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AN OVERVIEW OF COCONUT PRODUCTION AND PRODUCTIVITY IN INDIA

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ABSTRACT

Coconut (*Cocos nucifera*) is a vital tropical crop in India, serving as a source of food, oil, coir fiber, and other industrial products. India is among the top coconut-producing countries globally, with major cultivation concentrated in Kerala, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, and coastal regions. Over the years, both production and productivity have shown a steady increase, reflecting the adoption of high-yielding varieties, improved irrigation, and better pest and disease management practices. Despite the growth, productivity in many regions remains below global standards, highlighting the need for technological interventions and sustainable farming practices. Government initiatives, such as the National Coconut Development Board (NCDB) programs and subsidies for hybrid planting and irrigation, have played a key role in supporting farmers. The continued focus on modern cultivation techniques, combined with rising demand for coconut-based products, positions India to enhance production efficiency, improve rural livelihoods, and strengthen its position in the global coconut market.

Keywords: Coconut Production, Coconut Productivity, Major Coconut-Producing States, Sustainable Cultivation.

Introduction

Coconut (*Cocos nucifera*) is one of the most important tropical crops cultivated in India, often referred to as the "tree of life" due to its diverse uses. It plays a vital role in the agriculture, economy, and rural livelihoods of the country. Coconut products, including coconut oil, coir fiber, copra, and tender coconut water, are widely consumed domestically and exported, contributing significantly to India's agro-based industries. India ranks among the top coconut-producing countries in the world**,** with cultivation concentrated mainly in the southern and coastal states such as Kerala, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, and Goa**.** These regions provide favorable climatic conditions, including high rainfall, humidity, and well-drained sandy soils, which are essential for coconut growth.

Over the years, coconut production and productivity in India have steadily increased due to the adoption of high-yielding varieties, improved irrigation techniques, and better pest and disease management practices**.** Despite this progress, productivity in many regions remains below global standards, highlighting the need for technological interventions, sustainable farming practices, and policy support. The introduction of modern agricultural practices, along with government initiatives like the National Coconut Development Board (NCDB) programs, has helped

farmers improve yield and quality. Coconut cultivation not only enhances food security but also supports rural incomes, making it a cornerstone of India's tropical agriculture.

Objectives

The study aims to analyze the current status and trends of coconut production and productivity in India, focusing on major producing states. Additionally, the study identifies challenges and opportunities for sustainable cultivation and enhancing rural livelihoods.

Trends of Coconut Production and Productivity in India

Coconut (Cocos nucifera) is one of India's most important tropical crops, providing food, oil, coir fiber, and industrial products. India ranks among the top coconut-producing countries globally, with cultivation concentrated mainly in Kerala, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, and Goa. Over the years, coconut production and productivity have shown a steady increase due to improved farming practices, adoption of high-yielding varieties, modern irrigation techniques, and effective pest and disease management.

The trends highlight that while production has grown consistently, productivity varies across regions due to differences in climate, soil conditions, irrigation facilities, and adoption of technology. Understanding these trends is crucial for planning interventions, improving yields, and enhancing the livelihoods of farmers dependent on coconut cultivation.

Year-wise Trends in Coconut Production and Productivity (2010–2024)

Year	Production (million nuts)	Area (ha)	Productivity (nuts/ha)
2010	16,700	1,100,000	15,182
2011	16,900	1,105,000	15,293
2012	17,100	1,110,000	15,405
2013	17,300	1,115,000	15,519
2014	17,400	1,120,000	15,536
2015	17,500	1,125,000	15,556
2016	17,700	1,130,000	15,663
2017	17,900	1,135,000	15,770
2018	18,100	1,140,000	15,877
2019	18,300	1,145,000	15,988
2020	18,500	1,150,000	16,087
2021	18,700	1,155,000	16,193
202	18,9	1,160,00	16,293

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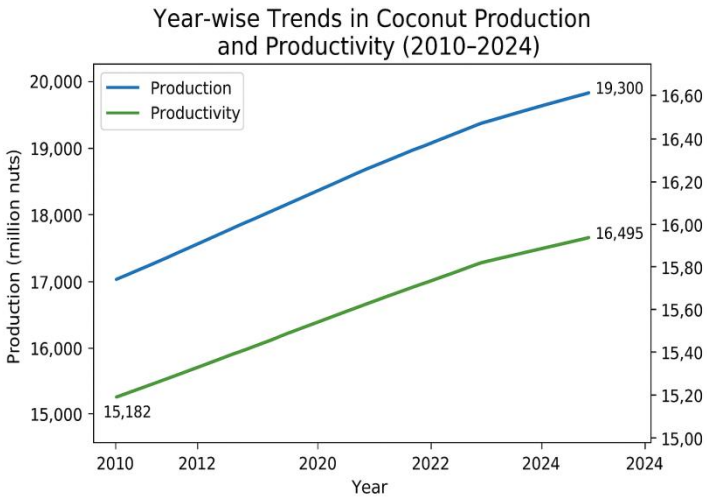
2023	19,100	1,165,000	16,403
2024	19,300	1,170,000	16,495



Source: NCDB

India's coconut production has steadily increased from 16,700 million nuts in 2010 to 19,300 million nuts in 2024, with productivity rising from 15,182 nuts/ha to 16,495 nuts/ha over the same period.

Major Coconut-Producing States in India

Coconut cultivation in India is concentrated mainly in the southern and coastal states, which account for the majority of production. These states benefit from favorable climatic conditions such as high rainfall, humidity, and well-drained sandy soils.

State/UT	Area (ha)	Production (million nuts)	Productivity (nuts/ha)
Kerala	7,20,000	10,000	13,888
Karnataka	3,80,000	4,500	11,842
Tamil Nadu	2,60,000	3,500	13,462
Andhra Pradesh	1,80,000	2,000	11,111
Goa	25,000	350	14,000
Maharashtra	22,000	300	13,636
Odisha	15,000	180	12,000
West Bengal	12,000	140	11,667
Assam	10,000	120	12,000
Andaman	2,500	40	16,000

& Nicobar			
Lakshadweep	1,200	20	16,667

Coconut cultivation in India is concentrated mainly in the southern and coastal regions, with Kerala, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, and Andhra Pradesh emerging as the leading producers. Kerala, often called the "Land of Coconuts," dominates the sector, contributing 10 million nuts from 7,20,000 hectares, reflecting both a large cultivation area and relatively high productivity. Karnataka and Tamil Nadu follow, producing 4.5 million and 3.5 million nuts respectively, while Andhra Pradesh contributes about 2 million nuts. These states benefit from favorable climatic conditions, adequate rainfall, and traditional farming practices that support high yields. In addition to these, smaller states and Union Territories such as Goa, Maharashtra, Odisha, West Bengal, Assam, Andaman & Nicobar, and Lakshadweep play a significant role in enhancing overall production. Interestingly, despite their smaller areas, places like Lakshadweep and Andaman & Nicobar achieve the highest productivity per hectare, demonstrating efficient land use and intensive farming practices. This distribution indicates that while total production is largely determined by area, productivity gains can make smaller regions significant contributors to India's coconut output.

Coconut cultivation in India faces several challenges that impact sustainability and rural incomes. Key issues include fragmented landholdings, declining soil fertility, pest and disease infestations, unpredictable rainfall, and limited access to modern agricultural technologies**.** These challenges often reduce productivity and constrain farmers' earnings. However, there are significant opportunities to overcome these hurdles and enhance rural livelihoods. Adoption of high-yielding and disease-resistant coconut varieties, integrated pest and nutrient management, organic farming, and efficient irrigation methods can improve productivity. Moreover, promoting value-added products such as coconut oil, coir, handicrafts, and desiccated coconut**,** strengthening farmer cooperatives, and improving market linkages can increase income and employment in rural areas. Investments in research, training, and climate-resilient technologies further support sustainable cultivation, ensuring that coconut farming remains both economically viable and environmentally friendly.

Suggestions:

- ✓ Promote high-yielding and disease-resistant coconut varieties to improve productivity.
- ✓ Implement integrated pest and nutrient management and water-efficient farming practices for sustainable cultivation**.**
- ✓ Encourage value addition through products like coconut oil, coir, and handicrafts to enhance farmer incomes.
- ✓ Strengthen farmer cooperatives, training programs, and market linkages to support rural livelihoods.
- ✓ Invest in research, extension services, and climate-resilient technologies to mitigate challenges such as pests, diseases, and climate variability.

Conclusion

Coconut cultivation in India plays a vital role in the agricultural economy, particularly in the southern and coastal regions. While states like Kerala, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, and Andhra Pradesh dominate production due to large cultivation areas, smaller regions such as Lakshadweep and Andaman & Nicobar achieve high productivity through efficient farming practices. Despite challenges like pest infestations, climate variability, and limited access to modern technologies, there are substantial opportunities for sustainable cultivation and rural livelihood enhancement. Adoption of high-yielding varieties, integrated pest and nutrient management, value addition, and improved market linkages can boost both productivity and income. Strengthening farmer cooperatives, promoting training programs, and investing in climate-resilient technologies can ensure that coconut farming continues to be economically viable, environmentally sustainable, and beneficial for rural communities.

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