

COCONUT DEVELOPMENT BOARD PROJECTS RETURNS VARYING FROM
RS.3.6 LAKH TO RS.10.8 LAKH A HECTARE

NEERA

A GAME-CHANGER FOR FARMERS



ECONOMICS OF NEERA PRODUCTION

Assumptions

Number of palms a hectare	175	Number of palms tapped	80	Number of inflorescence tapped per tree a year	3
Approximate cost of one litre of Neera	Rs.50				

Average productivity per hectare in Kerala
7,365 nuts/year

R. Ramabhadran Pillai

Neera, tapped from coconut palms, could be a game-changer for coconut farmers. The tapping, preservation, and marketing, to be done in a coordinated manner by coconut farmers' societies, federations of societies, and man-

ufacturing plants, will revolutionise the coconut sector in terms of income, officials of the Coconut Development Board say. Tapping of three inflorescence per palm a year for production of Neera will bring additional income to the farmer and the tapper without much reduction in yield, the board says in a treatise intended to generate awareness of the

produce. Coconut farmer communities in the Federations of Coconut Producers' Societies are expected to work out a viable proportion of production of Neera and jaggery so as to generate optimum income for the farmers, as per the board scheme.

The nutrient-rich 'sap' has low glycemic index (GI of only 35) and is diabetic-friendly, since very low amounts of the sugar are absorbed into the blood. It is an abundant source of minerals, 17 amino acids,

vitamin C, and broad-spectrum B vitamins, the treatise says. Diversified

value-added products such as coconut flower syrup, jaggery, and coconut palm sugar can be produced from Neera.

The board says coconut palm jaggery can be positioned as a safe and healthy alternative sweetener. If the jaggery is further converted to coconut palm sugar, value addition is still better.



COMPOSITION OF NEERA

Total solids (g/100ml)	152-197
pH	3.9-4.7
Specific gravity	1.058-1.077
Total sugar (g/100ml)	14.40
Original reducing sugars (g/100ml)	5.58
Total reducing sugars (g/100ml)	9.85
Total ash (g/100ml)	0.11-0.41
Citric acid (g/100ml)	0.50
Alcohol in %	nil
Iron (g/100ml)	0.15
Phosphorus (g/100ml)	7.59
Ascorbic acid (mg/100ml)	16.30
Total protein (g/100ml)	0.23-0.32

ESTIMATED RETURNS FROM NEERA

Item	Yield of Neera		
	@ 1 litre/ tree/day	@ 2 litre/ tree/day	@ 3 litre/ tree/day
Neera yield (in litres)			
Neera yield from 80 palms, tapped for 3 months	7,200 litres	14,400 litres	21,600 litres
Returns from Neera @ Rs.50 a litre	Rs.3.6 lakh	Rs.7.2 lakh	Rs.10.8 lakh
Returns per palm	Rs.4,500	Rs.9,000	Rs.13,500
Returns (in the proportion of 75% of production)	Rs.2.7 lakh	Rs.5.4 lakh	Rs.8.1 lakh