

# Kerala Minister pushes for ultra-high density cashew planting

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A Kerala Minister has stressed the need to adopt high-density planting in cashew plantations to get higher yields from less space.

Speaking at the 'cashew day' programme organised by the Directorate of Cashew Research at Puttur in Dakshina Kannada district on Tuesday, J Mercykutty Amma, Kerala Minister for Fisheries, Harbour Engineering and Cashew Industry, said that there is an urgent need to increase production and productivity of cashew.

The Directorate of Cashew Research is striving hard to develop technologies and get farmers to take up better practices of cashew cultivation.

Highlighting the fact that there is a shortage of raw cashewnuts for processing in Kerala and different parts of the country, Mercykutty Amma asked the farmers to use the services of the directorate for better cultivation of the crop.

The Minister distributed H-130 – a cashew hybrid variety from the Directorate of Cashew Research – to the officials of the Horticultural departments from Karnataka and Kerala on the occasion. This hybrid variety is suitable for high-density planting, and each nut weighs around 12-13 gms.

Shirish K, Special Officer (Cashew) and Managing Director of Kerala State Agency for Expansion of Cashew Cultivation, said that cashew planting material is of utmost importance to expand cashew cultivation in Kerala. The Kerala government is taking many initiatives to revive cashew cultivation in the State, he said.

Anitha Karun, Director (Acting) of the Kasaragod-based Central Plantation Crops Research Institute, and MG Nayak, Director (Acting) of the Directorate of Cashew Research, spoke on the occasion.

An exhibition on cashew production technologies, different cashew varieties and cashew apple products was organised on the occasion. Farmers were taken for field visits to show various cashew research plots. Around 200 cashew farmers participated in the programme.

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