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## The Current Scenario and Development of the Coconut Industry

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*Coconut (Cocos nucifera) or commonly known as 'tree of life' is planted in over 90 countries, mainly in Asia, Pacific Islands and South America. The total world planted area of coconut is about 12 million ha with the annual estimated potential production of 70 billion nuts. Currently, India, Indonesia and Philippines are the major coconut producers, contributing more than 75 per cent of the total global production. The coconut industry has shown rapid growth in the development of coconut products and is in great demand from the American, European, Middle East and East Asian markets. Coconut oil, copra meal, desiccated coconut and coir products are the traditional coconut products, whereas coconut water, virgin coconut oil, coconut milk and cream are amongst those that show the fastest growth. New coconut hybrids have been introduced, whereby their potential copra yield ranged from 7.65 to 9.12 tonnes per hectare per year. New invasive pests such as Brontispa longissima, Rhynchophorus ferrugineus, Aceria gueneronis and Aspidiotus rigidus have recently been reported attacking coconut farms in South East Asia. Meanwhile, lethal yellowing disease (LYD) that is caused by phytoplasma is the most devastating coconut disease that is currently affecting the coconut production in the Caribbean, Americas and African countries. However, the recent discovery of Bogia coconut syndrome in Papua New Guinea (PNG), the first report of a lethal yellowing disease in Oceania, brings great concern. The coconut industry is driven by the rapid growth and significant demand of coconut based products globally, which has proven to generate greater economic returns for the coconut producers. Therefore, the countries that are heavily dependent on a single industrial crop should take this opportunity to diversify their plantation crop to coconut as their new economic crop.*

**Keywords:** *Coconut production, coconut supply and demand, coconut products, planting material, pest and disease.*

