B-61: Effect of pruning on lemonime fruit yield

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Lemonime, which is a profitable intercrop to coconut belongs to the Rutaceae family. It is an introgeneric hybrid of lemon (*C. limon*) and lime (*C. aurantifolia*). Lemonime produces more than two branches at the base and very often water shoots are produced. Shoots are semi-hard and carry thorns. With the increasing fruit size and shade from foliage, erect branches tilt and take a horizontal position, resulting in an umbrella structure. This structure makes the intercultivation tedious and fruits rest on the earth. Thus, fruits may develop poor market appearance. Pruning can be used to develop a better structure to avoid these limitations.

Three pruning systems were evaluated to quantify the effect of pruning on fruit yield and fruit size: (1). Intensive pruning - (A clean single stem up to 45cm height and remove dead branches, water shoots and spent wood). (2). Mild pruning - (remove water shoots, dead branches and spent wood) (3). No pruning - (the control). These treatments were laid out in a randomized complete block design with 6 replicates.

Intensive pruning and mild pruning showed no difference from the control over the fruit yield or the number of fruits per plant. However, intensive pruning imposed some stress on plants at the early stage thus, delayed the flowering lowered the number of fruits per plant out lowered the yield in the early stages.

With time mild pruning developed a better structure and facilitated the cultural practices thus, mild pruning can be introduced to facilitate the economy of production and the general well being of the plant.