

Production and Marketing Constraints of Coconut Cultivation in Kurunegala District

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Abstract

Coconut (*Cocos nucifera*) is one of the major plantation crops that plays a vital role in the Sri Lankan economy. Currently coconut production has dropped significantly comparison to previous years. This contraction in nut production affected adversely to local consumption and coconut related industries. In such context, this study was conducted as a case study to examine the production and marketing issues faced by the coconut growers and analyze gross market margins of coconut cultivation at Bingiriya and Pannala Divisional Secretary's Divisions in Kurunegala District. Primary data were collected from randomly selected 70 coconut growers by using a pre-tested structured questionnaire. Descriptive and inferential statistical tools were used to analyze the data. According to the kruskal-wallis analysis, it was identified four major production constraints which affect the coconut growers. Adverse weather condition was the most leading constraint while losses due to pest and diseases were the second main constraint. The third and fourth priorities were lack of proper management practices and land availability, respectively. The majority (94%) of the respondents have marketed their coconut production through intermediaries. The main constraint faced by the growers during coconut marketing was the high commission for intermediaries. The cost of coconut cultivation per acre was LKR 413040.00. Based on the gross margin analysis, highest producer share was reported for the channel which consists of the Producer- Wholesaler- Retailer- consumer (66.3%). This study suggested that it is vital to produce and introduce heat tolerant, pest and disease tolerant high yielding coconut varieties to the growers. Also it is important to enhance the farmers' accessibility to different marketing channels in order to obtain a higher profit.

Keywords: Coconut cultivation, Gross market margin, Marketing constraint, Production Constraint

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