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Farmers' Corner- A Knowledge Hub

Woody pepper cultivation: a potential venture for Bay Islands

Woody pepper is species of the black pepper family, which is grown in the Andaman Islands. Like black pepper, plants of this species grow as a vine by taking support of the standards. As the vine grows, stem thickness increases and pieces of such stems are used as a spice in the vegetarian and non-vegetarian cuisines by some island communities. Considering potential of the species, it has been identified as a commercial crop for cultivation in the islands. Being a vine crop, this species is suitable for cultivation as an intercrop in the existing arecanut plantations. Arecanut plantations in the hilly areas of the islands could be used for its commercial cultivation. Apart from this, perennial trees in the backyard with rough bark (such as mango) could be used as standard for raising this crop. Low lying areas with issue of poor water drainage and water stagnation are not suitable for the crop as the vines are sensitive to water logging. To promote this crop in the islands, methods for rapid propagation have been standardized at ICAR-CIARI. Demonstration block in arecanut garden has been established at the institute for the benefit of stakeholders. Considering the scope in tourism industry and popularity in the local masses, woody pepper could be promoted as a novel spice in the Andaman Islands. Benefit: Woody pepper could serve as a remunerative crop for diversification of income avenues for the island farmers.



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