

Cashew Research in Karnataka

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Karnataka ranks fourth in area (34,000 ha) and second in production (14,000 tons). Comprehensive research work on cashewnut was started in Karnataka, with the establishment of Central Cashew Research Station at Ullal in June 1953, in the erstwhile Madras State.

Systematic floral biology studies carried out at this station showed that the peak anthesis was between 9 and 11 a.m. and anther dehiscence commenced at 10 a.m. The cashew pollen remained viable for 48 hours.

Nursery practices relating to raising of seedlings have been standardized and the method of vegetative propagation through air-layering has been perfected. Recent studies have shown that cashew could be propagated by cuttings treated with growth regulators.

Among the seedlings progenies of 111 high yielding trees selected through a survey of all cashew growing areas, ten high yielding selections have been made of which selection 3/67 Guntur, Andhra (20.97 kg), 3/108 Gubbi, Mysore (19.11 kg) and 9/2 Nileshwar, Kerala (19.6 kg) have been outstanding. From among the clonal progenies of 116 selections established in 1956, progeny No. 4/117 has given maximum yield.

The results of root distribution studies of layers, seedlings and grafts show that layers have a stronger and better formed root system capable of withstanding high wind and drought like the seedlings.