Abstract

Novel Products of ICAR-CPCRI to Turn Coconut Farmer into an Entrepreneur

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The coconut farmers of Kerala have been struggling to cope up with unstable prices and rising labour costs. Of late it has been realized that product diversification of farm produce into high-value products with better price realization for farmers through competitive markets, value chains and improved linkage between field and fork could increase the farmers income. All at a sudden there is interest in coconut plantation and coconut based products. The recent innovations and the value chains developed in coconut at ICAR-CPCRI can transform the farmers into entrepreneurs and can easily double the income. Coconut palm, widely acclaimed as Kalpavriksha or Tree of Heaven or Wonder tree where each and every part is useful. Based on the raw material used, the major products can be categorised as sap based, tender nut water based, meat/ kernel based, husk based, shell based and leaf craft based products. Though coconut value addition is at its nascent stage, the recent innovations and the value chains developed in coconut can transform the farmers into entrepreneurs and can easily enhance the income. ICAR-Central Plantation Crops Research Institute (CPCRI) Kasaragod developed various value added products adoption of it as a cottage or small scale industries created demand both in domestic and international markets so as to get better price for the produce and improve the livelihood of the farmers. In that context, the Kalparasa (neera) a hygienic and unfermented sap from the coconut spadix collected by the coco-sap chiller and its amenability to develop various value added products like coconut sugar, jaggary, nectar or syrup has evinced keen interest in entrepreneurs and coconut farmers for its collection and marketing. Virgin coconut oil and coconut chips are other products attracting the attention of consumers. From the byproducts natural extruded products are prepared which are far superior in quality compared to the commercially available products. Here we explain in brief the process of sap, tender nut water and meat/ kernel based preparation of consumable products, their nutritive value, use and cost
and returns by their adoption are discussed. These products evinced interest not only in coconut farmers but also in marketing personnel, traders, policy makers, doctors and all those health conscious people.