

Neera plant in Koz boosts farmers' spirits

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

Kozhikode: Over 30,000 farmers under the Kuttiady Coconut Farmers Producer Company Ltd (KCFPC) are in high spirits as they expect to make advancement in the field of neera production as chief minister Oommen Chandy inaugurated the neera plant set up by the company, at a function on Sunday.

The company, one of the 22 companies registered under the coconut development board, set up the plant at Marithonkara in Munda-vayal for helping their members to benefit from neera production. According to office bearers of the company, the plant has a capacity to produce 8,000 litres neera per day. It was set up at an

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initial cost of Rs 2.14 crore collected from the farmers. KCFPC has 19 coconut producers' federations and 275 coconut producers societies as its members.

The company is using the technology of SCMS for processing neera, said an official with the coconut development board. "Apart from producing neera, our plan is to start producing neera sugar, neera honey, vinegar, chocolate and syrup," said the official adding that they expect a good market for value added products from nee-

ra. KCFPC has already set up 14 neera collection centres in the limit of 14 coconut producers' federations to collect tapped neera.

"We also plan to set up 14 neera parlours attached to these collection centres," said the official. We have already imparted training to 400 neera technicians at Kunduthodu and Aayan-cherry at a cost Rs 25 lakh.

The company is also producing and marketing a coconut oil brand under the name Nekto and the foundation stone for the oil plant was laid on Sunday.

The inaugural session of the neera plant was presided over by Babu Mathath, president of KCFPC. MLAs K K Lathika, E K Vijayan, C K Nanu and others attended the function.