The Cocommunity

Monthly Newsletter of the International Coconut Community

Vol. LVI No. 1 ISSN 0215-1502 January 2026

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THE DIRECTOR GENERAL SPEAKS

"Digital Passports for the Remote Palm: Is the Coconut Sector Ready for the End of "Anonymous" Trade?"

As we enter 2026, the global coconut industry is facing a major change in how we do business. While coconut is not yet a mandatory part of the European Union Deforestation Regulation (EUDR), the industry is moving quickly to prepare for these rules. For a long time, the coconut trade was "anonymous," meaning it was hard to track exactly where every nut came from. Today, that lack of information is becoming a risk. In the future global market, a coconut product without a digital record may find it difficult to enter high-value markets like Europe. We must act now to ensure our products remain welcome across all borders.

The biggest challenge is making sure this new system is fair for everyone. Unlike other crops grown on large plantations, 95% of the world's coconuts come from small-scale farmers, many of whom live in poverty. These farmers work on millions of tiny plots in very remote areas where there is often no internet and poor roads. This creates a "compliance paradox": we are asking farmers who may not even have a smartphone to provide digital maps and GPS data of their land. If we do not help them, these 23 million households could be blocked from the global market, which would push them further into poverty.

For coconut processors and exporters, this shift means the old way of mixing different oils, known as "Mass Balance," is no longer enough. To meet modern standards, the industry must move toward "Segregated" supply chains, where compliant oil is kept completely separate from non-compliant oil. This requires factories to change how they work, physically separating production runs and tracking every batch with a digital ID. These changes are expensive and create more work for the processors, who now act as "Gatekeepers" responsible for the accuracy of all digital data sent to international systems.

The ICC is working on a strategy to build a bridge between these new rules and the reality of the small farmer. We urge governments to speed up land-mapping projects. By creating "Green Lanes" for areas where there is no risk of deforestation, we can reduce the paperwork and cost for individual poor farmers. We should also ask global buyers to pay a "Traceability Premium" to help cover these costs, ensuring that the price of digital tracking does not come out of the farmer's pocket. Ending "anonymous trade" is an opportunity to bring our smallholders into the formal global economy for the first time. However, this will only work if we provide the right technology and fair financial support. In 2026, we want to prove that the coconut industry is not just sustainable by nature, but transparent by design. We must work together to ensure that as the world moves toward digital trade, no farmer is left behind.

DR. JELFINA C. ALOUW
Director General

PREVAILING MARKET PRICES OF SELECTED COCONUT PRODUCTS AND OILS

In December 2025, coconut oil prices exhibited a general downward trend across major producing countries, including the Philippines, Indonesia, and India. A similar pattern was observed in the desiccated coconut market, where prices declined across the Philippines, India, Indonesia, and Sri Lanka, reflecting improved supply-side conditions.

COPRA: In December 2025, copra prices in Indonesia declined to US$ 1,031 per metric ton, down from US$ 1,208 per metric ton in November, also representing a year-on-year decrease of US$ 33 per metric ton. Similarly, the Philippines recorded a downward monthly trend, with prices easing from US$ 1,357 per metric ton in November to US$ 1,218 per metric ton in December 2025. Despite the monthly drop, this level still reflected a year-on-year increase of US$ 158 per metric ton, compared with US$ 1,060 per metric ton during the same month last year. Sri Lanka also posted a modest monthly decline, with copra prices falling from US$ 1,508 per metric ton in November 2025 to US$ 1,486 per metric ton in December 2025.

COCONUT OIL: In December 2025, coconut oil prices trended downward across Indonesia, the Philippines, and India. In Europe (C.I.F. Rotterdam), the average price declined to US$ 2,285 per metric ton, although it still represented a solid 17% year-on-year increase. In the Philippines, the local market price stood at US$ 2,342 per metric ton, reflecting a year-on-year rise of US$ 384. Indonesia recorded a marked month-on-month decrease, with FOB prices falling from US$ 2,355 per metric ton in November to US$ 1,968 per metric ton in December 2025; however, this level remained US$ 33 higher year-on-year. In contrast, Sri Lanka experienced a modest 1.73% month-on-month increase in prices during the same period.

COPRA MEAL: In the Philippines, the average domestic price of copra meal rose to US$ 283 per metric ton in December 2025, reflecting a year-on-year increase of US$ 53 per metric ton. In contrast, Indonesia recorded a decline in its average domestic copra meal price, which fell to US$ 298 per metric ton during the same period. Despite the monthly decrease, this level remained US$ 31 per metric ton higher than that recorded in the corresponding month last year.

DESICCATED COCONUT: In December 2025, the average FOB price of desiccated coconut (DC) from the Philippines to the United States declined to US$ 3,726 per metric ton, indicating a decrease from the previous month. The domestic price in the Philippines also edged down slightly to US$ 2,038 per metric ton. In Indonesia, FOB prices for desiccated coconut fell to US$ 2,831 per metric ton, remaining below the US$ 3,200 per metric ton recorded during the same period last year. Similarly, Sri Lanka registered a decline in its export price of desiccated coconut, which dropped to US$ 3,147 per metric ton in December 2025.

COCONUT SHELL CHARCOAL: In November 2025, the average price of coconut shell charcoal in India rose to US$ 974 per metric ton, indicating relative price stability compared with the previous year. Indonesia also recorded an increase, with the average price reaching US$ 930 per metric ton during the same period. In contrast, Sri Lanka experienced a moderate decline, with coconut shell charcoal prices easing to US$ 907 per metric ton in December 2025.

COIR FIBRE: In December 2025, Sri Lanka's domestic coir fiber market recorded an average price of US$ 121 per metric ton for mixed fiber, while bristle fiber prices ranged between US$ 497 and US$ 946 per metric ton. Meanwhile, in Indonesia, the price of mixed raw fiber stood at US$ 220 per metric ton, indicating relative price stability compared with the same period last year.

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

Products/Country	2025 Dec	2025 Nov	2024 Dec	2025 (Annual Ave.)
Dehusked Coconut				
Philippines (Domestic)	272	300	182	306
Indonesia (Domestic, Industry Use)	240	270	289	312
Sri Lanka (Domestic, Industry Use)	653	672	389	757
India (Domestic Kerala)	794	884	744	834
Copra				
Philippines (Dom. Manila)	1,218	1,357	1,060	1,396
Indonesia (Dom. Java)	1,031	1,208	1,064	1,264
Sri Lanka (Dom. Colombo)	1,486	1,508	1,610	1,675
India (Dom. Kochi)	2,176	2,451	1,676	2,298
Coconut Oil				
Philippines/Indonesia (CIF Rott.)	2,285	2,436	1,953	2,488
Philippines (Domestic)	2,342	2,644	1,958	2,623
Indonesia (Domestic)	1,968	2,355	1,935	2,442
Sri Lanka (Domestic)	2,817	2,769	2,719	2,914
India (Domestic, Kerala)	3,721	4,113	2,730	3,743
Desiccated Coconut				
Philippines FOB (US), Seller	3,726	3,799	2,296	3,473
Philippines (Domestic)	2,038	2,039	2,039	2,040
Sri Lanka (Domestic)	3,147	3,352	3,733	3,735
Indonesia (FOB)	2,831	3,035	3,200	3,094
India (Domestic)	2,746	3,176	2,827	3,163
Copra Meal Exp. Pel.				
Philippines (Domestic)	283	254	230	201
Sri Lanka (Domestic)	308	342	350	380
Indonesia (Domestic)	298	301	267	317
Coconut Shell Charcoal				
Sri Lanka (Domestic)	907	923	907	804
Indonesia (Domestic Java), Buyer	930	912	930	886
India (Domestic)	974	968	974	894
Coir Fibre				
Sri Lanka (Mattress/Short Fibre)	121	122	121	106
Sri Lanka (Bristle 1 tie)	497	474	497	519
Sri Lanka (Bristle 2 tie)	946	963	946	846
Indonesia (Mixed Raw Fibre)	220	220	220	185
Other Oil				
Palm Kernel Oil Mal/Indo (CIF Rott.)	2,113	2,141	2,113	2,103
Palm Oil Crude, Mal/Indo (CIF Rott.)	981	970	981	1,007
Soybean Oil (Europe FOB Ex Mill)	1,119	1,126	1,119	1,140

Exchange Rate

Dec 31, '25 1 US$ = P58.86 or Rp16,723 or India Rs89.78 or SL Rs310.06
1 Euro = US$ 1.17 n.q. = no quote

MARKET REVIEW OF COCONUT OIL

The global lauric oils market— coconut oil (CNO) and palm kernel oil (PKO)—experienced heightened volatility during 2025, reflecting a combination of supply-side constraints and resilient downstream demand. Adverse weather conditions in major producing countries, particularly those linked to El Niño, disrupted coconut production and constrained raw material availability. At the same time, sustained industrial demand from the oleochemical, food, and biofuel sectors supported firm prices, resulting in a notable divergence between export volumes and values across key markets.

Coconut oil production in Southeast Asia, especially in the Philippines and Indonesia, was significantly affected by prolonged dry spells that reduced coconut yields and limited milling operations. These supply disruptions tightened global availability, contributing to elevated price levels throughout most of 2025. Despite lower shipment volumes, exporters benefited from strong international prices, underscoring the structural tightness in the lauric oils market during the review period.

The Philippines, the world's leading exporter of coconut oil, recorded a sharp contraction in export volumes between January and November 2025. Shipments declined by 15.3 percent to approximately 1,251,619 metric tons, reflecting reduced nut availability and lower crushing activity. However, export earnings increased markedly by 35.6 percent year-on-year, highlighting the extent to which higher prices compensated for lower physical volumes. This divergence between volume and value illustrates the sensitivity of the coconut oil market to supply shocks and reinforces the Philippines' continued influence on global price formation despite production challenges.

Indonesia exhibited a broadly similar pattern. Coconut oil exports declined by 19 percent to 488,821 metric tons during January–November 2025. Nevertheless, export revenues rose sharply by 45.7 percent, supported by strong international prices and firm demand. In addition to weather-related production constraints, Indonesia's coconut oil exports were also affected by rising domestic consumption, particularly from the oleochemical industry, which absorbed a larger share of available supply. In contrast, palm kernel oil exports from Indonesia increased moderately in volume by 7.6 percent, while export value surged by more than 73 percent, reflecting substantial price appreciation. Overall, Indonesia's total lauric oil exports declined marginally in volume by 1.1 percent, yet total export value expanded by over 63 percent, confirming the strength of the global lauric oils market amid constrained supply conditions.

On the demand side, industrial consumption of lauric oils remained resilient throughout 2025. The oleochemical sector continued to be a key driver, particularly in Europe and North America, where manufacturers rely on coconut and palm kernel oils as renewable feedstocks for surfactants, detergents, and personal care products. In addition, growing interest in bio-based and sustainable raw materials further supported demand, partially offsetting the impact of higher prices on consumption volumes.

Table 1. Exports of Lauric Oils from Indonesia

		Jan-Nov 2024	Jan-Nov 2025	Change (%)
CNO	Volume (MT)	603,705	488,821	-19.0
	Value (USD'000)	773,543	1,126,990	45.7
PKO	Volume (MT)	1,233,026	1,327,118	7.6
	Value (USD'000)	1,386,205	2,400,736	73.2
Lauric Oils	Volume (MT)	1,836,731	1,815,939	-1.1
	Value (USD'000)	2,159,748	3,527,726	63.3

Source: BPS-Statistics Indonesia

In the European Union (EU27), imports of coconut oil declined by 9 percent to approximately 750,000 metric tons during January–October 2025. Despite the reduction in volume, the value of coconut oil imports increased dramatically by 81.3 percent, reflecting the sharp rise in prices. Higher coconut oil prices also encouraged substitution toward palm

Table 2. European Union (EU27) Imports of Lauric Oils

		Jan-Nov 2024	Jan-Nov 2025	Change (%)
CNO	Volume (MT)	823,549	749,566	-9,0
	Value (USD'000)	1,099,793	1,994,308	81,3
PKO	Volume (MT)	631,954	702,098	11.1
	Value (USD'000)	959,784	1,165,102	21.4
Lauric Oils	Volume (MT)	1,455,503	1,451,664	-0.3
	Value (USD'000)	2,059,577	3,159,410	53.4

Source: ITC

Table 3. US Imports of Lauric Oils

		Jan-Nov 2024	Jan-Nov 2025	Change (%)
CNO	Volume (MT)	423,502	333,097	-21.3
	Value (USD'000)	621,017	828,437	33.4
PKO	Volume (MT)	301,134	360,830	-88.0
	Value (USD'000)	360,082	631,465	75.4
Lauric Oils	Volume (MT)	724,636	693,927	-4.2
	Value (USD'000)	981,099	1,459,902	48.8

Source: US Census Bureau

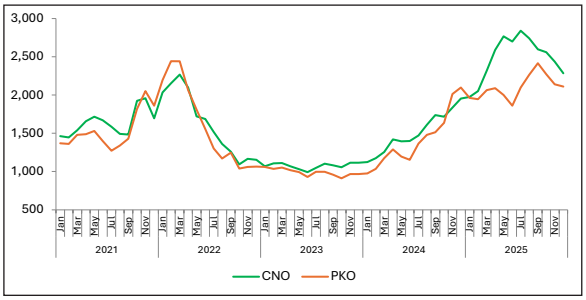
kernel oil, whose imports rose by 11.1 percent in volume and 21.4 percent in value. As a result, total lauric oil imports into the EU remained broadly stable in volume, contracting by only 0.3 percent, while total import value increased by more than 53 percent. The Philippines and Indonesia continued to dominate the EU market, jointly accounting for over 85 percent of lauric oil supplies, reinforcing their strategic importance to European downstream industries.

The United States exhibited a slightly softer demand profile compared to the European Union. Total U.S. imports of lauric oils declined by 2.9 percent during January–October 2025, driven primarily by a significant reduction in coconut oil imports. Coconut oil volumes fell by over 20 percent, reflecting both high prices and some degree of substitution. Nevertheless, the value of coconut oil imports increased by more than 30 percent, underscoring the continued strength of prices. In contrast, palm kernel oil imports expanded in both volume and value, supported by robust demand from the surfactant and detergent industries. Overall, while total import volumes declined modestly, the value of U.S. lauric oil imports increased substantially, indicating sustained underlying demand despite supply constraints and elevated prices.

Price developments were a defining feature of the lauric oils market in 2025. Coconut oil prices increased sharply during the first three quarters of the year, rising from approximately USD 1,976 per metric ton in January to a peak of USD 2,742 per metric ton in August, representing an increase of nearly 39 percent. Prices subsequently eased toward the end of the year, falling to around USD 2,285 per metric ton in December, as market participants adjusted to demand rationing and expectations of gradual supply improvement. Palm kernel oil prices followed a similar, though less pronounced, trajectory, increasing by about 15 percent from January to September before moderating toward year-end. The overall price strength was underpinned by supply shortages in Southeast Asia, firm industrial demand, and the expanding use of lauric oils as sustainable alternatives to petroleum-based inputs.

Looking ahead, the global coconut oil market is expected to remain sensitive to weather conditions and production recovery in major producing countries. While some easing of prices may occur if supply improves, structural demand from the oleochemical and bio-based industries is likely to continue supporting the market. As such, volatility is expected to persist, with prices remaining vulnerable to any renewed supply disruptions or shifts in competing vegetable oil markets.

Figure 1. Price of Lauric Oils, January 2021 – December 2025, (USD/MT)



Source: ICC

COMMUNITY NEWS

DEVELOPING INCLUSIVE INVESTMENT POLICIES TO OPTIMIZE COCONUT DOWNSTREAM POTENTIAL: A KEY DELIBERATION AT THE WANTIMPRES COORDINATION MEETING

Director General of the International Coconut Community (ICC), Dr. Ir. Jelfina C. Alouw, delivered a key presentation in Session II of the Coordination Meeting hosted by the Secretariat of the Presidential Advisory Council (Wantimpres), with the central theme: "Agricultural Downstream Investment Strategies to Enhance Farmer Welfare." The meeting gathered academics, ministry representatives, commodity experts, and policy strategists to strengthen Indonesia's agricultural downstream development agenda.

Dr. Jelfina underscored the vital role of coconut in regional and global supply chains. Despite increasing global demand, Indonesia's coconut production has remained stagnant for over a decade. To address this, she stressed that replanting programs must be supported with simultaneous rehabilitation of existing coconut palms. A significant constraint is the insufficiency of national seed availability to meet replanting targets. To overcome this, she advocated for fast-tracking tissue tissue culture technology, which is expected to become commercially viable within the next three years supported by research and technology to optimize the technology. Major coconut-producing provinces Riau, North Sulawesi, East Java, Central Sulawesi, North Maluku and other coconut producing provinces require coordinated support to restore productivity.

The ICC DG promoted polyculture as a crucial strategy for environemtal resilience and food security. Given the typical 8-9 meter spacing between coconut palms, complementary crops can be integrated, improving income stability, strengthening household food security and maximizes overall land productivity and enhancing ecosystem stability. This approach positioned coconut as a crop with exceptional ecological and economic flexibility.

Dr. Jelfina also highlighted a range of downstream coconut sectors with strong investment potential: coconut shell charcoal and activated carbon (essential for European industries and reducing pressure on natural forests), husk-based products like coir fiber and peat substitutes, and the continued growth of coconut oil exports and oleochemical derivatives. A notable new opportunity is in Sustainable Aviation Fuel (SAF) feedstock, citing a Japanese investor who established a facility in South Sumatra to convert coconut oil (CNO) for export to Japan. Furthermore, drawing on evidence from the studies conducted by a research institute in the Philippines, the DG explained that incorporating coconut milk into school feeding programs can significantly reduce stunting, an insight highly relevant for nutrition and human-capital policies. This approach also holds potential for integration into Indonesia's MBG program, offering a practical, locally sourced solution to improve child nutrition outcomes.

To ensure downstream benefits reach farmers, she stressed the importance of minimum price mechanisms, professionalizing farmers through capacity development, and strengthening value chain management, including nurseries, logistics, and quality standards. She warned that downstream expansion without strong upstream foundations may harm producers, mirroring the experience of other commodities that lost competitiveness. This caution was reinforced by insights from other commodity sector.

Dr. Purwono presented data showing that Indonesia's white crystal sugar production remains strong, with declining household consumption eliminating the need for additional imports in 2025. He noted that Indonesia is already considered self-sufficient under FAO standards, reinforcing the importance of prioritizing domestic

productivity improvements rather than relying on external supply.

From the cassava sector, Dr. H. Welly Soegiono highlighted how recent regulations unintentionally pushed tapioca prices below cassava prices while triggering higher import volumes, disrupting what had previously been a naturally aligned market. He cautioned that even well-intentioned policies can harm farmers if not carefully calibrated, drawing parallels to the decline of Lampung's once-dominant pepper industry. These examples underscore the relevance of Dr. Jelfina's call for downstream strategies that strengthen, rather than destabilize, farmer livelihoods.

The Wantimpres Secretariat highlighted that agricultural downstreaming carries strong multiplier effects, including: Improved farmer incomes, Expanded employment opportunities, Strengthened local economies. However, several constraints remain significant: Suboptimal downstream ecosystems, Underdeveloped infrastructure and logistics, Inadequate quality standards and traceability systems, Input subsidy inefficiencies, Limited raw material supply for key commodities-particularly coconut. The coconut sector exemplifies the need to synchronize upstream improvements with downstream industrialization, ensuring long-term sustainability and competitiveness.

To support Indonesia's downstream acceleration agenda, Dr. Jelfina outlined several priority recommendations: A National Coconut Revitalization Roadmap combining replanting, rehabilitation, nursery expansion, and tissue-culture acceleration. Strengthened pricing policies and farmer professionalization initiatives ensuring equitable value distribution. Cluster-based development for coconut industries to reduce logistics costs and stabilize raw material supply. Promotion of high-value added products. International collaboration and foreign investment partnerships to support technology transfer and diversification of market demand.

These actions aim to unlock the estimated IDR 164 trillion (USD ~10.5 - 11 billion) value-added potential from Indonesia's coconut sector significantly higher if advanced derivatives scale commercially.

The discussions provided a comprehensive and forward-looking perspective on strengthening Indonesia's coconut sector as a cornerstone of national downstream transformation. This direction, championed by Dr. Jelfina, emphasized a balanced approach that is vital for inclusivity. The ICC DG's call to synchronize upstream productivity (benefiting farmers and input suppliers), downstream innovation (engaging industry and investors), and farmer protection (ensuring equitable value distribution) resonated deeply, confirming the necessity of integrated strategies that benefit all stakeholders across the value chain—from smallholders to large processors and international markets.

The insights from coconut, sugar, and cassava experts collectively reinforced the importance of integrated investment strategies that enhance national competitiveness while ensuring sustainable prosperity for Indonesia's farmers. *(ICC News)*

STRONG WORLD DEMAND, PARTICULARLY FOR MANGOES, PINEAPPLES, AND COCONUT PRODUCTS

As the nation rebounded from the consequences of recent US trade policy, Philippine exports maintained double-digit growth in October. The Philippine Statistics Authority released data showing that exports increased from $6.2 billion in the same month last year to $7.30 billion, a 19.4 percent year-over-year increase. Following a 16.2 percent increase in September, October's performance indicated a steady rebound.

Trade Secretary Cristina Roque said officials remain committed to supporting export expansion by pursuing wider global markets

for Philippine products. She noted that the 19 percent reciprocal tariff imposed by the United States on August 7 had temporarily slowed growth to 4.6 percent, but the U.S. continues to be the Philippines' top export destination, taking in $1.16 billion or 15.7 percent of total shipments.

Roque emphasized that the agriculture sector received crucial relief when certain products were exempted from U.S. tariffs. An executive order issued on November 14 by President Donald Trump excluded key goods such as coconut, tropical fruits, coffee, cocoa, spices, bananas, and selected fertilizers. Roque said strong global demand—especially for coconut products, pineapples, and mangoes—makes the exemption a significant boost for farmers and the broader agricultural industry. *(Fresh Plaza)*

VĨNH LONG UNLOCKS BILLION DOLLAR POTENTIAL FOR COCONUT EXPORTS

As plant-based products surge worldwide, a coconut powerhouse is taking shape in Việt Nam's Mekong Delta. Anchored by Vĩnh Long's vast groves and deep-processing drive, the country's coconut industry is eyeing a new billion-dollar frontier.

In 2025, the province's coconut export value is expected to exceed US$500 million, underscoring its status as the nation's leading "Coconut Capital".

With nearly 120,000 hectares of coconut – equivalent to about 65 per cent of national coconut cultivation – the enlarged province of Vĩnh Long (which now also includes the former provinces of Trà Vinh and Bến Tre) commands a raw-material base unmatched by most global coconut producing regions.

Although Việt Nam accounts for only around two per cent of global coconut-growing area, its value-added ratio is almost three times the world average, thanks to product diversification and deep processing. This advantage is particularly evident in Vĩnh Long.

According to Châu Hữu Trị, director of the Agricultural Extension Centre under the provincial Department of Agriculture and Environment (DAE), coconuts grown between the Tiền and Hậu rivers absorb nutrient-rich alluvium, producing fruits with abundant sweet water and thick flesh – attributes highly sought after by international buyers.

Yet structural challenges persist. Most farmers cultivate only around 0.4 hectare on average, leaving production fragmented and limiting investments in improved varieties and farming techniques.

Although the province hosts 183 coconut-processing enterprises, linkages between the State, scientists, businesses and farmers remain relatively loose, leaving the value chain exposed to fluctuations.

Organic production – vital for markets such as the US, European Union and Northeast Asia – also faces bottlenecks due to inconsistent national frameworks on certification, traceability and pest control.

Processing power

Despite these constraints, Vĩnh Long's long-term export potential remains exceptionally strong. Việt Nam already masters about 90 per cent of its coconut-processing technologies, enabling nearly every part of the coconut tree to be transformed into high-value products, according to Trị.

As global demand rises for plant-based beverages, natural ingredients and sustainable materials, opportunities for the province to strengthen its role in global value chains continue to expand.

A key contributor to this momentum is Trà Bắc Joint Stock Company (Trabaco), one of the province's largest deep-processing firms.

Exporting to more than 30 countries, the company produces activated carbon, desiccated coconut, frozen coconut milk and a range of coir-based products.

CEO Huỳnh Khắc Nhu said investment into Vĩnh Long's coconut sector – both domestic and foreign – was accelerating, with new projects valued between VNĐ500 billion and 1 trillion (US$20 million to 40 million).

However, raw material supply remains insufficient, forcing factories to source coconuts from neighbouring provinces, according to Nhu. Only around two per cent of local farmers own more than five hectares, making it difficult to establish uniform cultivation zones that meet international standards.

Nhu suggested prioritising the rehabilitation of mixed coconut gardens, expanding industrial-grade varieties, improving traceability systems and modernising harvesting and transport chains.

With an economic lifespan of more than 60 years, coconut trees can support long-term value chains if production is organised methodically.

Market imbalance

This view is echoed by Phạm Hồng Dương, deputy general director of Betrimex Import Export Joint Stock Company, who noted that Việt Nam produces roughly 1.7 billion coconuts annually, ranking sixth globally and standing as the world's leading exporter of canned coconut water.

The industry earned $1.05 billion in 2024, but with more advanced deep processing, this figure could rise to $1.8 billion each year.

Yet farmers often sell fresh aromatic coconuts for about VNĐ30,000 ($1.20) per dozen, while factories pay up to VNĐ15,000 ($0.60) for a single industrial-grade fruit.

This imbalance is a direct result of insufficient industrial varieties suitable for deep processing.

Vĩnh Long currently has more than 30,000ha of internationally certified organic coconut, but safeguarding this advantage requires strict biological pest management.

Dương warned that even one month of pest outbreak could reduce output for an entire year, stressing the need to prioritise sustainable biological crop protection.

Building resilience

According to Văn Hữu Huệ, deputy director of the DAE, Vĩnh Long is pursuing a comprehensive strategy to strengthen climate-adaptive cultivation, enhance deep-processing capacity and tighten value-chain cohesion.

The province is expanding internationally certified organic zones, selecting drought- and salt-tolerant varieties, adopting water-saving irrigation systems and promoting low-emission farming techniques.

Biological control agents such as parasitic wasps and earwigs are being encouraged to protect coconut farms against pests.

Beyond agriculture, Vĩnh Long also aims to link coconut production with tourism, promote local craft villages and develop OCOP products — especially those made from the province's well-known sáp coconut variety.

On the processing side, Việt Nam still lags behind the Philippines and Indonesia in advanced technologies, particularly in preserving drinking coconuts.

To meet rising quality standards in major markets, the province plans to introduce new incentives to attract investment into modern deep-processing technologies that fully use coconut water, flesh, husk, shell, and trunk.

Digital transformation – including blockchain-based traceability and automated quality monitoring - will be prioritised.

To strengthen the value chain, Vĩnh Long will support the establishment of modern agricultural cooperatives, intensify international trade promotion and build a strong global presence for the "Vĩnh Long Coconut" brand. International cooperation will also be expanded to access high-end technologies and premium markets.

In support of long-term development, the agricultural sector has proposed a project to analyse soil characteristics, build a detailed coconut soil map using ArcGIS and develop a comprehensive data system for planning from 2026 to 2030, with a vision to 2050.

With outstanding natural advantages, expanding processing capacity and increasing international demand, Vĩnh Long is well positioned to accelerate Việt Nam's ascent toward a new billion-dollar frontier in coconut exports. *(Viet Nam News)*

BARMM COCONUT FARMERS SHOWCASE PRODUCTS AND SHARE SKILLS AT THE REGIONAL SUMMIT

On December 17–18, coconut farmers from all around the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM) came together for the first Coconut Farmers Cooperative Summit.

The goal of the activity was to build cooperatives to improve farmers' lives, share knowledge and experiences, and educate value-adding skills to improve and increase coconut products.

The summit was spearheaded by the Cooperative and Social Enterprise Authority (CSEA) with the theme, "Empowering Bangsamoro Communities Through Cooperatives for Peace, Prosperity, and a Shared Future."

One of the highlights of the two-day event was a trade fair showcasing a range of coconut-based food and non-food products, as well as handicrafts.

The fair provided coconut farmers' cooperatives a platform to display innovations, share best practices, and connect with national and international stakeholders to explore new market opportunities.

In his opening message, CSEA Executive Director Samcia Ibrahim emphasized the significance of the gathering.

"This occasion is a vital platform for exchanging ideas, sharing information, and giving cooperatives a specific role in contributing to the region's economic growth, which is bound to peace and prosperity," Ibrahim said.

CSEA Chief Cooperative Development Specialist Hayat Pilas underscored the importance of giving coconut farmers wider exposure.

"The reason we conduct activities like this is to give our coconut farmers the opportunity to present what they have and the products they produce, and to prove that we can compete not only nationally but also internationally," Pilas said.

Cooperative Development Authority (CDA) Chairman Alexander Raquepo expressed his support for the initiative, describing the coconut sector as a pillar of Philippine agriculture.

"It is truly an honor to be part of this historic and meaningful gathering, *dahil ang sektor po ng niyugan ay isa sa mga haligi ng ating agrikultura* (because the coconut sector is one of the pillars of our agriculture)," Raquepo said.

"*Ngunit sa matagal na panahon, ang ating mga coconut farmers, lalo na dito sa BARMM, ay nanatiling isa sa mga pinaka-nangangailangan ng suporta* (But for a long time, our coconut farmers, especially here in BARMM, have remained among those most in need of support)," he added.

Officers-in-charge Administrator Mahalia Midtimbang, representing Cotabato City Mayor Mohammad Ali "Bruce" Matabalao, also delivered a message of support.

"*Nawa'y magsilbing inspirasyon ang summit na ito upang lalo pa nating pagtibayin ang kooperasyon ng bawat lungsod at munisipyo sa buong BARMM—upang ang bawat ani ay magdala ng dignidad, at ang bawat bunga ng niyog ay maghatid ng pag-unlad sa bawat tahanan* (May this summit serve as an inspiration for us to further strengthen the cooperation of every city and municipality throughout BARMM—so that every harvest brings dignity, and every coconut fruit brings development to every home.)," Midtimbang said.

Mariko Ikawa, Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) project team leader, echoed the message of solidarity.

"This event itself sends a very strong message. It shows that cooperatives are not only about coconut or income; they are also about peace, solidarity, cooperation, and a shared future," Ikawa said.

"I am here to share and, first of all, to listen to your stories and to learn from them," she added.

The summit also featured a Cooperative Awards and Recognition Ceremony, honoring the efforts and contributions of the participating cooperatives.

The activity was held in partnership with the Cooperative Development Authority and Coconut Farmers and Industry Development (CFID), which promote value-adding, market access, and capacity-building initiatives for coconut farmers.

These initiatives are aligned with Chief Minister Abdulraof Macacua's development agenda, particularly the Government of the Day's third priority on revenue generation, optimizing resources, and attracting investments. *(Bangsamoro)*

BRAZILIAN DWARF: THE KEY TO REVIVING THE COCONUT INDUSTRY IN TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

Trinidad and Tobago Agriculture Minister Ravi Ratiram has launched a bold initiative to rebuild Trinidad and Tobago's struggling coconut sector, as he aims to generate US$1 billion in agricultural exports.

Ratiram said his ministry will support agro-processors, bottlers, and value-added manufacturers capable of converting coconuts into high-value commercial products, as government moves to rebuild a sector, which he claimed, suffered more than a decade of decline.

Ratiram said agriculture's contribution to gross domestic product (GDP) has fallen by $1.4 billion, declining to $650 million, meaning more than 50 per cent of TT's agricultural sector has deteriorated in the last decade. He added his ministry intends to reverse that trend and generate US$1 billion in export potential from agricultural products.

The minister was speaking on December 1 at a ceremony for the distribution of Brazilian dwarf coconut seedlings at the Central Experiment Station, Caroni North Bank Road, Centeno, where every farmer present received ten seedlings.

He said the initiative is part of a broader plan to modernise and revitalise the sector. This, he said, marked another step in the ministry's broader plan to strengthen, expand, and secure the future of TT's agricultural sector.

"Every new tree planted is a step towards restoring a once-thriving industry and building a modern, competitive, and sustainable coconut sector."

Ratiram emphasised the objective is not to produce more raw nuts but develop a complete coconut value chain, including farming, processing, manufacturing, distribution, and exports.

"This will open up the estate and expand the journey… contributing significantly toward the exportation of agricultural products to boost our income and foreign exchange."

He thanked farmers and stakeholders for their partnership, stressing each seedling distributed represents an opportunity for economic diversification, rural employment, and community empowerment.

Ratiram also praised the Caribbean Agricultural Research and Development Institute (Cardi) for its role in rehabilitation efforts, including training, genetic improvement, pest management, and nutrition.

"You are the custodians of our agricultural heritage," he told farmers. "You know the land, you carry the traditions, and you keep alive the spirit of innovation and resilience that has always defined our rural communities."

A declining industry

Despite the coconut tree's longstanding significance—it was formerly referred to as the "tree of life"— Decades of setbacks have plagued the local and regional sector, according to Ratiram.

According to him, the number of coconut plantations in the region has decreased by an estimated 17% as a result of aging trees, fewer replantings, pests and diseases, changes in land use, and limited accessibility to high-quality planting material.

"These constraints, combined with increasing competition and the growth of imported coconut products, have weakened what was once a highly productive and largely local industry," he added.

Many local estates established in the 1950s to 1970s were never replanted at a commercial scale, leaving TT with an ageing tree population unable to meet the growing demand for coconut water, oil, and related products.

"Trinidad and Tobago today consumes more coconut products than it produces. We import most of our coconut water, oil, and other coconut-based products."

Ratiram described the seedling distribution programme as "a timely and strategic intervention" aligned with the government's policy agenda. Policies include reviving strategic agricultural industries, including cocoa, rice, fisheries, livestock, dairy, and coconut.

He reiterated the government's goal to support the replanting of one million coconut trees and develop a vibrant coconut-based products industry.

Ratiram said that earlier this year, the ministry, working with Cardi, received the Brazilian green dwarf coconut seed nuts which he described as a high-yielding coconut known for improved genetics and strong water-producing capacity.

"Over 600 ml per nut, and greater resistance to pests and diseases."

He stressed the initiative is an investment in rebuilding the country's production capacity, aiming to restore coconut estates while creating sustainable opportunities for current and future generations.

Potential market

A revitalized coconut business has significant promise, according to Ratiram. In the 1980s, the market for coconut water was estimated to be worth US$4.4 billion worldwide. By 2060, it is expected to exceed US$11 billion.

Beyond beverages, customer preferences for natural, plant-based products continue to drive significant global demand for coconut oils, flours, milks, fibers, and personal care items.

"The Caribbean, given its history of coconut production, is well-positioned to re-enter the market with strength, provided local production systems and value-chain linkages are rebuilt."

He said TT has the climatic conditions, soil quality, agricultural expertise, and entrepreneurial capacity to cultivate, process, and commercialise coconut products.

Ratiram noted more than 150 coconut farmers have already expressed interest in participating in the revitalisation programme.

"What we are doing today is laying the foundation for consistent supply, increased productivity, and meaningful market participation," he added.

He said the ministry's approach includes improved access to planting material, training, extension support, research, pest and disease management, and expanded processing capacity as production increases.

Cardi's contribution to industry

reconstruction Ansari Hosein, executive director of Cardi, shared Ratiram's worries over the region's diminishing coconut production. He stated that Cardi and its project partners understand the critical need to boost output and productivity in order to fulfill the growing demand for both fresh and processed coconut products.

"Our goal is to bring the coconut business back to its peak in the 1870s. We've started a lot of initiatives to boost the sector both locally and throughout the nine EU member states," Hosein stated.

The project includes establishing one-and-a-half seed gardens on state and private holdings and training personnel in selecting seed nuts from local varieties to populate the gardens.

"In less than two years, these nine seed gardens should produce about 45,000 nuts per year, enough to plant 45,000 acres annually with superior genetic material."

He said the lethal yellowing disease remains a major threat to the sector. Several farmer-training seminars were held to help identify and treat the disease. Linked to this challenge is the South American palm weevil, another major pest.

"One hundred farmers were trained in the use of this technology for improved pest control."

The ministry has also implemented demonstrations on identifying and managing the pest, including establishing 50 integrated pest-management blocks. Digital technologies have also been introduced to support early detection of the palm weevil and reduce tree losses.

Hosein said Cardi imported high-quality seed nuts from Brazil to improve the national germplasm.

"These actions have laid a solid foundation for accelerating and expanding the development of the coconut industry. Through these interventions, farmers are positioned to become major players in a global coconut market expected to exceed US$58 billion by 2030."

He stressed the coconut tree remains a key symbol of Caribbean tourism and a natural protective barrier for coastal communities. Across the region, countries are investing in research, improved seed material, new technologies such as sensors, and small-scale machinery suited to coconut estates.

"In less than 18 months, we will see the tangible fruits of our work, bunches of coconuts from the seedlings distributed today, and, for farmers, the dollars in their pockets," he concluded.

A reconstructed industry is shown by seedlings

According to Ian Mohammed, chief technical officer of the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries, the program is a strategic move in securing and restoring national potential for rural and economic growth.

He talked about the industry's problems, including as aging plantations, insufficient replanting, insect pressure, and restricted access to high-quality genetic material.

He claimed that even in conditions with little moisture, the seedlings may produce large water yields.

"The seedlings issued today signal our commitment to rebuilding production capacity and revitalising global demand for coconut water and high-value coconut products," Mohammed said.

He said opportunities for farmers and processors are significant, as TT has the comparative advantages and expertise needed to re-establish a competitive coconut value chain.

"To our farmers receiving seedlings, your role is critical. Each seedling represents an investment not only in your estates but in the future of the coconut industry," he said.

Mohammed said the initiative forms part of a broader national strategy positioning agriculture as a driver of food security, rural development, and economic diversification.

"We are planting seeds, literally and figuratively."
(Trinidad and Tobago Newsday)

THE TARGET PRICE FOR SELLING GREEN COCONUTS IN LAKSHMIPUR IS TK50 CR

Due to producers' increased efforts to increase production in Lakshmipur, the Department of Agricultural Extension (DAE) has set a goal to sell green coconut worth Taka 50 crore this year.

The Department of Agricultural Extension (DAE) has stepped up efforts to increase production in response to the high-quality yield and robust market demand; local farmers have already benefited from this strategy. The Agriculture Department has set a goal to sell Taka 50 crore worth of green coconuts this year.

The DAE claims that approximately 3,000 hectares of the district's five upazilas are being used for coconut farming. According to official statistics, Lakshmipur produces about 26,960 metric tons of coconuts a year, which are worth about Taka 50 crore.

Of this, about 18,400 metric tons are green coconut, generating an estimated Taka 30 crore. Authorities say private production is even higher.

Due to the high quality of Lakshmipur's green coconut, market demand remains significant nationwide. Farmers have long been selling it directly from the tree to wholesalers. Each green coconut currently sells for Taka 70–80 at the local level, later reaching Taka 120–150 in retail markets after passing through multiple traders.

Although traders buy green coconut from farmers at Taka 60–70, retail prices nearly double, often depending on size.

The DAE notes that farmers prefer selling green coconut rather than mature coconuts as it brings better profit margins. Officials expect revenues from green coconut sales alone to reach Taka 50 crore this year.

Local traders said that while they buy green coconut for Taka 70–80 each, the overall cost increases due to labor and transportation. A gachi—the person who climbs coconut trees—charges Taka 100 per climb.

Additional expenses include transport by van or truck from rural areas to major markets. After covering all costs, traders typically earn Taka 20–30 profit per green coconut. They added that Lakshmipur's green coconut is known for its taste and enjoys high demand nationwide.

According to farmer Tofail Ahmed of Dalal Bazar in Sadar upazila, careful tree care, little pest infestation, and favorable weather all contribute to great yields and competitive prices each year. This season, he has already sold coconuts for Taka 50,000.

Farmers Yusuf Hossain and Nuruzzaman from the same area noted that many farmers are shifting to coconut and green coconut

cultivation because it requires low investment and minimal maintenance.

They said demand for green coconut is far higher in the region, leading most farmers to sell their produce in its raw form.

District DAE Deputy Director Md. Zahir Uddin said that coconut and green coconut from Lakshmipur are supplied to various districts including Dhaka and Chattogram, and some are even exported abroad.

He confirmed that farmers are prioritizing green coconut sales due to higher profitability, and the department expects about Taka 50 crore in earnings from green coconut alone this year.

He added that green coconut water contains essential nutrients and is often recommended by doctors, especially during dengue outbreaks. "During dengue, every patient tries to consume green coconut water, which further boosts its demand," he said, noting that farmers are benefiting from the increased market price. *(BSS News)*

AGRICULTURE MINISTER: GOVT WORKING ON WAR FOOTING TO CONTROL PESTS AND DISEASES AFFECTING COCONUT PLANTATIONS

Union Agriculture Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan stated that the government is expanding the clean plant program and is working on a war footing to eliminate pests and illnesses that harm coconut crops in southern India.

The Minister stated during Question Hour in the Lok Sabha that Pollachi in Coimbatore is a significant producer with 1.2 lakh hectares of coconut plantations, and that India leads the world in coconut output.

"We have proposed we will set up a coconut cluster in Pollachi, [and the] work is going on," Mr. Chouhan said.

Of late, pests and diseases like rhinoceros beetle, red palm weevils, root wilt and ganoderma have been affecting coconut crops and have become a challenge.

"The government is working on a war footing to control the diseases which are affecting coconut cultivation," Mr. Chouhan said.

He said the Coconut Development Board is working to produce good, clean coconut plants in its nursery, but the number is not sufficient.

"We are trying to do this clean coconut plant programme for coconut on a larger scale," he said.

"Climate change has emerged as a big crisis for the farm sector with rising temperatures and higher rainfall," the Minister said.

"We are taking steps to help farmers deal with climate change. We are coming out with newer varieties of seeds which are climate resilient," he added.

Underlining that the excessive use of chemical fertiliser affects soil health, Mr. Chouhan said the government is sensitising 1 crore farmers to take up natural farming.

"More than 15 lakh farmers are doing natural farming. We are also encouraging organic farming," he noted. *(The Hindu)*

PH IS WARNED BY ANALYSTS TO INNOVATE OR RISK LOSING THE EDGE IN THE COCONUT MARKET

A foreign trade expert cautioned that while the Philippines is still one of the world's leading producers of coconuts, it must quickly advance up the value chain to maintain its export dominance as Vietnam quickens its ascent in important international markets.

Speaking at the Department of Trade and Industry's National Exporters Week in Makati,

Sowmya Ramaswami, Head of Global Trade and Export Solutions at Euromonitor International, stated that coconut products are still among the nation's top non-electronic export earners and are now on par with fruits in terms of their share of total exports.

"Quality and diversity drive growth in Philippine exports," Ramaswami said, noting that demand for coconut-based goods is surging across the United States, Europe, and China.

Global health and wellness trends, the increasing move to plant-based diets, and the expanding usage of coconut derivatives in both the food and non-food industries are driving this expansion.

Vietnam: PH Quickly Growing Rival

Ramaswami cautioned that although the Philippines continues to be a significant exporter of coconut products to the US and other important markets, the nation "cannot afford complacency." She underlined that Vietnam, which already accounts for about 20% of coconut imports in significant consuming nations, has quickly become one of the Philippines' most formidable rivals.

Despite high tariff barriers, Vietnam's share has increased significantly in the US alone over the past three to five years, a sign of how competitive its goods have grown.

Ramaswami explained that Vietnam's growth stems from a combination of supply chain realignment, strategic expansion into new coconut product categories, and a strong emphasis on value-added processing, all reinforced by aggressive trade and investment policies. Together, these factors have allowed Vietnam to establish a firmer foothold in segments once dominated by Philippine exporters.

Three key pillars to maintain PH's lead

Ramaswami urged the Philippines to increase its coconut exports through innovation, diversification, and higher-value processing in order to keep its lead.

She emphasized the necessity of "smart diversification," which refers to a purposeful entry into new product applications and developing markets that correspond with customer preferences for the functional, nutritional, and flavor benefits of coconut.

She also underscored the importance of innovation, customization, and stronger branding so Philippine exporters can offer differentiated products tailored to the food, beauty, wellness, and nutraceutical sectors worldwide.

Complementing these must be a more aggressive shift toward enhanced value-added processing, allowing the country to reduce reliance on raw commodity exports and compete through premium, higher-margin goods.

"Many developing countries are doing this in a smart way—Vietnam is a classic example," she said.

The Global Frontiers of Coconuts

Ramaswami identified a number of high-growth categories where the demand for coconuts is still rising.

While virgin coconut oil is still well-liked due to its alleged health benefits, coconut water is emerging as a preferred natural hydration beverage. Desiccated coconut continues to be in high demand among manufacturers of baked goods and confections, while coconut milk and cream are becoming more widely accepted as dairy substitutes.

Concurrently, coconut flour and sugar are gaining popularity as natural, gluten-free alternatives in a variety of food items.

Beyond food, she noted that coconut-derived ingredients are fueling a growing "clean beauty"

movement, with more applications in skincare, haircare, cosmetics, and nutraceuticals.

This global shift toward healthier alternatives, she said, creates more opportunities for the Philippines to diversify strategically and capture higher-value segments.

Now is the moment to take action

Ramaswami asked the Philippines to make a commitment to changing its role from being a raw coconut supplier to an innovation-led, value-added producer in light of the growing worldwide demand for coconut products and the even quicker escalating competition.

She cautioned that if prompt action was not taken, rivals, especially Vietnam, might take an even greater portion of markets in which the Philippines had previously maintained a dominant position. *(The Philippine Business News)*

HOW COCONUT HUSK BECAME A GREEN WEAPON TO AVOID OIL SPILLS, ABSORB OIL IN THE SEA, REPLACE PLASTIC, SAVE REEFS, PRODUCE LOCAL INCOME, AND PROMOTE AN ECOLOGICAL SOLUTION AT THE UN

A coconut shell turns into an eco-friendly weapon. Suffocated reefs, tainted marine life, and coastal villages devoid of fishing and tourism are all possible outcomes if a large portion of the spilled oil is never retrieved and the harm spreads quickly.

The most unexpected response in the Philippines was not provided by costly machinery or robots. It originated from agricultural waste that had been thrown away for many years.

Coconut shells become a green weapon. when engineers and residents began using coconut fiber to contain and absorb oil, reducing impact and speeding up cleanup in sensitive areas.

The disaster that exposed the limits of traditional solutions.

On August 11, 2006, the oil tanker MT Solar 1 sank in the Philippine Sea carrying approximately 550.000 gallons of bunker oil, a thick, heavy, and highly toxic fuel.

The spill affected entire ecosystems, destroying mangroves, seagrass meadows, and coral reefs, as well as directly impacting the income of thousands of fishermen.

The nation implemented traditional emergency procedures, including mechanical suction, floating barriers, and area separation. The issue is that... The behavior of bunker oil differs from that of light oil. It bunches together, adheres to rocks and roots, blends with sand, and makes removal a costly and time-consuming procedure.

Why "absorbing oil" is more difficult than it appears.

On paper, the issue is resolved by barriers and absorbents. In actuality, efficiency is decreased by the flowing sea and gasoline viscosity.

Recovery is typically only partial, even when containment is successful. A portion of it sinks and stays at the bottom for years, endangering the food chain and marine life.

It was this frustration that opened the door to solutions based on natural materials, starting with alternatives like human hair, which is oleophilic and hydrophobic. But the biggest leap came later.

How coconut shells were used as a green weapon

The Philippine Coast Guard used bags of dried coconut husks attached to containment buoys in July 2023 in response to a fresh oil spill threat.

It wasn't spontaneous. Residents had already used gathered shells and fiber-filled nets to make homemade buoys months before.

The important thing to remember is that it's not "half coconuts" floating. Coir is coconut fiber that has been removed from the husk. Shells from coconuts become an eco-friendly weapon. due to the fact that this fiber is affordable, lightweight, floats well, and generally accessible in the nations that produce it.

The science of coconut fiber

The properties of coconut fiber make it very efficient against oil. It attracts oil and repels water because it is both hydrophobic and oleophilic. It floats and absorbs even after being immersed for days.

The substance is also high in lignin, which is reported to make up over 45% of its makeup and functions as a natural "glue" with a powerful tendency to stick to oil.

Additionally, steady retention is encouraged by the porous structure's microcapillaries and twisted fibers. Tests showing retention for up to 72 hours and the capacity to absorb many times more oil than conventional materials like straw are mentioned. This is revolutionary in areas where the reaction needs to be quick and inexpensive.

Next, the fiber and oil are reused

The method outlined is straightforward and effective. The fiber absorbs the oil and creates containment buoys. The material is then gathered, and the oil can be removed for future use.

The fiber can then be recycled or put to other uses, including bioenergy, ecological bricks, organic compost, and building materials.

This particular aspect is important because it lessens a common operational side effect: the use of plastic blanketss and buoys that eventually turn into litter and discharge microplastics.

The economic impact that transforms an environmental solution into a productive chain.

The peel has always been treated as waste, even though it represents a significant portion of the fruit's weight. And this isn't unique to the Philippines.

Countries like Indonesia, India, Sri Lanka, and Vietnam also produce huge volumes, with much of the fiber being wasted.

When the Coconut shells become a green weapon. The text states that waste disposal began to turn into a market. It cites a significant increase in the price of fiber, the creation of factories, and the expansion of exports.

It is a type of solution that connects conservation and income, especially in coastal areas that depend on fishing and tourism.

What does this story teach us, and why did the UN participate in the discussion?

Because it converts agricultural waste into oil containment and absorption technology, the solution was praised as one of the greenest ever seen, according to the source material. What was formerly "trash" is now used as environmental infrastructure.

The lesson is clear: not all solutions must be costly in order to be successful. Scale, accessibility, and usability may be more valuable in an emergency than complex innovation that is delayed. *(Click Petroleo e Gas)*

GLOBAL COCONUT DEMAND REBOUNDS, SO THE GOVT RETHINKS COCOCHEM SALE

The Phlippine's government is reevaluating the long-planned sale of United Coconut Chemicals Inc. (Cocochem) as new concerns about whether selling the company would benefit coconut farmers and the sector as a whole are raised by the resurgence of demand for coconut-based products worldwide.

According to a news release, Agriculture Secretary Francisco P. Tiu Laurel Jr. conducted an ocular inspection of Cocochem's facilities last week (December 22), indicating a policy

review of the state's stance on the business, which was formerly a significant participant in the oleo fats and coconut chemicals industry in Southeast Asia.

"We want to see for ourselves whether it still makes sense for the government to continue operating this chemicals and oleo fats factory given the rising demand for coconut products, particularly in Europe," Tiu Laurel said, describing the visit as a fact-finding step ahead of a final decision.

The government, through Land Bank of the Philippines, has been offering about 682 million common shares of Cocochem, targeting at least ₱2.82 billion in proceeds. The planned sale has been framed as a way to generate funds for coconut farmers while allowing private investors to revive or repurpose the asset. However, improving market conditions for coconut derivatives are prompting policymakers to re-examine whether holding on to the facility could yield greater long-term value for the sector.

Founded in 1981 under then President Ferdinand E. Marcos Sr. and Ambassador Eduardo M. Cojuangco Jr., Cocochem was once the largest coconut chemicals and oleo fats factory in Southeast Asia and the first in the region to produce fatty alcohols using German-designed Lurgi technology. Its export-oriented operations were supported by a private jetty capable of handling 35,000-deadweight-ton vessels, enabling shipments to major markets in Europe, the United States, and Asia by the mid-1980s.

A mix of market and policy shocks contributed to the company's downfall. Executive Order 259, which required the use of fatty alcohol in regional detergent products, was not implemented in 2001, which decreased domestic demand. Following this, the cost of coconut oil increased in comparison to palm kernel oil, making Cocochem less competitive with local competitors. 2012 saw the closure of manufacturing.

Land leases, storage and warehouse rentals, power distribution, wastewater treatment, pier and weighbridge services, dockage fees, water supply, and apartment rentals have been the main sources of income for Cocochem since 2014. Currently, Cocochem Agro-Industrial Park Inc. accounts for 53% of the 39-hectare complex's revenue, followed by Cocochem itself at 44% and residential operations at 3%.

Will coco growers profit?

One of the corporations funded and sequestered by the coco-levy is Cocochem, which is listed in the official inventory of coco-levy assets that are a part of the Coconut Farmers and Industry Trust Fund under Republic Act No. 11524.

In order to support 2.5 million coconut farmers and the long-term growth of the coconut industry, the law establishes a special trust fund from recovered coco levy assets and transfers from the national government. It requires the Philippine Coconut Authority to create a 50-year Coconut Farmers and Industry Development Plan that will direct the fund's investment and use for initiatives like modernizing coconut processing, boosting farm productivity, and increasing farmers' incomes.

The law also sets a programmed infusion of at least ₱75 billion into the fund over the first five years and requires that utilization follow the approved development plan, be audited annually, and remain separate from the PCA's regular budget, to ensure the money is preserved and used primarily for the benefit of poor and marginalized coconut farmers.

With European demand for coconut-based chemicals and derivatives gaining traction amid sustainability and bio-based material shifts, the government's reassessment underscores a broader policy dilemma: whether immediate monetization through a sale best serves farmers' interests, or whether retaining a strategically located industrial asset could support a more integrated, value-adding coconut industry over the long term. *(The Philippine Business News)*

GUJARAT, A MAJOR "COCONUT PRODUCING STATE," SUPPLIES 40% OF COCONUTS TO THE NORTH, NOT SOUTH INDIA

Gujarat, which is well-known for its tender green coconuts, is becoming one of India's major coconut-producing states. North India receives the majority of its coconuts. It may surprise you to learn that the state is falling short of Kerala and Karnataka in terms of producing a significant quantity of these delicious, green coconuts. Here's additional information about this.

Gujarat is currently a major producer of coconuts

India has a brand-new coconut capital. Gujarat is gradually supplying more coconuts than Tamil Nadu, Kerala, and even West Bengal. Tempos carrying tender green coconuts are frequently spotted traveling to Delhi, Haryana, Punjab, Rajasthan, and Uttar Pradesh, according to an article published in The Print. Now referred to as the "coconut highway," this section of NH-51 travels via Somnath, Junagadh, Valsad, and Bhavnagar.

Over the last five years, coconuts have taken over an increasing number of hectares of fields in Gujarat. The Print was informed by farmers that the green, delicate, and slightly sweet coconut is currently their coastal belt's most lucrative produce.

And yes, the profits have also been great for farmers. One farmer, Naranbhai Solanki from Somnath, even called the coconut their lifeline.

Gujarat is now celebrating Coconut Day

According to The Print, Gujarat now celebrates World Coconut Day on September 2. Raghavji Patel, the state minister of agriculture, also made a significant statement this year. According to him, Gujarat's coconut crop area has grown by around 26% since 2025. Gujarat currently produces 260.09 million coconuts annually. When they are tender, 20% of them are harvested. North Indian regions sell about 40% of the coconuts. Gujarati coconuts are preferred by buyers in North India due to the lower cost of transportation.

Gujarat may start to compete with the southern states in the production of coconuts if this keeps up. According to reports, not enough states are able to produce tender coconuts, and Gujarat seems to have grabbed the opportunity and turned the situation to its advantage. But aren't you curious to know what led to the growing production of coconuts in Gujarat? According to The Print, coconut production in the state has been growing for a decade, but Covid actually boosted its market.

Demand Increased Sharply After COVID

When COVID hit, many doctors across the country started prescribing patients to drink coconut water instead of soft drinks, and the habit stuck. Coconut water became a go-to drink for many, and demand increased. This led to farmers along the coast adding more trees.

Farmers shared with The Print that the bigha revenue from coconut stands at around ₹50,000-70,000. The best quality coconuts cost around ₹25 per piece, but in summer, the price can go up to ₹60. Reportedly, coconut production has also replaced 40-50% of groundnut and wheat production in the region.

Additionally, you should be aware that the majority of coconuts in southern states are utilized to produce oil. However, this isn't the case in Gujarat, where coconuts are prized for their creamy pulp and cool water. (Curly Tales)

IOI'S RM100 million investment in a coconut mill could close the demand gap

Citing IOI Corporation Bhd's near-to mid-term development forecast and its RM100 million investment in Malaysia's first integrated coconut mill complex, MBSB Investment Bank

Bhd has maintained its BUY recommendation on the firm with an unchanged target price of RM4.42.

According to MBSB Research, fresh fruit bunch output will support IOI's upstream businesses, which are anticipated to provide over 90% of profit with margins above 40% in FY26–28, growth of 5–10% from mature oil palm estates.

The research house highlighted that the new coconut facility in Segamat, Johor, will monetise all parts of the coconut, with coconut oil forming 70% of output alongside concentrated coconut water and by-products. Coconut oil, commanding a 30–40% premium over palm kernel oil, is expected to underpin margin expansion in the group's refined and blended oils business.

The coconut venture will also include a joint venture with Taiwan's Megastar to secure stable off-takers for concentrated coconut water, particularly targeting demand in China's beverage sector.

MBSB Research said Malaysia's domestic coconut supply meets only around 60% of local demand, leaving a structural gap that IOI's integrated operations aim to address.

The company's plantation-to-processing model provides a competitive advantage over fragmented markets in the Philippines and Indonesia, where smallholders dominate and regulatory restrictions limit scale.

Management indicated that coconut operations will largely mirror the group's oil palm standard operating procedures, with trees maturing in three years and yielding up to 20,000 nuts per hectare annually.

The facility is expected to reach breakeven within two years of operation, with earnings estimates unchanged, as the project is seen providing scalable, value-accretive returns over the medium to long term.

As of 10.35 am, the stock price is up by 0.50% to RM4.04. *(Business Today)*

FRANKLIN BAKER MAINTAINS THE MPIC COCONUT COMPANY

After assuming control of the Franklin Baker Group of Companies, Metro Pacific Investments Corp. (MPIC) now holds a roughly 70% market share in the nation's food-grade coconut exports.

One of the top coconut processors in the Philippine market, Franklin Baker, was acquired by the Pangilinan-led group, according to a statement released on Wednesday.

This occurred fewer than five months after Franklin Baker was acquired by Metro Pacific Agro Ventures Inc. (MPAV), the group's agri-food division.

MPIC said the move injects Franklin Baker with "immediate capital and strategic support to clear pending export backlogs and stabilize the operations …"

With the conglomerate backing Franklin Baker, the latter is given a boost to "transition confidently toward a clear growth trajectory."

MPIC did not disclose the transaction value.

"In our drive to build a stronger agricultural sector, this acquisition supports key industries such as coconut processing," said Manuel V. Pangilinan, chair and CEO of MPIC.

"By bringing Franklin Baker into our portfolio, we are strengthening an important segment of the supply chain and helping ensure that thousands of Filipino farmers and communities benefit from a more efficient and stable industry," Pangilinan said.

Global stage

Jovy Hernandez, president and CEO of MPAV, said the acquisition would also provide momentum

to its goal of making the local coconut sector competitive on the global stage.

MPIC also has investments in power, toll roads, water, transportation, health care and real estate.

The group's consolidated core net income in the first nine months of the year jumped 14 percent year-on-year to P23.6 billion from P20.8 billion.

Its reported net income, however, fell 7 percent due to the absence of a one-time gain booked a year ago.

The group said its power business still provided the biggest contribution at P17.6 billion, or 65 percent of the net operating income. Water and toll roads pitched in P5.8 billion and P4.4 billion, respectively. *(Inquirer)*

AGRICULTURE MINISTER OF INDIA: "GOVT WORKING ON TO CONTROL DISEASES AFFECTING COCONUT PLANTATIONS"

Union Agriculture Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan told the Lok Sabha on Tuesday that the government is expanding the clean plant program and is working on a war footing to eradicate diseases and pests that damage southern Indian coconut crops.

"Of late, pests and diseases like rhinoceros beetle, red palm weevils, root wilt and ganoderma have been affecting coconut crops and have become a challenge," Chouhan said.

He said the Coconut Development Board is working to produce good, clean coconut plants in its nursery, but the number is not sufficient.

"We are trying to do this clean coconut plant program for coconut on a larger scale," Chouhan said.

Globally, India ranks first in coconut production and Pollachi in Coimbatore is a major producer with coconut plantations spanning 1.2 lakh hectares, the minister said during Question Hour in the Lok Sabha.

"We have proposed we will set up a coconut cluster in Pollachi, (and the) work is going on," Chouhan said.

Climate change has emerged as a big crisis for the farm sector with rising temperatures and higher rainfall, he said.

"We are taking steps to help farmers deal with climate change. We are coming out with newer varieties of seeds which are climate resilient," he said.

Underlining that the excessive use of chemical fertilizers affects soil health, Chouhan said the government is sensitising 1 crore farmers to take up natural farming.

"More than 15 lakh farmers are doing natural farming. We are also encouraging organic farming," he said. *(Deccan Herald)*

TRADE NEWS

INDUSTRY PERSPECTIVE

Further lower prices were observed in this week's vegetable oils market.

Coconut oil in Rotterdam market continued silent and a one-sided affair with only sellers present. The market opened lower, tracking palm oil weakness, with offers at $2,265.00-2,333.50/MT CIF for positions from December/January through to July/August. Prices thereafter continued to head downward, with the bearish palm oil market largely influencing coconut oil weakness, and settled at close in the downside at $2,215.00-2,293.50/MT CIF.

The palm kernel oil market likewise was a quiet affair during the week though with active buyers' participation. Opening quotes were similarly

easier with sellers at $1,635.50-1,737.50/MT CIF for positions from December/January through to June/July. Prices after that spiraled downward, interrupted only on Thursday in step with palm oil gain, though at the close returned to the negative zone with closing values at $1,665-1,730/MT CIF.

The price premium of coconut oil over palm kernel oil declined this week across all positions except one, as shown below. The weekly average thus was back in the $500 threshold at $592.19/MT after hitting $600 mark in the last two weeks. The figure is lower than $615.57 last week and $610.47 two weeks ago. Premium per positions are shown following: December/January $574.90 ($577.50 last week); January/February $592.40 ($613.83); February/March $589.90 ($597.40); March/April $594.50 ($607.05); April/May $600.20 ($596.40); May/June $591.00 ($609.35); June/July $602.50 ($612.15); July/August no data ($623.33); July/August/September no data ($670.00); August/September no data ($648.33).

At the CBOT soya complex market, soybean futures stayed mostly lower during the week after a positive start as players await more purchases from China. Concerns remained over the country not meeting commitments this year-end. The US Trade Representative said the previously released timeline for China to meeting its commitments to purchase US soybeans had been extended from this year to the end of the 'growing season'. Later during the week, short covering and technical buying lifted the market, as did the USDA report that indicated improved export sales from 510,000-695,000 MT. Nevertheless, the week ended in the downside still dragged by limited Chinese buying.

At the palm oil section, the market was bearish this week under constant pressure from concerns about rising inventories in Malaysia with November estimates reported increasing 13% over last month. Increasing near-terms production and sluggish export demand added to the bearish market sentiment. A short-lived lift though was lately noted sparked by bargain buying ahead of the MPOB report. The market, however, closed with easier undertone, but with losses moderated by seasonally lower output and higher domestic consumption. *(UCAP Bulletin)*

MARKET ROUND-UP OF COCONUT OIL

In Rotterdam, the coconut oil market was still untraded and bearish. By week's end, all offers were below $2,300 last seen last week: $2,293.50 for December/January; $2,282.50 for January/February; $2,265 for February/March; $2,225 for March/April; $2,247.50 for April/May; $2,215 for May/June; $2,231.25 for June/July; $2,215/MT CIF for July/August. Buyers appeared to have retreated this week. *(UCAP Bulletin)*

FTP AIDED COCONUTS IN THE GLOBAL MARKET CRACK

The unique customs procedure for the entire island will begin at Hainan Free Trade Port. While "duty-free shopping quotas" and "cross-border trade facilitation" garner international attention, Ahai, an artisan, is hard at work polishing coconut shells in a modest workshop amid Wenchang's coconut orchards in Hainan province. The common coconut shell, which local farmers once threw away as garbage, has suddenly found a home in international markets.

For decades, the coconut was a "familiar stranger" in Hainan. Its flesh produced sweet coconut water and soft desserts, but its hard shell remained underutilized. Traditionally, coconut shells were used as firewood or crudely made into bowls and spoons, fetching only a few yuan locally. Exporting them was not feasible, because tariffs and customs fees ate into the profits. "The profit from coconut craft could barely cover the customs agent's fee," Ahai's forefathers would lament.

But Hainan FTP's new customs framework — "freer access at the first line, regulated access at the second line, and free flow within the island" — opened new avenues for local industries. Simply put: foreign goods enter Hainan duty-free at "first line", Hainan goods entering China's

mainland are taxed as required at "second line", and resources move relatively freely within the island. For coconut shells, this institutional redesign unlocked two distinct but mutually reinforcing value chains.

On the production side, the biggest change was the upgrading of manufacturing capacity by providing access to global inputs. Before the FTP was established, Ahai's workshop struggled to import natural dyes from Malaysia or precision carving equipment from Germany due to high tariffs. As a result, most of their output consisted of low-end products. But now these materials and equipment enter duty-free, enabling them to upgrade their production. FTP incentives, such as 15 percent corporate and personal income tax, lower their operational and labor costs, allowing Ahai to hire skilled artisans at higher wages.

Ahai's workshop now produces gradient-dyed coconut shells using Malaysian plant dyes and carves intricate lamps and jewelry with German tools. Both the quality and the value of the products have risen significantly. Domestic duty exemptions for processing further boost profitability, with value-added across the supply chain exceeding 30 percent.

Some feared that the special customs operation would turn Hainan into a "duty-free shopping island". But the opposite has happened: local culture has strengthened, paired with high-quality global consumption. Cross-border e-commerce allows these upgraded products to bypass traditional export hurdles, reaching European and American consumers within 72 hours via Haikou's "9610" export model.

At the same time, products made from coconut shells are being integrated into Hainan's cultural tourism economy. Duty-free stores, once dominated by cosmetics and luxury goods, now also feature Hainan coconut craft zones. Brooches inlaid with duty-free imported pearls, bookmarks with Li ethnic embroidery, and aroma holders paired with cross-border-sourced scents are on offer. These souvenirs are both locally distinctive and high-quality, which Southeast Asian tourists can take home and domestic tourists can ship internationally, enabled by the FTP's streamlined cross-border logistics.

Before the island-wide special customs operation, some also feared Hainan would become isolated from the mainland and global markets. But coconut shells prove otherwise. High-end crafts sell abroad under "first-line" access, while affordable daily-use items reach cities on the mainland through "second-line" channels, performing well in cultural shops and boutique hotels in Jiangsu, Zhejiang, and Shanghai. The FTP is not a market barrier but a connector that links local resources to global technology, traditional crafts to international high-end markets, and ordinary artisans to shared benefits.

The special customs operation also brings tangible benefits to residents. In Haikou, residents are likely to enjoy a 30 percent price drop on "cross-border coconut milk jelly" made with imported Thai coconut flesh and local coconut juice. Workers from a Qionghai processing plant can train in Singapore under FTP vocational programs, acquiring advanced coconut processing skills. Ordinary coconut farmers in Wenchang can label their products with "organic traceability", boosting purchase prices and transforming their businesses from raw material suppliers to branded producers.

Future "coconut stories" abound: fibers exported as eco-friendly materials to Europe, activated charcoal entering international high-end purification markets, or coconut-themed cultural tourism destinations akin to Penang's durian farms. The protagonists are artisans, frontline workers, and everyday consumers.

Hainan FTP's island-wide special customs operation is not an isolated loop but an open hub connecting domestic and international markets. When a simple coconut shell can leap across oceans in value, and a small workshop can access global markets, the island's vitality surpasses policy alone, illustrating China's pursuit of a higher-level open economy. *(China Daily)*

OTHER VEGEOIL NEWS

IN NOVEMBER, INDIA INCREASED ITS IMPORTS OF PALM OIL DUE TO LOWER PRICES

Leading vegetable oil business group Reuters reported on December 15, Mumbai, that India's imports of palm oil increased in November as refiners took advantage of lower pricing, increasing purchases of the tropical oil while decreasing imports of the more expensive soybean and sunflower oils. According to the report, increased imports of palm oil by India, the world's biggest consumer of vegetable oils, are anticipated to lower the current high stocks.

Data from the Solvent Extractors' Association of India (SEA) showed palm oil imports in November rose about 5% from October to 632,341 MT. Imports of soybean oil dropped more than 18% to 370,661 MT and sunflower oil imports fell 45% to a two-year low of 142,953 MT, the industry body said. India also imported 5,000 MT of canola oil from the United Arab Emirates in the month, it added.

Lower imports of soybean oil and sunflower oil cut India's total imports of edible oils in November by 13.3% from a month earlier to a seven-month low of 1.15 million MT, the SEA said. India buys palm oil mainly from Indonesia and Malaysia, and imports soybean oil and sunflower oil from Argentina, Brazil, Russia and Ukraine. *(UCAP Bulletin)*

THIS YEAR, MALAYSIA WILL PRODUCE MORE THAN 20 MILLION METRIC TONS OF PALM OIL

According to Datuk Dr. Ahmad Parveez Ghulam Kadir, director general of the Malaysian Palm Oil Board (MPOB), Malaysia is anticipated to produce between 20 million and 20.5 million MT of palm oil this year, assuming favorable weather and maintained harvesting efficiency. Production will exceed 20 million MT for the first time. According to Ahmad Parveez, "crossing the 20 million MT threshold would therefore represent not merely a statistical achievement but a historic milestone reflecting both supportive market conditions and structural improvements in plantation productivity."

MPOB data showed, Malaysia's palm oil stocks in November rose to a more than six-and-a-half-year high, as weaker exports coincided with the second-highest production ever recorded for the month. The rise in inventories reflects ongoing export headwinds, he said, adding he expects inventories to edge higher by the end of December as he anticipates export demand to improve with restocking ahead of Chinese New Year. *(UCAP Bulletin)*

USED VEGETABLE OIL MAY BE USED AS FUEL FOR AVIATIONS

With funding from the Russian Science Foundation, researchers at the Institute of Catalysis SB RAS are developing catalysts to transform used cooking oils into parts for environmentally friendly aviation fuel. Without requiring large modifications to the current infrastructure, these sustainable aviation fuel (SAF) solutions can drastically lower the carbon footprint of air travel.

In 2024 alone, the aviation sector released more than 940 million tons of CO2 into the atmosphere, making it a significant contributor to greenhouse gas emissions. Concurrently, the aviation sector is increasing fuel generation from renewable feedstock. Although SAF combustion produces carbon dioxide as well, aggregate emissions across the entire production chain (from feedstock to usage) are almost 80% lower than those of conventional jet fuel. While global SAF production is currently estimated at about 2 million tons per year, major companies expect to increase SAF production to 500 million tons by 2050.

Used edible oils are considered among the most accessible and economically attractive feedstock

for SAF. They are cheaper than petroleum feedstock; the global market for edible oils is estimated at about $7 billion. These oils are processed with the HEFA technology, which removes oxygen from fats using hydrogen and converts them into a hydrocarbon mixture. This mixture undergoes cracking and isomerization, which results in feedstock that can be used to produce aviation fuel, diesel and gasoline.

There are two approaches to the HEFA process. With the classic approach, the reactions are divided into two stages: oxygen is removed to form normal alkanes, after which the fuel's performance properties are improved. A more modern and cost-effective approach involves a single-stage process in which hydrodeoxygenation, hydroisomerization and partial hydrocracking occur simultaneously on a single catalyst. It is these types of systems that are the focus of research at the Institute of Catalysis SB RAS.

The scientists are looking into bifunctional catalysts based on nickel and molybdenum which are applied to zeolite-containing carriers. Their goal is to understand how carrier preparation methods and active component application affect the efficiency, selectivity and reliability of the catalysts.

In the future, these solutions could streamline the production of environmentally-friendly aviation fuel and cut its cost significantly. *(Global Energy)*

EUROPEAN COOKING OIL RECYCLER PURCHASES LIFECYCLE OILS

Quatra, a recycler of used cooking oil, has strengthened its presence in the UK market by announcing the acquisition of Lifecycle Oils, a UK-based company. The Belgian company announced the acquisition, characterizing it as a new phase of its expansion plan.

According to Quatra, the action would strengthen its operations in the UK, increase client proximity, and help build a robust European network for the collecting and processing of spent fats and cooking oils.

In a statement on LinkedIn, the company said: "We are proud to announce that Quatra has acquired Lifecycle Oils in the United Kingdom.

"We warmly welcome the Lifecycle Oils colleagues to the Quatra group!

"This step fits our long-term focus on growth, service quality and sustainable operations across borders. Exciting times ahead!"

Making biofuels from waste oil

Lifecycle Oils is a UK-based company that runs a nationwide network for collecting and processing used cooking oils and fats. The company uses twelve dedicated depots to gather used cooking oil from all throughout the United Kingdom.

Waste cooking oil is converted by the company into biofuels and products, such as its LF100 fuel and specialty feedstocks for sustainable aviation fuel (SAF), hydrotreated vegetable oil (HVO), and biodiesel.

Piet Van Pollaert, CEO of Quatra, commented on the acquisition: "The UK is an important market for us.

"This acquisition enables us to bring our advanced capabilities to a broader customer base.

"It marks an important milestone in our European growth strategy."

Belgium-based Quatra

With its headquarters located in Belgium, Quatra collects and processes used cooking oils and fats for use in renewable fuels and other applications throughout a number of European markets.

According to the corporation, the agreement improved consumer proximity and allowed

for more effective, large-scale collecting and sustainable processing, which strengthened its operational model in the UK.

Van Pollaert added: "Our goal is simple. We want to build a strong, stable and future-proof Quatra in the UK, one that delivers top-quality service and contributes to a more circular economy." *(Lets Recycle)*

HEALTH NEWS

WHY YOU MIGHT WANT TO SWITCH FROM WHITE SUGAR TO COCONUT OR PALM SUGAR INSTEAD

Sugar has surpassed fat as the biggest threat to public health in recent years, with obesity and diabetes rates continuing to rise. However, the human palate is drawn to sweetness. Therefore, it makes sense that people have been searching for substitutes for table sugar, which is linked to a number of health problems.

Cooks may also want to take into account sugar's glycemic index, which measures how carbs affect blood sugar. Refined table sugar, also known as sucrose, contains virtually no vitamins, minerals, or fiber, which is why it is known for adding "empty calories." Following a high-glycemic-index meal,blood sugar spikes can cause brain fog, and over time, they can contribute to diabetes and heart disease.

Enter palm sugar, which includes sugar made from coconut, date, and palmyra palms. Palm sugars in general contain various vitamins and minerals because they are less refined than table sugar. These sugars are also generally slightly lower on the glycemic index than white sugar. Because coconut sugar has become so popular, it's worth exploring this particular palm sweetener, which has long been used in Southeast and South Asian foods, but has only recently become more popular on health food store shelves in the West.

Coconut sugar stands out for its nutrients and lower glycemic properties

Before coconuts are formed, the nectar of coconut palm flowers is used to make coconut sugar. Iron, zinc, calcium, potassium, and the prebiotic inulin are all found in coconut sugar. The low glycemic properties of coconut sugar are the "real benefit" of the sweetener, according to Ellie Krieger, a registered dietitian, culinary show host, and cookbook author, who states on a Substack article that the tiny amount of nutrients by itself wouldn't justify a switch. According to a 2023 study published in the International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health, "compared to the majority of other commercially available sugars, coconut sugar is certainly a healthy sweetener."

It's largely because of its nutritional profile that coconut sugar has gained popularity among consumers despite costing more than regular table sugar. Unlike mass-produced white sugar, coconut sugar is generally farmed by traditional smallholders, contributing to its higher cost.

If you decide to splurge on coconut sugar, you can use it to take twice-baked sweet potatoes to the next level, employ it in a simple candied walnuts recipe, or keep it on hand as one of the best brown sugar substitutes. In many recipes, you can use coconut sugar with a 1:1 ratio instead of white sugar, but you wouldn't want to use coconut sugar in some delicate baked goods, and it shouldn't be confused with the coconut flakes you might use for toasting. *(Tasting Table)*

THE HEALTH BENEFITS OF DRINKING COCONUT WATER DURING THE WINTER

Our routines are subtly disrupted by winter. We walk less, eat differently, and, to be honest, we don't feel as thirsty. However, in order to maintain a stable metabolism, your body still requires water, minerals, and all those healthy nutrients. Contrary to popular belief, coconut water is effective all year round. It is low in calories and full of electrolytes and bioactive

goodness, which is just what your body needs during the colder months, according to science. Beyond just keeping you hydrated, it promotes healthy mineral balance, aids in digestion, helps control body temperature, and gives you mild energy without raising blood sugar or overtaxing the body, making it suitable for daily use across different age groups and lifestyles. So, don't think of coconut water as just a hot-weather drink. It's a smart way to keep hydrated, support your immune system, and help your body stay balanced when it's cold outside.

The health benefits of coconut water in the cold

Your body still loses fluids even when you're wrapped up and not sweating profusely (particularly inside with the heat turned up). In addition to providing hydration, coconut water contains a number of beneficial minerals, including potassium, magnesium, sodium, amino acids, and antioxidants. According to a study that was published in Foods, all of these components cooperate to maintain healthy cells, prevent oxidative stress, and improve bodily functions.

Let's examine the benefits of using coconut water throughout the winter:

- It keeps you hydrated by replacing potassium and sodium, which you lose even if you're not sweating.
- It gives your immune system a boost thanks to vitamin C and antioxidants.
- Your muscles and nerves function better, so you're less likely to feel tired from mineral imbalances.
- You get a gentle energy lift from its natural sugars, but not so many calories that you need to worry.
- Digestive issues? Coconut water helps keep things moving in your gut.

Why using coconut water is advantageous in the cold months

Your body experiences a whole different kind of stress throughout the winter. Your digestion slows down, your circulation alters, and inflammation may increase. Without the sugar rush or caffeine crash that come with many winter drinks, coconut water helps you find equilibrium.

Your blood vessels constrict in colder conditions, which might cause your blood pressure to rise. Magnesium helps calm your muscles and nerves, and potassium in coconut water keeps those vessels flexible.

Here's what coconut water does for you in winter:

- Keeps your electrolytes in check, even if you're not drinking as much water.
- Supports your heart and circulation when it's cold out.
- Helps your body deal with winter stress and inflammation.
- Makes digestion easier, especially if your meals get heavier.
- Boosts your metabolism without spiking your blood sugar.

How to incorporate coconut water into a regular winter diet

You don't have to change your diet. Working with coconut water is simple, and its mild flavor won't interfere with your food. Don't boil it; instead, drink it at room temperature. You don't need to chill it. You retain all the nutrients in this manner.

Here's how to apply it:

- Sip a glass mid-morning for hydration without ruining your appetite.
- Pair it with breakfast to help your body absorb minerals.
- Use it as a base for warm herbal drinks; just warm it gently, don't boil.
- Drink it after light exercise to restore electrolytes.
- Blend it into smoothies with winter fruits for an extra nutrient kick.

The effects of consuming coconut water during the winter on long-term health

Throughout the winter, drinking coconut water does more than just satisfy your thirst; it subtly

strengthens your body's long-term resistance. If you continue, you're not only staying hydrated but also improving the daily function of your heart, kidneys, and muscles. As the cold months continue, these advantages mount, and eventually you begin to see improvements in your general health.

In all honesty, winter may be physically taxing in subtle ways. Your immune system has to work a little harder, your skin dries up, and occasionally your energy levels drop. Coconut water acts as a natural means of maintaining a stable intake of nutrients and fluids.

If you make coconut water part of your winter routine for a few years, you'll probably see steadier blood pressure, a happier gut, and less of that heavy, seasonal tiredness. Plus, it's not loaded with sugar or weird additives, so it works for just about anyone: kids, adults, you name it. It fits perfectly with that push for real, minimally processed drinks, instead of chasing after whatever's trending.

Small decisions like adding coconut water can subtly support your body's demands as winter habits gradually move toward comfort and convenience. This offers a straightforward, natural method to be nourished, hydrated, and balanced throughout the colder, slower months. *(Times of India)*

COCONUT RECIPE

COCONUT FLOUR DETOX PANCAKES

Who doesn't love pancakes? They've always been one of those simple pleasures that bring back good memories of slow mornings and home-cooked breakfasts. This version keeps that same comfort but makes it work for your body, not against it. Made with coconut flour instead of refined grains, these pancakes are rich in healthy fats and fiber to keep your energy steady. Top them with berries, nuts, or a sprinkle of coconut flakes for a wholesome twist on a classic favorite.

Ingredients

- ¼ cup coconut flour
- 3 large free range eggs
- 2 tablespoons olive oil
- 1-2 tablespoons of coconut oil (for greasing the skillet)
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1/8 teaspoon fine sea salt
- Blueberries (optional for adding to batter)
- Coconut flakes, berries, and nuts (optional for topping)

Method

Step 1. In a large bowl, whisk together the coconut flour, eggs, olive oil, baking powder, vanilla extract, and salt until smooth and free of clumps.

Step 2. Heat a large skillet over medium-low heat and grease with coconut oil.

Step 3. Pour 2 tablespoons of batter into the skillet and cook until bubbles form on the surface, about 4 minutes. Flip and cook the other side for an additional 4 minutes or until golden brown.

Step 4. Continue cooking the remaining batter. serve the pancakes warm with nuts or berries Leftovers can be stored in the fridge for up to five days. *(Mark Hyman MD)*

STATISTICS

Table 1. Indonesia's Monthly Exports of Coconut Oil (in MT), 2023 - 2025

Month	2023		2024		2025	
	Volume (MT)	Value (FOB) US$'000	Volume (MT)	Value (FOB) US$'000	Volume (MT)	Value (FOB) US$'000
January	54,436	55,216	58,053	59,761	57,630	107,485
February	74,419	74,978	64,023	68,231	45,809	88,981
March	74,970	76,473	49,013	54,648	40,337	82,272
April	57,695	57,515	58,675	68,580	50,722	110,204
May	55,397	56,651	59,821	75,878	58,144	141,470
June	70,093	67,749	35,258	44,850	26,603	68,199
July	52,109	51,187	67,699	86,068	55,588	144,494
August	61,594	58,845	64,126	90,338	27,947	73,204
September	41,572	42,876	47,578	66,188	45,498	115,046
October	57,262	57,270	64,795	100,625	46,365	114,805
November	64,097	65,456	34,665	58,377	34,180	80,829
December	58,894	60,942	52,374	93,076		
Total	**722,537**	**725,157**	**656,079**	**866,620**	**488,821**	**1,126,990**

Source: BPS-Statistics Indonesia

Table 2. Philippines' Monthly Exports of Coconut Oil (in MT), 2021 - 2025

Month	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
January	52,687	97,206	99,147	127,714	136,883
February	57,390	124,457	65,575	102,316	128,619
March	73,756	98,096	138,057	119,055	119,786
April	59,061	124,057	60,428	161,267	111,263
May	52,202	114,725	111,473	146,162	76,089
June	61,066	87,911	65,895	124,897	75,727
July	78,540	113,303	120,807	171,936	82,431
August	80,398	105,261	91,387	109,423	73,083
September	83,209	79,577	78,300	128,886	110,072
October	93,387	110,147	104,617	157,463	70,355
November	95,295	83,828	64,950	128,207	267,312
December	98,197	88,278	99,209	165,452	
Total	**885,188**	**1,226,847**	**1,099,845**	**1,642,778**	**1,251,619**

Source: Philippine Statistics Authority *) Preliminary figures

Table 3. International Prices of Selected Oils, January 2023 - December 2025, (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)
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	1,610	1,031	933	1,480	1,049
	September	1,740	1,044	983	1,515	1,068
	October	1,718	1,095	1,077	1,636	1,206
	November	1,836	1,145	1,169	2,015	1,267
	December	1,953	1,064	1,190	2,099	1,223
2025	January	1,976	1,048	1,070	1,962	1,207
	February	2,051	1,069	1,067	1,947	1,220
	March	2,316	1,011	1,068	2,064	1,233
	April	2,587	1,120	994	2,090	1,225
	May	2,767	1,163	908	2,003	1,208
	June	2,699	1,178	935	1,860	1,196
	July	2,841	1,307	976	2,097	1,214
	August	2,742	1,245	1,026	2,264	1,274
	September	2,596	1,159	1,037	2,414	1,312
	October	2,558	1,132	1,038	2,273	1,363
	November	2,436	1,128	983	2,153	1,360
	December	2,285	1,119	981	2,113	1,343

Source: Cocommunity and Oil World

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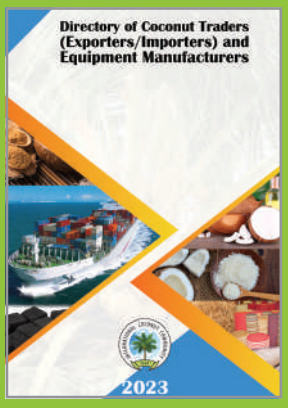

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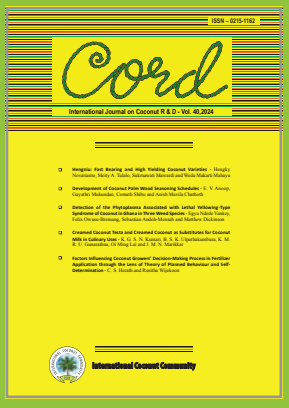

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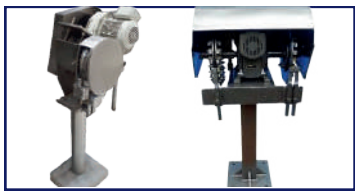

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