

## RAISING ARECANUT SEEDLINGS

Many methods are adopted and also recommended to others by the progressive arecanut growers of different regions in India for raising quality seedlings for the economic cultivation of the same. But without a scientific outlook in that field, all methods have become moot cases. Some of the progressive areca growers in South Kanara District of Mysore State have evinced by trial and error, a certain method for raising best seedlings. Scientific investigations in this line, however, have to be carried out before we decide about more economic practice.

These cultivators after the procurement of fully tree-ripe nuts from the marked out middle aged mother palms, never forget to give a pre-requisite pro-creative cowdung treatment to their seednuts before they are being put into germination. This practice is in vogue in this part of the country from time immemorial. This method also stands explained in "Vriksha Ayurveda", which

is an ancient Sanskrit work. For this a thick solution of cowdung in water is prepared in a wide mouthed vessel and the selected seednuts are well immersed in the same. The dipped nuts are immediately taken out from the vessel one by one to spread them for shade drying. Usually in the next day the shade dried nuts are suitably arranged in baskets without overlapping but at the same time with their stalk end pointing upwards. The filled baskets are afterwards placed in an open ground for four or five weeks for sprouting. The baskets are properly shaded and watered once or twice daily.

By treating the nuts with fresh cowdung and keeping them in baskets as explained above, a vigilant grower thinks that the pericarp or husk by the association of the cowdung, when in decay may produce number of useful substances at the disposal of the primary root before it is being taken into the soil.

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