

ARECANUT

Areca catechu Linn.

Cultivar:

Kahikuchi: High yielding variety with medium thick stem, longer internodes, partially drooping crown, regular bearer, consistent in yield. Bunches are well placed on stem, orange color, bold & round shaped nuts, high recovery of dry kernel (25.16%) from fresh nuts, yielding 3.70 kg dry kernel/palm/year. Comes to bearing by 5th year and economic yield can be realized up to 40-45 years.

Nalbari: Tall palms with medium thick stem, longer internodes, partially drooping crown, regular bearer, bunches well placed on stem, round shaped yellow colour nuts, high recovery of dry kernel (25.18 %) from fresh nuts, yielding 4.15 kg dry kernel/palm/year. Comes to bearing by 5th year and economic yield can be realized up to 40-45 yrs.

Soil: Well drained soil. Avoid stiff clay and water logged soil

Seed Selection:

Select the healthy round nut of average weight 40 g. Dip the nuts in a bucket containing water. The nuts which are floating on the water vertically are suitable for raising seedlings.

Nursery:

Remove the perianth from the healthy seed nut and place vertically in the raised nursery bed 15 x 15 cm apart. Provide adequate shade in the nursery bed containing sand, soil and compost. When the seedlings attain 25-30 cm height transfer the seedlings to the 2nd nursery bed at 30 x 30 cm apart. Keep the seedlings in the second nursery upto maximum age of 18 months.

Planting Distance: 2.75 m x 2.75 m

Pit Size: 60 cm x 60 cm x 60 cm

Planting Time: Spring/Autumn

Manure and Fertilizer:

Age	FYM kg/Plant/yr	N g/plant/yr	P ₂ O ₅ g/plant/yr	K ₂ O g/plant/yr
1st yr	5	30	15	50
2nd yr	10	60	30	100
3rd yr & onwards	20	100	40	140

Apply the entire manure and fertilizers in 2 splits, one during March/April and the other during September/ October.

Weeding:

Remove weeds by hand hoe twice a year, once after pre monsoon and once after monsoon.

Intercrops:

Turmeric and ginger can be grown profitably as intercrops. Besides, one line of banana or lemon or three rows of pineapple can be grown as intercrops.

For both bearing and non-bearing plantation, combination of banana and pineapple with an additional crop like black pepper or betelvine can be grown as intercrops.

Disorder:

- 1) **Phula Tamul:** In Arecanut cultivation, the phenomenon of the soft/leathery kernel, i.e. lack of proper hardening of kernel associated with moisture stress in the endosperm in ripe and mature fruit may be termed as phula tamul. This condition of fruit is generally found in the first bunch of the palm which ripens earlier and gets ready to be harvested in the beginning of the harvesting season (Late March to Early April). The incidence is observed when the palm experiences scanty or irregular rainfall during the fruit development period.

Control: Providing irrigation to the arecanut plants especially during the dry months with proper drainage facilities followed by improved cultural practices are some of the remedial measures to be adopted.

- 2) **Nut Splitting:** It is considered to be a physiological disorder. Improvement of drainage in areas of high water table is known to help in minimizing the incidence. Spraying of Borax at the rate of 2g/l per palm during the early stage of the problem also reduces the splitting.
- 3) **Pencil tip:** Apply adequate manures and fertilizers regularly and improve cultural practices. Improvement of drainage is essential in areas of high water table. Plants should not suffer from N deficiency.

Plant Protection:

- 1) **Bud rot** – Same as in coconut
- 2) **Ganoderma** – Same as in coconut
- 3) **Band disease:**
 - (i) Improve the soil condition by loosening hard soil strata present and providing good drainage.
 - (ii) Apply powder mixture of copper sulphate and lime in equal quantities @ 225 g per palm twice a year at the base of the affected palm.

Stem bleeding: Same as coconut.

Benefit: cost ratio: 1.40 after 6 years
 12.6 after 8-10 years