

# Daily Telegrams

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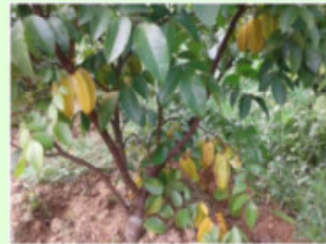
Port Blair, Tuesday, October 19, 2021

Web: dt.andaman.gov.in

## **Farmers' Corner- A Knowledge Hub**

### **Carambola (Averrhoacarambola): a suitable fruit crop for the islands**

Carambola or star fruit is a beautiful five cornered fruit native to South East Asian countries. It is sometimes sold in the local markets of our islands. Both sweet as well as sour types are available in it. The fruits are not only aesthetically appealing but are also the sources of antioxidants including vitamin C. Their high potassium and low sodium content makes them suitable for consumption by people suffering from hypertension. However, considering its high oxalic acid content, kidney patients should defer its consumption. The juicy fruits are suitable for fresh consumption as well as for processing in the form of juice, squash, salad, pickle etc. While sour type fruits are usually consumed in processed form or along with salt, sweet types are liked in fresh form as well.



Since the fruit is native to tropical regions of South East Asia, agro-climatic conditions of Andaman and Nicobar Islands are suitable for its cultivation. A few farmers in various parts of Andaman Islands have planted the trees of sweet carambola in their backyards. Studies at ICAR-CIARI have suggested that it can be planted at closer spacing with appropriate canopy management and produces flowers and fruits throughout the year with three major picking seasons. The tree bears fragile branches and hence, the field should be protected against high wind velocity. However, the tree revives back on its own, thereby making it a suitable plant for fragile island ecosystem. A grafted or budded plant starts bearing fruits within 2-3 years of planting and from 7-8 years onwards, commercial harvest is obtained. Ideal stage of harvesting of fruits for direct consumption or for sale in local market is when about 50% of the fruit surface has turned yellow. Fruits should not be stored in refrigerator as they are sensitive to chilling injury.

**Benefit:** Cultivation of carambola and its processing could promote small scale enterprises such as fruit salads, beverages etc. in tourist places of our islands.

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