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Farmers' Corner- A Knowledge Hub **Malabar tamarind (*Garcinia gummi-gutta*): A potential commercial crop for the islands**

Malabar tamarind is a multipurpose species native to the Western Ghats. To study the performance of crop under island condition, ICAR-CIARI introduced and evaluated it for past 13 years. Results have suggested that the crop could be profitably grown under island conditions, provided scientific crop production and postharvest management is adopted. Malabar tamarind has been valued for the medicinal value of its rind, anti-obesity being the major one. Grafted plants start yielding within 3-4 years of planting and could be planted at a spacing of 6 m x 6 m with suitable canopy management practices.



It could also be incorporated as an intercrop in coconut plantations. A well grown plant may yield about 50-70 kg fruits per year. Flowering occurs during February-March, while fruiting occurs during July-August under island conditions. Some early types have been identified at ICAR-CIARI, which start fruiting from May onwards. Fruits could be harvested every 4-5 days during fruiting season. At home or cottage scale, fruit peel could be sun dried or smoke dried for future consumption. Considering the coincidence of fruiting season with rains in the islands, use of mechanical driers is desirable for commercial scale processing. From 100 kg of fruits, about 10-15 kg dry produce could be obtained depending upon the drying method used. Under island condition, no major pest or disease incidence was reported in the experimental fields of the Institute.

Benefit: Cultivation of Malabar tamarind, solely or as an intercrop coupled with processing through mechanical means could not only diversify the island agriculture but would also enhance the income of the stakeholders involved.

Contact person with Name, Designation e-mail and phone no: Dr.Pooja Bohra, Scientist (Fruit Science), Division of Horticulture and Forestry, ICAR-CIARI, Port Blair. Email: pooja.bohra@icar.gov.in, Phone: 9933263442