

# Hyderabad- a potential market for value added coconut products

(Shri. Jayanath R, Assistant Director & Marjana Beegum. K. C. Technical Officer, CDB, Hyderabad)

Coconut- nature's supermarket, is itself a self service store from where we are getting different types of products like nut, water, oil, copra, coir, husk etc. Coconut has been produced in India since time immemorial and has a crucial role in the Indian culture. India is one of the leading coconut producers in the world. Andhra Pradesh occupies first position in coconut productivity and the fourth position in area under coconut among the major coconut growing states viz, Tamil Nadu, Kerala and Karnataka. Coconut occupies nearly 1.02 lakh hectares in Andhra Pradesh with an annual production level of 1678 million nuts which accounts for 6.03 % area and 8.52 % production in the country. The crop is one of the important horticultural crops cultivated in the state. Bulk of the coconut produced in the state of Andhra Pradesh is utilized as tender coconuts, as temple coconuts, edible nuts for culinary purpose or as edible copra. Copra processing, coconut oil extraction and coir manufacturing are the traditional coconut based industries in the state.

A study was undertaken to explore the availability of various value added coconut products in the major retail shops and shopping malls located in Hyderabad. Major 16 supermarkets/malls like Reliance market, D mart, Walmart, More hyper market, Ratnadeep, Inorbit Mall, Big bazar, Forum Mall, Manjeera- Mall, Spencer's hyper market etc. were visited as part of this study. It was found that all supermarkets have varieties of edible and non edible coconut products in their shelves. The major edible products found were cut copra, coconut milk, coconut powder, tender coconut water, desiccated coconut powder, coconut based confectionaries and chocolates.

Cut copra was seen in major markets of Hyderabad due to its utility in culinary items in this area. People of Andhra Pradesh are mainly utilizing coconut for making edible copra for their household purposes. Cut copra is used here as a major ingredient in a variety of dishes. Because of its culinary use, there is demand for copra in the state during all seasons. Amalapuram, Ampajipeta and Palakol are the important trading centres for coconut and copra. All super markets and malls have cut copra in their own packets. Retailers are purchasing it from wholesalers and repacking and selling with their own label. Even though copra is sold at a very high price at the retail outlets, the farmers are not getting even half



of its profit share. This is a good avenue for the Farmer Producer Organizations in coconut sector to become part of this sector and earn the best and maximum price for their produce instead of being a mere producer of copra.

Desiccated coconut powder is another product found in most of the supermarkets and malls in small packets. Coconut milk is also having a prominent position when compared with other coconut products. Dabur's coconut milk is available in almost all supermarkets. Some of them are manufactured in Nepal and imported by Dabur India Ltd. It shows the high demand of coconut milk in urban areas. The high income groups are using packed coconut milk for preparing variety of dishes. Coconut milk based squash with the brand name of 'Mapro' was also found in many of the markets during the study. It is felt that production and marketing of coconut milk is having tremendous scope in Andhra Pradesh.

Even coconut based confectionaries like biscuits and cookies have separate shelves in all supermarkets. Britannia, Nice time and Parle's coconut are few of the coconut based biscuits found in all shops and super markets.

Packed tender coconut water of M/s Push, Manjeshwar, Kerala have franchises in Hyderabad and the company is distributing packed tender coconut water to Q mart, Ratnadeep, Max hyper, Spencer's and Heritage fresh. Tender coconut water of M/s Coojel

was found in Ratnadeep. This product also seems to have high demand among the residents of Hyderabad as a rehydrating drink.

Edible coconut oil could be found only in Reliance market and Ratnadeep. Edible coconut oil of major brands like Kera and KPL, coconut milk powder of KPL and Maggi, and chutney powder is available only in retail Kerala stores run by Keralites for catering to the need of Malyalees living in Andhra Pradesh. Unlike Kerala, coconut oil is not used for edible purposes in Andhra Pradesh. Usage of copra for milling is very negligible and contribution of Andhra Pradesh to the coconut oil industry is meager.

The consumption of coconut is dominated by the food sector. The oil is further used in industrial applications like hair oils, soaps, shampoos etc. Toiletries occupies a major share among non edible coconut products in almost all the supermarket surveyed. Parachute and Dabur Vatika have separate sections in most of the supermarkets. Other than this, other brands like Vijaya, Everest, Meera, Parajet, Dabur Anmol Gold, Clinic plus etc. are also found its space in the hair oil sections of major markets. Coconut oil based soaps, coconut milk based hand wash etc. have also found in major markets. The fast developing market for these toiletries offer good prospects for realizing better income to coconut farmers.

International brands of packed tender coconut water, fruit juice with nata de coco, syrup etc. are also available in various malls in the hi-tech city. Jell O Fresh, bottled tender coconut water and coconut water with pulp are imported from Thailand and is sold @ Rs. 90 for 290 ml This drink with a shelf life of two years contains fructose and sugar. Another foreign product found in the same mall was a Malaysian made coconut flavored syrup named Monin which is sold @ Rs 240 per 500 ml. Fruit juice with nata-de-coco was also found in many of the market with different brand names like 'Kokozo (Rs.50 for 300 ml)' and 'Mogu mogu (Rs 55 for 300 ml)' from Thailand. Other imported products available in the markets are Maggi coconut milk powder imported from Srilanka and Bounty tender coconut covered with chocolate from Netherland. These foreign products have high demand in areas where the high income groups are residing due to their willingness to pay the premium prices for high quality products.

The study revealed that coconut and coconut based products are very popular and are having good demand in Hyderabad. People are using different coconut based products in their day today life like raw coconut for culinary purposes, copra for edible purposes and milling, coconut oil for non edible purposes, desiccated coconut, coconut milk and milk powder for household purposes and packed tender coconut water as a soft drink. Thus, the demand for coconut in the state of Andhra Pradesh is much higher than the current production. If the Farmer Producer Organizations can ensure a steady supply of coconut and other value added products based on the consumer demand, coconut farmers can be ensured of a fair, steady, and reasonable price for their produce. FPOs can also take the advantage of the growing consumer trends to have eco-friendly chemical free natural products by supplying quality products at a premium price. ■