

COMPARISON OF TODDY TAPPING IN PALMYRAH WITH THAT IN COCONUT AND KITUL AND THE POSSIBILITIES OF YEAR-ROUND YIELDS IN PALMYRAH

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Methods of toddy tapping in coconut and kitul both of which have a monocious spathe are described, for purposes of comparison with the methods adopted for palmyrah which is dioecious. The male and the female inflorescences are treated somewhat differently. The various methods of bruising the spathe stimulate the palm to direct the sap to bruised and wounded parts. The exudate toddy is generally collected twice daily in earthenware pots.

Tapping the palmyrah palm for toddy unlike coconut is seasonal, i.e., December to April and therefore tapping is essentially discontinuous during the year. This disability has been surmounted by 3 ways as per research performed on it: (i) correctly selecting male and female palms to be tapped in a system of rotation, (ii) employing different tapping techniques to male and female palms, and (iii) tapping the tender inflorescence flowered during off-season (Sept.-Nov.); this flowering was induced by cutting off the sprout of inflorescence emerged during normal season.

Male palms were tapped for $1\frac{1}{2}$ to 3 months (Jan.-May) and they yielded about 200 to 350 bottles of toddy/palm/season (one year) whereas female palms for a longer period, viz. $2\frac{1}{2}$ to 4 months (Feb.-Oct.) and yield of toddy/palm/season was also increased to 250 to 400 bottles. Off-season flowers (male and female) were tapped for about $1\frac{1}{2}$ months from September to December but their yield was only about 150 bottles/palm/season.

During that tapping season both yield of toddy per palm and the number of palms from which toddy was received varied with months. Hence the total toddy monthly available varied and a fairly good supply of toddy was obtained from February to September and a considerably small supply from October to January ensuring a continuous yield throughout the year.