

VICARP R & D INFORMATION SHEETS

8 TIPS TO INCREASE COPRA YIELD

Most coconuts in Leyte are grown with little care and management. This results in a poor harvest.

Improvement of coconut production need not be expensive. Family labor can be employed for a better coconut harvest. A good harvest of coconuts means more copra. Here are 8 tips to get a good harvest from your coconut trees.

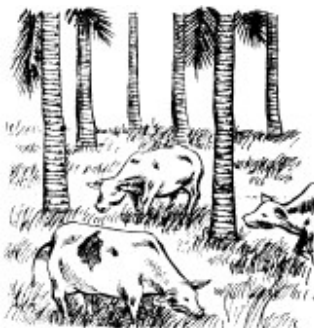
1. **Weed Control**

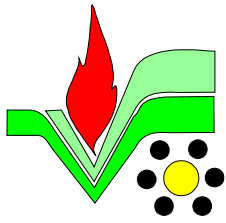
All plants that should not be in your coconut groves are considered weeds. Good examples of these are cogon or talahib. If allowed to grow without control, weeds reduce the yield of coconuts. Therefore, a regular control against weed growth is recommended.



Suggested control:

- Cut down weeds manually. Uprooting weeds and leaving the soil bare is discouraged.
- Allow cattle or goats to eat weeds.
- Used weed killers.
- Grow leguminous cover crops.





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2. Tillage



Tillage or loosening the soil can improve the yield of coconut. It should not be too deep nor done too often. Loosening the soil once a year at a depth of 20 centimeters or less is desirable.

Grazing of cattle or goats under coconut with proper tillage also helps increase the yield of coconut.

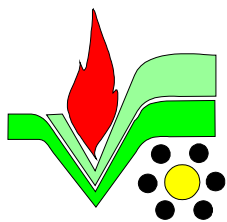
The best time for tillage is near the end of the dry season.

3. Thinning and Replanting

Thinning

Coconuts planted at a closer than 8 meters from each other in a plantation do not produce many fruits. If you have such a crowded plantation, thinning or cutting down the poorer trees is desirable. Dispose all parts of the cut trees to minimize the occurrence of coconut beetle.





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Replanting

When a tree dies for any reason, the area becomes vacant. Replanting with a well selected seedling is recommended.

The production of a tree starts to decrease when it reaches the age of 50 to 60 years. At this age, the tree is considered old and less productive. Thus, replanting with a well selected seedling should be done.



4. Cover Cropping



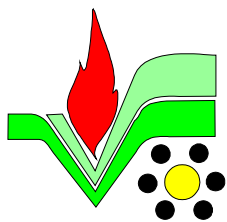
Leguminous cover crops such as tropical kudzu, colopogonium and centrosema are beneficial for coconuts. Whenever possible, grow and maintain them in your coconut grove.

5. Control of Rats and Other Pests

Among the coconut pests, rats are most destructive. In Leyte, rats can cause a yield loss as high as 50 percent in many places.

(For details on protecting coconuts from rats and other pests, see Leyte Technoguide on Coconut "Identification and Control of Coconut Pests".)





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6. Fertilizer Application

Use proper fertilizer to increase coconut yield. Always follow the recommended practices.

(For details on increasing coconut yield by using fertilizer properly, see Leyte Technoguide on Coconut "Fertilize Your Coconut Now".)



7. Drainage

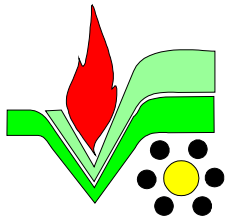
Coconut trees do not like excess water in the root zone. Regular pasturing of carabao in your plantation is very harmful to coconuts. It causes soil compaction which leads to the accumulation of water within the root zone of coconut trees.

For good drainage -

- Prevent carabao from pasturing in the plantation.
- Provide a drainage canal if your soil is poorly drained.



Plantation badly affected by carabao pasturing.



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8. Harvesting



Finally, harvest your coconut once in every 45 to 60 days. At least two bunches of nuts that are partially or completely brown can be harvested at a time. Each bunch should bear at least 7 to 8 nuts. At harvest time, cleaning the crown of the coconut is desirable.

Source: RCRC Farmer's Bulletin 06,5C,10/81
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