



Exploring Marketing Constraints and Potential Opportunities for Coconut-Based Products: Evidence from Batticaloa, Sri Lanka

G.C. Samaraweera^{1}, M.H.F.N. Samha¹, T. Geretharan²*

¹ Faculty of Agriculture, University of Ruhuna, Sri Lanka

² Faculty of Agriculture, Eastern University, Sri Lanka

**Corresponding author: gangani@agecon.ruh.ac.lk*

There is significant potential to improve the marketing of coconut-based products in Batticaloa. However, demand currently exceeds the production of coconut-based products despite many opportunities. Therefore, the present study was an effort to explore marketing constraints and opportunities related to the coconut industry in Batticaloa, Sri Lanka. Simple random sampling was used to select 50 registered coconut farmers and 50 registered coconut-based producers for the study. Primary data were collected through pre-structured questionnaires and field surveys and analyzed with IBM SPSS 25.0 and Microsoft Excel. Descriptive statistics were applied to assess the data. The results reveal a strong positive disposition toward the coconut industry among male respondents, due to the male-dominated farming system in Batticaloa. Surprisingly, no value-added products are currently produced among the sample. The most prominent constraints identified in both local and global markets were, respectively, poor access to market information (81.4%), high input and other operational costs (73.6%), price volatility (83.8%), and lack of government and non-government support (48.4%) for export in Batticaloa. Despite the constraints, considerable local and global marketing opportunities were available, respectively: income generation (85.0%), higher local and global demand (84.0%), creation of employment opportunities (83.4%), earning foreign exchange (81.8%), competitive advantage (78.6%), and coconut tourism (77.2%) in Batticaloa. Based on the findings, the study recommends encouraging community engagement in the marketing of the coconut-based industry and enhancing knowledge regarding value addition of coconut. The respondents of this study demanded that the government establish quality upgrading programs, provide appropriate training facilities to implement suitable marketing strategies, and enhance the use of e-commerce platforms for the marketing process. Therefore, the present study recommends addressing these constraints and identifying opportunities to improve the local and global marketing of coconut-based products in Batticaloa, Sri Lanka.

Keywords: Coastal areas, Coconut-based farmers, Coconut-based producers, Coconut-based marketing, E-marketing