

## Problems experienced by the arecanut growers in arecanut cultivation

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### ABSTRACT

The study was conducted in Dapoli and Guhagar tahsils of Ratnagiri district of Konkan region. The sample was constituted 100 arecanut growers drawn from 10 villages. The respondents were interviewed with the help of a specially designed schedule. The exploratory survey design was used for the present study. Major problems faced by the respondents were 'intercropping decreases the yield of main crop', 'did not get minimum price to the arecanut by middle man', 'possibility of transferring disease from intercrop to main crop', 'lack of knowledge about pest and disease'

**Key words :** Problems, Arecanut growers, Arecanut cultivation

### INTRODUCTION

Arecanut or betel nut or supari (*Areca catechu*) is one of the important commercial crops grown in India, since immemorial time. It is a matter of great proud that India at present ranks first in the world both in area and production of arecanut. Arecanut cultivation is said to be date back to pre christian era. This existence of the Sanskrit name 'kramuka' supports the view that this tree has been cultivated in India from very ancient times. Besides India, arecanut is grown in Sri Lanka, Borneo, Philipines, New Guinea, East Indies, East Indian Archipelago and Bangladesh. Arecanut is exported to the countries like Nepal, Singapore, Kenya and Malaysia where it is mainly used for chewing and extraction of alkaloid purpose as it has got medicinal properties such as astringent, narcotic, antihelmentic and vermifuge.

Major Arecanut producing countries of the world are India, China, Myanmar, Indonesia, Thailand, Bangladesh. India ranks first in both area (58.00 per cent) and production (53.00 per cent) of arecanut. Total area under arecanut is around 3.2 lakh ha and the total production is around 3.4 lakh tonnes. Kerala and Karnataka account for about 70 per cent of country's production. Out of the total production the percentage of white variety is around 60.00 per cent and that of red variety is 40.00 per cent. Arecanut consumption in the country is around 3.3 lakh tonnes.

It can be seen that agro-climatic conditions of the Konkan region are most congenial for the cultivation of Arecanut even then we find that the Arecanut cultivation is restricted to some pocket in Konkan region. Probably the main reason behind this may be the restricted availability of water for irrigation throughout the year in

some pockets of Konkan region. Very little information is available on the cultivation practices followed by the arecanut growers and difficulties experienced by them in cultivation, processing and marketing of arecanut.

The need of present era is to increase the productivity of each and every crop. This could be achieved by adopting improved and high yield varieties and new technologies of crop plant. Dr. Balashab Sawant Konkan Krishi Vidyapeeth, Dapoli has done valuable research work on major fruit crop of Konkan region.

The university has recommended two varieties of arecanut namely mangala and shrivardhini. So also, other improved package of practices for cultivation of arecanut crop for better production. Efforts are made to transfer these recommendations among the arecanut growers by the extension workers. However, it has been observed that arecanut growers are still following their age old practices of arecanut cultivation. The practices followed by the arecanut growers of Ratnagiri district have not been systematically documented so far. Hence, the study was undertaken to study the problems experienced by the arecanut growers in arecanut cultivation.

### MATERIALS AND METHODS

Dapoli and Guhagar tahsils from Ratnagiri district were selected, as area under arecanut cultivation in this tahsils are comparatively more than those of other tahsils of Ratnagiri district. List of villages cultivating arecanut from selected two tahsil were obtained from Department of Agriculture (Taluka Agricultural Officer). From this list, five villages having larger area under arecanut cultivation were selected. For selection of the respondents, a list of arecanut growers who possessed at least of 50

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