

SIZE OF COCONUT HOLDINGS, SOIL TYPES AND SELECTION
OF CROPS BY COCONUT INTERCROPPERS IN SRI LANKA

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A survey was conducted in three selected agrarian service centre divisions in the coconut triangle in order to identify the factors affecting the selection of crops by coconut intercroppers. This survey indicates that out of the five major crops which are most popular among the intercroppers in the survey area, pineapple and ginger were selected mainly by the large and medeium-size coconut holders, and betel and various kinds of low-country vegetables were selected mainly by the small coconut holders. On the other hand, banana was almost equally preferred by all size-classes. This pattern of selection can be accounted for in terms of the individual coconut holder's production objectives and access to production inputs which vary with the varying size of coconut holdings.

The type of soils prevailing in the coconut **holdings** were also found to be significant in the selection of crops. It was found that while the coconut holdings associated with gravally soils were mostly cultivated with pineapple, ginger and betel, clayly soils were cultivated with various types of low-country vegetables. However, banana was found on almost all soils types. This soil-crop relationship can be explained in terms of the different agronomic requirements of various crops.

These findings suggest that size of coconut holdings and micro-level soil variations should be given much attention when crops are recommended and incentives are made available to intercroppers.