



Dweep Haritha

Promising indigenous dwarf coconut cultivars and varieties of Andaman and Nicobar Islands

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The coconut palm is known to be one of the most important crops among all cultivated crops in the world and is the most extensively grown and used nut in the world. Coconut palm is one of the predominantly grown crops in the Islands which is used for various purposes. Coconut is aptly called 'Kalpavriksha' as all parts of the palm are useful. The coconut fruit provides food, edible oil, sweet water and milk for consumption and industrial uses. Coconut is one of the predominantly grown crops of Andaman & Nicobar Islands, and the crop is closely associated with the socio-culture life of the island communities. Coconut is considered as one of the remunerative crops of these islands and the main economy of the Islands directly depends on the fortunes of the crop. Traditionally, tall coconut cultivars of these islands are used for copra making and now for many other kernel-based products such as desiccated coconut, VCO etc. The tall and dwarf cultivars are used for neera extortion in Nicobar Islands. The native dwarf cultivars of these islands which include Andaman Green Dwarf, Andaman Yellow Dwarf and Andaman Orange Dwarf



Dweep Haritha

are popularly used for tender coconut purpose and conserved at ICAR-CIARI, Port Blair. Selections from these conserved dwarf accessions are recommended as better varieties for higher tender coconut yield, dwarfness, ornamental value and earliness. The salient features of these cultivars and varietal selections are furnished here.

Dweep Haritha

It is a selection from Andaman Green Dwarf accession evaluated over 25 years. ICAR-CIARI has identified and selected this high yielding dwarf selection from Andaman Green Dwarf coconut population and released as Dweep Haritha, for promotion in the island areas suitable for tender coconut purpose. The palms are dwarf with slender stem, produces dark green leaves, petiole, rachis and fruits. The bunches are huge, fruits are round, medium sized, dehusked fruits are round with average weight of 370g. The palms are regular bearers with shorter drooping leaves, not very strong attachment of leaves with the stem when compared to yellow and orange dwarfs considering the observation of bunch buckling. The nuts are early germinating and delayed harvest may lead to viviparous germination on the crown itself. The palms are self-pollinating, hence, the seedling production is much easier to get true to type. Owing to the good tender nut water quantity (over 350ml), nut yield (over 150 fruits per palm per year), dwarfness and regular production of bunches, it could be a preferred variety to be grown under home gardens. The cultivar has not been affected by any major pests under field conditions but observed to be susceptible to spiraling whitefly when compared to other tall varieties. The palms give better performance with summer irrigation or else the bunch production may get affected. Owing to the market demand for the attractive dark green colour of fruits and tender coconut yield, the cultivar could be planted for tender coconut purpose in plantations and in home gardens.



Dweep Sona



Dweep Sona

Dweep Sona

It is a high yielding dwarf selection from Andaman Yellow Dwarf population made by ICAR-CIARI and released as Dweep Sona for promotion in the island areas suitable for tender coconut purpose. The palms of this selection exhibit attractive yellow coloured petiole, rachis and fruits. The fruits are round to oblong, bright attractive yellow coloured, bunches are huge with good number of fruits ranging from 10 to 20 per bunch. The palms produce round canopy and the leaf tip is drooping making the palms as ornamental with gracefully hanging leaves and bunches. The variety could be preferred for home gardens as well as avenue planting and for plantations suitable for tender coconut purpose. The palms are robust with medium sized stem and with no bole at the base. Tender fruits weigh over 2kg and tender nut water is sweet, quantity ranges from 300

to 400ml per nut with TSS above 5.5 to 6° brix. The seedlings of the variety are early splitting, vigorous and the palms are early flowering (about 30 months after planting) with regular bunch production over the years. The variety has not recorded to be affected by any major pest under field conditions but observed to be moderately susceptible to scale insects and susceptible to spiralling whitefly. As the young leaves are attractive yellow in colour, they are preferred for making decorative items.

Andaman Orange Dwarf

Andaman Orange Dwarf cultivar is a very attractive variety with moderately thin stem with closely arranged leaf scars over the stem, short and erect leaves with orange petiole colour, very



Andaman Orange Dwarf

attractive bright orange-coloured fruits, high number of female flowers per bunch with very good taste of tender coconut water, higher tender water quantity (300 to 400 ml per nut) and high yielding (80 to 150 fruits per palm per year). It is predominantly grown in home gardens and preferred in landscapes as ornamental palms. Often the fruit fetches good price owing to the demand in the market. Keeping few trees of this promising cultivar in home gardens ensure good additional income and provide delicious tender coconuts to the family. The seedlings of this cultivar are early splitting, vigorous and the palms are early flowering (about 36 to 40 months after planting) with regular bunch production over the years. The cultivar has not recorded to be affected by any major pest under field conditions but observed to be susceptible to spiraling whitefly and rhinoceros beetles when compared to other dwarf cultivars and varieties. The palms give better performance with summer irrigation or else the bunch production may get affected. This cultivar is popularly called as 'King coconut' by the islanders. ■

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