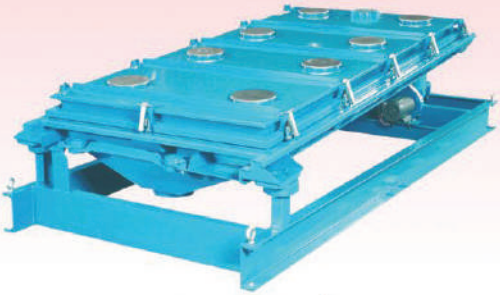

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BY AIR MAIL

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Established in 1969, under the auspices of the United Nations Economic and Social Commision for Asia and the Pacific (UN-ESCAP), the ICC is an independent regional intergovernmental organization which consist of twenty one member countries and accounts for 85-90% of the world production of coconut. The ICC member countries are: Côte d'Ivoire, the Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Guyana, India, Indonesia, Jamaica, Kenya, Kiribati, Malaysia, Marshall Islands, Papua New Guinea, Phillipines, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Timor Leste, Tonga, Vanuatu, and Vietnam.

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