

2007

May

Monthly Picking of Coconuts *vis-à-vis* Bimonthly Picking - An Economic Analysis

PATHIRAJA, P M E K^a, M T N FERNANDO AND A W A D R ABEYSEKERA
Agricultural Economics Division, Coconut Research Institute, Lunuwila (61150), Sri Lanka

Bimonthly picking is the widely-practiced coconut harvesting system in Sri Lanka. However, empirical researches suggest that monthly picking is better than bimonthly picking due to the comparative yield increase in the former. But growers are reluctant to practice monthly picking due to several factors including the unavailability of a rigorous economic analysis to convince them. A study was therefore conducted to analyse the economic feasibility of monthly picking of coconuts vis-à-vis bimonthly picking. Data was gathered from an experiment conducted for a period of 12 years by Mathes and Marikkar (2004). Net benefits of the two practices were compared using a cost benefit analysis to find out the best practice. Incremental net benefit was used to determine the economic viability of monthly picking. And the variation of incremental net benefits due to monthly picking with the change in different land size classes was examined to find out the breakeven land size. Results revealed that the economic feasibility of monthly picking depends on the size of the land holding, price of nut as well as the types of costs incurred. However, it can be concluded that monthly picking is economical for land holders of more than three acres.

Keywords: *Monthly picking, bimonthly picking, cost benefit analysis, net benefit, economic viability.*