

Windfall for farmers as neera begins to sparkle

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KOCHI: Farmer producer companies engaged in tapping and processing neera across the State have had a sales turnover of more than Rs. three crore since their operations began about three months ago.

Figures for the latest week from Coconut Development Board shows that Malappuram coconut producer company leads the way with a sale of nearly 93,492 litres of neera so far, earning Rs. 1.08 crore. The sales turnover is from neera and neera derivatives like palm sugar, palm honey and other value-added

tapped a total of 57,201 litres of neera and sold the produce for more than Rs. 60 lakh.

The Malappuram company employs 148 neera technicians for tapping 984 palm trees. The Kaippuzha company taps 790 palms using 80 technicians. The Palakkad company taps 471 palms us-

nut Development Board said.

Coconut Development Board sources said that farmer producer organisations had succeeded in reviving the coconut economy through neera tapping and value addition.

They said that farmers, who have subscribed to equity in the producer companies, "received a fair amount" of their investments in return. It is estimated that about Rs.

50 crore have been invested by farmer producer companies in setting up neera processing facilities across the State.

A Board statement said that it was only three months since the 173 Coconut Producer Federations received their licences to start tap-



LEADING NEERA PRODUCER COS.

Company	Neera Production in Litres	Sale in Rs.	Number of Technicians	Licence to Federation	Number of palms tapped
Malappuram	93,492	1,08,97,470	148	01	984
Kaippuzha	89,525	77,75,650	080	11	790
Palakkad	57,201	60,03,661	037	14	471
Kuttiady	24,785	24,67,550	112	14	247
Kozhikode	40,019	22,64,036	195	12	567
Thirukochi	23,664	10,71,452	009	07	083
Thejaswini	17,667	18,96,495	026	08	300

products.

Kaippuzha producer company in Kollam district comes a close second with a sale of nearly 89,525 litres and a turnover of more than Rs. 77 lakh. Palakkad company

ing 37 technicians.

Coconut producer companies in Kuttiady, Kozhikode, Kochi and Thejaswini in Kozhikode are among the other leading companies in the business, a list from the Coco-

ping neera. The licences were issued after Excise regulations were amended to bring the sweet sap of coconut flowers out of the purview of the more than 100-year-old Excise rules.