

# TENDERNUT WATER

'Those alone who have tried it, know how delicious it is to be seated in such shade and drink the cool pleasant fluid of coconut' - *Charles Darwin*

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**T**endernut water is a delicious and nutritious drink - the most refreshing non-alcoholic beverage to mankind. It is sterile in its natural form with a characteristic delicate flavour.

With the annual production of about 13968 million nuts from an estimated area of 17.95 lakh ha (1995-96), India ranks first in terms of nut equivalent of coconut production in the world. Among the coconut growing states in the country, Kerala ranks first with an estimated area of 9.82 lakh ha with an annual production of 5905 million nuts. In all the coconut growing countries, a portion of coconuts are harvested at tendernut stage estimated that nearly 200 million nuts are harvested at the tendernut stage for drinking mainly in cities like Chennai, Bangalore, Mumbai and Calcutta.

## Composition

Tendernut water has a caloric value of 17.4 per 100 g of water. When the nut is seven to eight months old, the nut water has the maximum concentration of sugars and a large nut at this stage may contain about 30 g of sugar in solution and 2 g of potassium besides organic and inorganic compounds including vitamins (Vitamin C and B group vitamins like nicotinic acid, panthothenic acid, riboflavin acid biotin) and minerals such as potassium, sodium, calcium, magnesium and iron. The pleasant taste of tender coconut water is attributed to mainly to the sugars and mineral matter.

## Medicinal Uses

Tendernut water has a number of medicinal properties and has been widely used in ayurvedic preparation.

Tendernut water is widely used for curing dehydration. It is very effective to regain lost health. Tendernut water contain large quantities of potassium and other minerals which increases urinary output. It is used to prevent vomiting in children suffering from round worms and cholera patients. It is a useful medicine for constipation and piles. Taking plenty of tendernut water is advised by doctors to patients suffering from typhoid, chickenpox and measles. Tendernut water is widely used in Ayurvedic eye lotion, *Elanzer kuzhambu* for eye diseases.

Tendernut water can be safely used by ladies without any side effects in beauty treatments. Regular washing with tendernut water is an excellent way for removing pimples and black heads. Its regular use prevents wrinkles on the face, blackness under the eyes and dryness of the skin.

## Economic Benefit

Farmers are benefited economically when the nuts are harvested at tendernut stage. Harvesting immature stage induces higher production of nuts by not less than 15% as a result of assimilation becoming available to the developing nuts in other bunches. Also, farmers get the same or even better price at the farm level visa-a-vis mature nuts. While the farmers have to wait for over 7-10 days for realizing money when they convert coconut into copra, they can get ready cash when harvesting is at tendernut stage.

Tendernut water from 7 month-old nuts from fortysix cultivars belonging to both exotic and indigenous types were subjected to a preliminary organoleptic screening for quality. Of these, 12 cultivars were selected for a detailed biochemical analysis. Based on this study, Chowghat Orange Dwarf - COD - an indigenous cultivar confined to Kerala has been released by CPCRI during 1991 for large scale cultivation for tendernut purpose.

## Chowghat Orange Dwarf (COD)

This indigenous dwarf cultivar is found sparsely cultivated throughout the West Coast of India particularly in the Chavakkad area of Thrissur district of Kerala. The cultivar derives the name from the place Chavakkad (Chawghat) from where it was reported. The plants have a characteristic Orange colour on nuts, spadix and leaf petioles. This cultivar comes to flowering in about four years after planting. Average annual yield is about 70 nuts per palm with a range of 50 to 120 nuts. This cultivar is also as 'Gowrigatham' and 'Chenthengu'

in some parts of Kerala and 'Genthali' in Karnataka. The biochemical analysis indicated that COD has the maximum sugar content (7.1 g/100 ml) and reducing sugar content (4.7 g/100 ml) with 20 ppm of sodium and 2000 ppm of potassium. Tendernut water content varied from 300 to 400 ml per nut.

This cultivar can be grown on commercial scale for tendernut water. □

