

# Neera may Get Uniform Pricing

Coconut Development Board has suggested a uniform price to avoid cut-throat competition among the producer cos

**PK KRISHNAKUMAR**  
KOCHI

As Kerala awaits a boom in neera, a non-alcoholic health drink tapped from coconut palms, in the coming months, Coconut Development Board (CDB) has suggested a uniform price for the product to avoid cut-throat competition among the producer companies.

Neera is expected to fetch a minimum income of ₹1,000 from a coconut tree for a farmer making him less dependent on coconut oil and copra, the principal products from coconut, for a living. A lot of producer companies have applied for neera licences which are likely to lead to a slew of brands in the market.

The state excise department has given licence to tap 1,500 trees each for 16 coconut producer federations in the state effective from April 1, 2014. Another 156 federations are in the pipeline. Each federation comprises around 20 coconut producer societies with each society hav-

## Packing a Health Drink

₹1,000

Likely income from neera for a farmer per coconut tree

₹100

Expected price to be fixed for a litre of neera

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- Kerala excise department has given licence to tap 1,500 trees each for 16 coconut producer federations in the state effective from April 1, 2014
- The product will be marketed by coconut producer companies which are formed by combining ten federations
- The Palakkad Coconut Producer Company has taken over the neera plant of Karnataka Horticulture Department in Mangalore



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**TK JOSE**  
Chairman, Coconut Development Board

ing 40 to 100 coconut farmers.

"We would like to fix the basic price for a standard product of 200 ml at ₹25. The premium variants could be priced differently," said TK Jose, chairman of Coconut Development Board. Other factors like the possibility of a uniform brand for neera would be discussed later, he said.

The product will be marketed by coconut producer companies which are formed by combining ten federations. Some have already identified the land and are getting ready to become operational in next two to three months.

The Palakkad Coconut Producer Company has taken over the neera plant of Karnataka Horticulture Department in Mangalore and has planned training for 100 neera tappers at the plant.

It is expecting to produce and market the products initially through kiosks set up in Infopark, civil station and bus terminals in Kochi by the end of next month.

Shajahan Kanjiravilayil, chairman of Kaipuzha Coconut Producer Company in Kollam said the company has submitted a project report for a ₹20 crore factory capable of producing 10,000 litres of neera

daily. "Apart from share of ₹1,000 a tree collected from the farmer, we are expecting 25% subsidy from CDB and assistance from the state government," he said.

He said the company simultaneously will produce and market jaggery, honey and jam made from neera. Jaggery and sugar from neera have low glycemic index and fetch premium prices in overseas markets.

A price of ₹100 is likely to be fixed for a litre of neera. Of this, ₹50 will go to the farmer, ₹25 to the tapper and the balance to the producer company.