## B-55 An effective method for rapid germination of kithul or fish-tail palm (*Caryota urens* L) seeds

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This study was carried out to find a suitable method for germinating kithul seeds as an initial step to promote kithul cultivation. Fully ripened kithul nuts were collected and the treatments were, T1-Whole nut (with pericarp), T2-Seeds, pericarp removed, T3-Seeds, thoroughly washed and soaked in water for 3 days, T4-Seeds, treated with 25% nitric acid. T5-Seeds, thoroughly washed and the seed coat overlying the embryo partially removed by rubbing on a rough surface.

Seeds from each treatment were kept in germinating trays filled with moistened coir dust. After two weeks of sowing, seeds of which the seed coats were partially removed showed the highest germination (78.55%) and the germination of the seeds with pericarp was zero. Rate of germination of all the other treatments were significantly low compared with the scratched seeds. There is no significant difference between the acid treated seeds (23%) and the water treated seeds (21.65%). The duration taken to reach 50% germination was highest (62 days) in the seeds with pericarp and lowest in the seeds of which the seed coats were partially removed (7 days). The acid treated seeds (17 days) and the water treated (19 days) seeds were not significantly different, between them in germination.

Results of the study shows that the kithul palm could be propagated easily by using the seeds and that the complete removal of the pericarp and partial removal of seed coat facilitate quicker germination.