Coconut Research Institute of Sri Lanka

Advisory Circular No A 4

PLANT COCONUT IN YOUR HOME GARDEN

The day by day increasing prices of coconut affect the urban people. According to the land availability in the urban home yards, we can easily plant coconut in the home garden. This will reduce the financial burden on the family. The Coconut Research Institute (CRI) has introduced a high yielding coconut cultivar which is suitable for home gardens.

The following procedures should be adopted when planting coconut in home gardens.

1. Suitable planting material

The most suitable cultivar is CRIC 65 (Dwarf x Tall hybrid), which is early bearing (3-4 years). Under good management it can produce 130-200 nuts per year. The seedlings are available in the nurseries of Coconut Cultivation Board for sale.

Picture 1: Bearing palm of CRIC 65 (Dwarf x Tall hybrid)

Picture 2: A crown of CRIC 65 palm

2. Selection of the planting site

In urban home gardens shade is the main problem for growing coconut. In addition, the home gardens are comparatively small. The home gardens are mostly planted with ornamental and fruit crops. Therefore, the location of the planting site should be carefully identified. If the selected location is shady, then even with good management the growth and the nut production of coconut will be very low.

3. Planting method

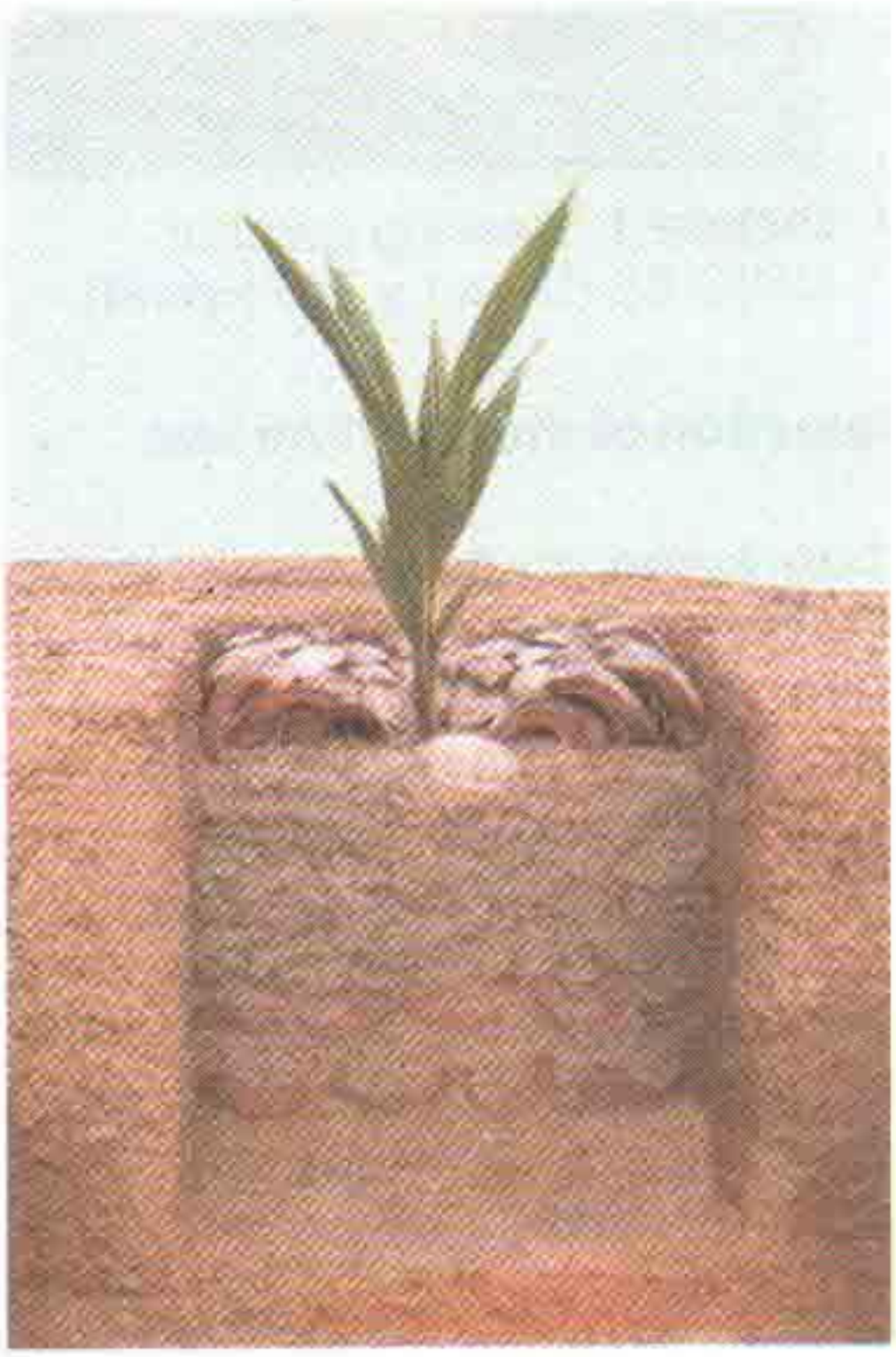
The dimension of the planting hole should be 4 ft x 4 ft x 4 ft. Remove the top fertile soil up to 1 foot depth and heap separately.

Place two layers of husks at the bottom of the hole. Fill the rest of the planting hole with the mixture of top soil, 10kg of cattle or goat manure, 1 kg of dolomite and 1 kg of Young Palm Mixture (YPM).

Fill the planting hole leaving 7-8 inches from the ground level of the hole (Picture 3 and 4).

The YPM could be either purchased or prepared by the following method.

Picture 3: Required materials for planting



Picture 4: Cross section of a planting hole

Name of the Fertilizer	Parts by weight
Urea	2
Saphos Phosphate	3
Muriate of Potash	2

4. Management Practices

After planting, use either coconut fronds or husks as mulch. Leaving about one foot, place the mulch up to about 3 feet from the base of the seedlings.

Ten liters of water should be supplied once a week per seedling (Picture 5).

Deep planting of the seedling may increase the incidence of die back due to fungal infection and water logging.

The most common pests attacking seedlings are termites, black beetle and Plesispa beetle.

If termite damage is present drench a 5 liter solution of chloropyrifos 20% (3-5 ml/ 1 liter of water) or Imidaclorprid 20% (1 ml in 1 liter of water) around the base of the seedlings.

Picture 5: Watering the seedling

The black beetle penetrates into the tender bud region and feeds on the bud tissues. Frays could be seen around the entry hole of the beetle (Picture 6). The damage causes deformation of bud leaf, growth retardation of seedlings or even death. To control the pest hook out the beetles at regular intervals or place 15 g of carbofuran 3G or 10 g of carbosulfan 5G mixed with an equal quantity of sand in the innermost leaf axils at 2 monthly-intervals or apply used engine oil on the innermost leaf bases at monthly intervals. Regularly check the mulch for presence of black beetle grubs and If present destroy them. Also, it is essential to destruct any decaying coconut logs and avoid leaving decaying heaps of organic matter such as cow dung, compost etc. in home yards.

Picture 6: Young palm with black beetle damage

Plesispa beetle and larvae which feed on the bud leaves could be effectively controlled by spraying Marshall SC (4 ml in 1 liter of water) or Chlorpyrifos (3-5 ml in 1 liter of water), preferably in the early mornings at 2 weekly intervals until controlled.

To get the early and optimum production, YPM mixture and Dolomite should be applied every six months as shown in the table.

Fertilizer mixture should be broadcast around the seedling 3 feet away from the base and incorporated with the soil. Application of organic manure will not only provide nutrients to the seedlings but also improve the soil properties.

Recommended doses for application of YPM mixture and Dolomite

Duration (after planting)	YPM (g)	Dolomite (g)
6 Months	800	500
1 Year	1600	500
1.5 Year	1600	500
2 Year	1300	500
2.5 Year	1300	500
3 Year	1000	500
3.5 Year	1200	500
4 th Year up to bearing	2000	500

Provisions of sufficient sunlight and proper management of the seedling is essential for early bearing. Growing coconut in home yards will not only supply nuts for home consumption but also will ease the financial burden as well as increases the national production.

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