

# COCONUT RESEARCH INSTITUTE



**LEAFLET No. 1**  
**(New Series)**

## SELECTION OF SEED COCONUTS

A programme of seed selection is advocated in which seed-nuts are collected from the dominating palms of genetically good stands. This consists essentially of three phases, viz.: (a) selection of suitable blocks, (b) selection of seed palms within these blocks and (c) selection of seed-nuts from the selected seed-palms.

### SELECTION OF SUITABLE BLOCKS

From available crop statistics, high-yielding blocks of an estate should be selected. The definition of high-yield will naturally vary with the district; however, the average yield should be more than 60 nuts per palm per year.

As far as possible, determine whether this high-yield is due to specially favourable environmental conditions or to the genetical make up of the palms. For practical purposes, blocks falling within the former group can be eliminated to a large extent by avoiding those situated on extra fertile stretches. In other words select only the blocks on average or below average soil types.

Even in high-yielding blocks the variation in yield between palms is considerable. There will be a good number of low-yielders which will liberate large quantities of pollen for the fertilization of coconut flowers. If these palms (*i.e.*, those that produce



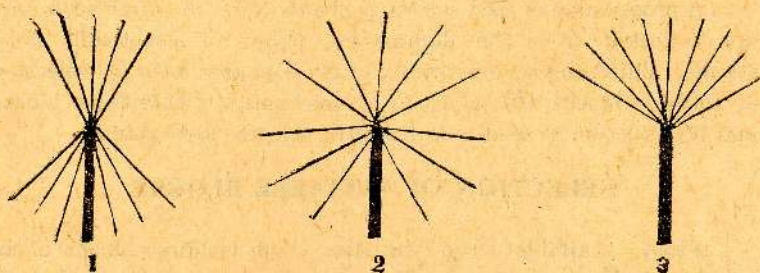
less than 30 nuts a year) are replaced or their inflorescences are removed periodically before opening, then the efficiency of seed selection will be considerably increased.

## SELECTION OF SEED-PALMS

After suitable blocks have been determined, palms with yield potentialities above the average for the block and having the following characters should be marked out.

**STEMS** stout with leaf-scars situated close to each other. Avoid very tall types.

**LEAVES** short and well disposed on the crown; orientation of leaves will generally fall into three main types as in the diagram given below and only the palms with crown with type 2 should be selected.



**CROWNS** should carry a large number of leaves.

**BUNCHES** should be well stocked with nuts in all stages of development. The bunch stalks should be short without any tendency for drooping. Avoid seasonal bearing palms or those with crowns empty on one side.

**NUTS** should preferably be round in shape with a high husked-nut weight.

The important factors are the number of nuts and the weight of husked-nuts per palm per year. Even within the block, palms growing in favourable situations such as near cattle sheds should be avoided.

After a preliminary selection of high-yielding palms on the above basis, their yield of nuts and the weight of husked-nuts or copra should be recorded for at least three consecutive years and only those that yield more than 75 nuts per year with an average husked-nut weight of over 1.5 lbs. should be utilised for collection of seed coconuts.

### SELECTION OF SEED-NUTS

When the seed-palms have been selected on the basis outlined above, dead ripe nuts harvested at each pick could be used for seed, excluding those that show obvious abnormalities. There are no differences between the first and second bunch nuts for seed purposes as long as they are ripe.

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