

## Coconut sugar may make life sweeter for farmers

- [R. Ramabhadran Pillai](#)

*CPCRI moots project for its large-scale production*

Coconut sugar, also called coconut palm sugar, could save coconut farmers from the distressing situation arising out of low market prices. A new proposal for taking up a project for large-scale production of coconut sugar has been mooted by the Central Plantation Crops Research Institute (CPCRI).

While Neera, a health drink made from the inflorescence of coconut palms, did complement the efforts for value-addition of coconut, it has not been able to make the desired level of profitability due to several reasons. It is in this context that researchers in the sector are proposing coconut sugar production as an alternative, perhaps a better one, to improve the farmer's income.

CPCRI Director P. Chowdappa says that coconut sugar made from sap has good demand in the market. The product has a low glycemic index of around 35, almost half that of ordinary sugar. ‘

Blood glucose levels may not rise much due to consumption of coconut sugar. Thus, the product is a better option for people having problems associated with diabetes, he says.

### **Neera**

The opposition to Neera among some sections of people could be an impediment to the plans for its promotion, according to him.

Neera has to be produced in a time-bound manner under special supervision to guard it against fermentation into toddy.

It has to be either vacuum packed or refrigerated. Production of coconut sugar does not pose such problems.

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- ***With a lower glycemic index, coconut sugar may be a better choice for people***
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