



# DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE & RURAL DEVELOPMENT

## Regional Coconut summit

Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, Forestry, Fisheries & Biosecurity  
(MALFFB)

30<sup>th</sup> to 31<sup>st</sup> October  
Vanuatu Agriculture Collages, Santo.

# BACKGROUND

- ❑ Coconut is a central feature of an integrated system for the overall majority of Vanuatu's Farmers. Coconut is a common food item for Vanuatu cultures and copra is the most widespread cash crop in the country.
- ❑ Total area of coconut tree sub-holdings : (ha) 119,384 (*Agriculture census 2007*)
- ❑ Approximately 23,000 households have been involved in coconut production
- ❑ Percentage of households regularly using coconuts for drinking and/or cooking and/or feeding animals: 58 %
- ❑ The copra sector in Vanuatu is currently regulated by the Vanuatu Commodities Marketing Board (VCMB)



## Cont...

- ❑ Total coconut trees currently in the sub-holdings: 9,737,000
- ❑ The coconut sector is the second largest contributor to foreign exchange earnings and also contributes 45% to GDP
- ❑ Number of trees bearing coconuts 8,797,000



## Cont...

Percentage of coconut trees, according to

- ▶ age:
- ▶ Less than 5 years 2 %
- ▶ 5 – 19years 22 %
- ▶ 20 – 49 years 58 %
- ▶ 50 years and over 18 %



## Cont...

- ▶ National stock is comprised of very old and non-producing stands
- ▶ The majority being well over 70 to 80 years of age
- ▶ 2007 agriculture census recorded a very low rate of replanting or planting of new stocks





# What measures Vanuatu Gov't has taken?

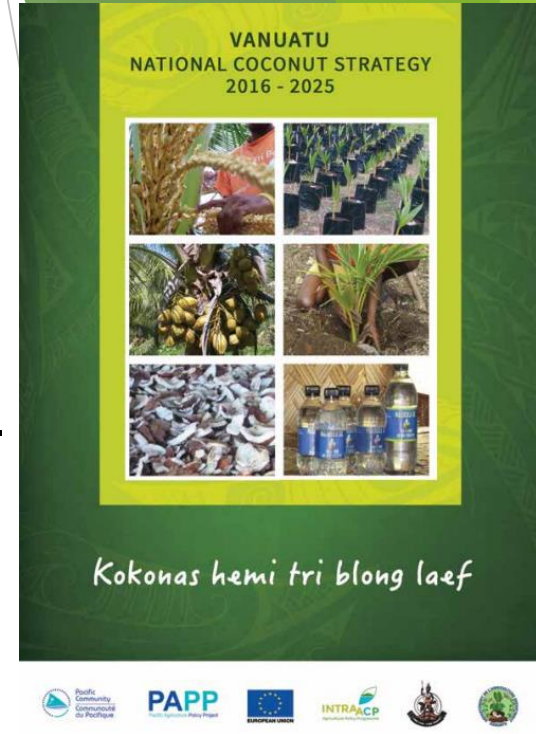
Development of a National coconut strategy:

**Vision:** Coconut is the top income earner in Vanuatu's agriculture sector by 2026

**Objective:**

1. Establish appropriate administrative and regulatory frameworks to manage the coconut sector.
2. Increase farmer access to improved planting materials
3. Enhance coconut farming through appropriate information and support.
4. Increase production and quality through good agricultural practices.
5. Introduce incentives for private sector engagement in agro-processing and value adding at all levels of the value chain
6. Enhance trade and marketing of coconut products in the domestic and export market.

*Annual Target, 100,000 coconut seed nuts planted annually*



- ▶ According to Vanuatu National coconut strategy, objective 2:
  - **“Increase Farmers access to improve planting material”**

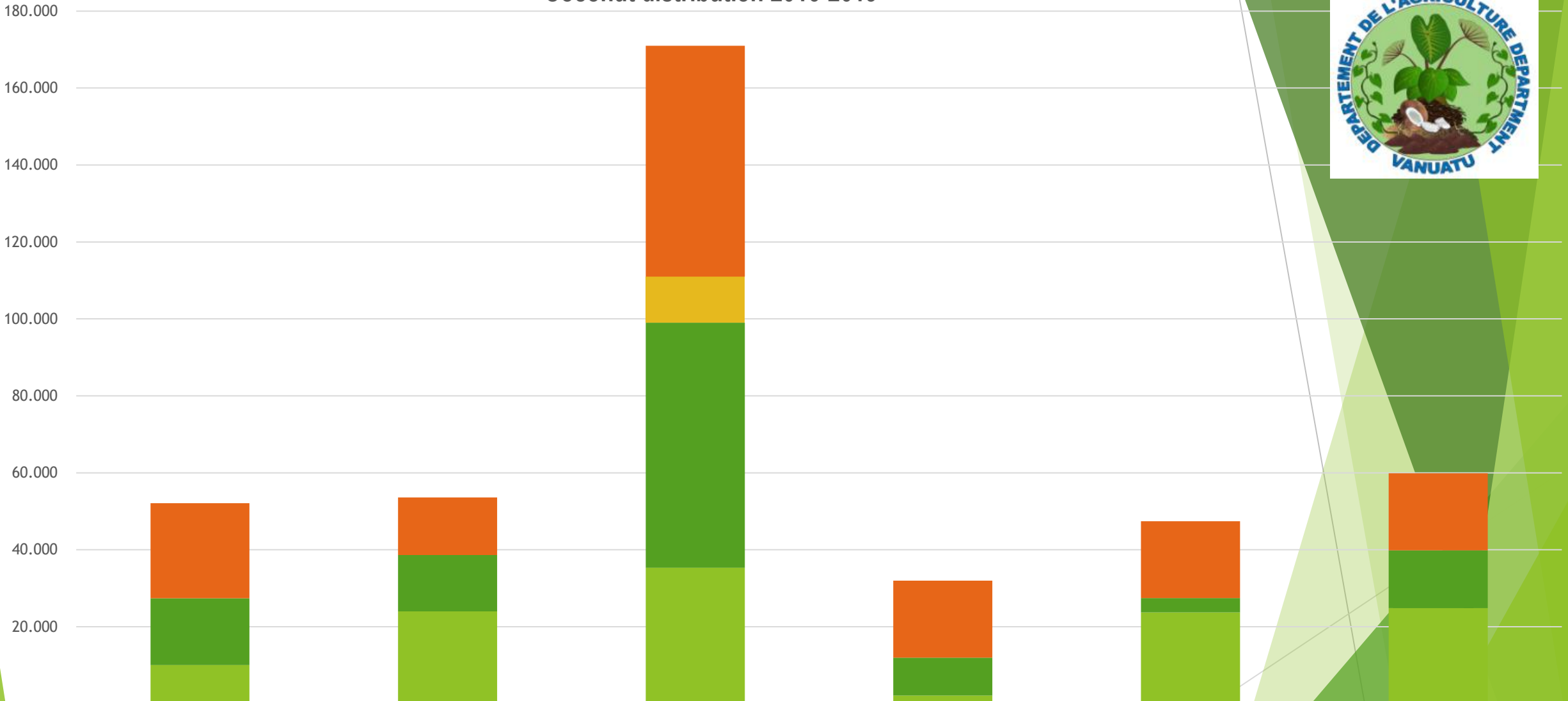
DARD is undertaking the following activities:

- Distribution of Improve Vanuatu Tall
- Setting up of Farmers Nurseries
- Distribution of copra hot air pipe ( in 2020)
- Distribution of Barbed wire for replanting purposes
- Distribution of exotic varieties to target coconut water niche Market





# Coconut distribution 2016-2019



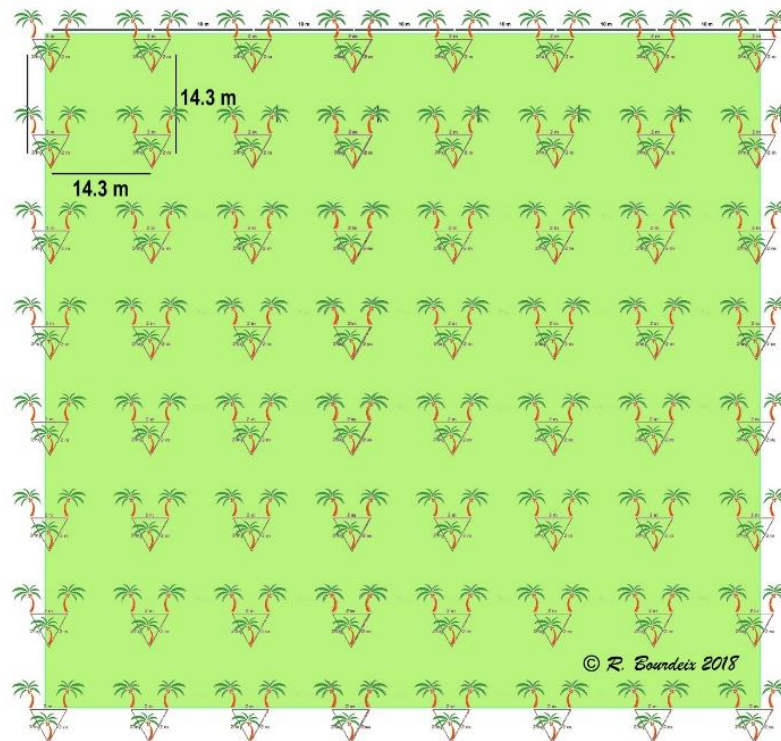
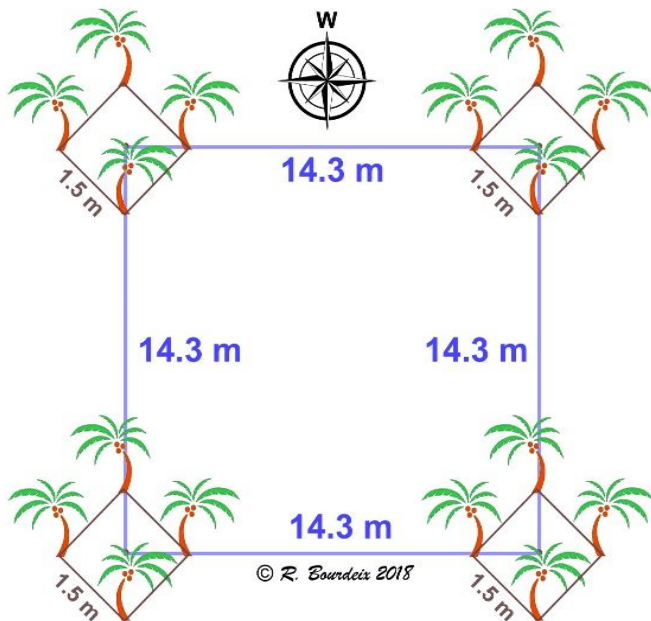
	Torba	Penama	sanma	Malampa	Shefa	Tafea
2019	24.702	15.000	60.000	20.000	20.000	20.000
2018	0		12.000	0	0	0
2017	17.388	14.616	63.680	9.870	3.722	15.040
2016	10.040	24.000	35.313	2.100	23.720	24.840

■ 2016 ■ 2017 ■ 2018 ■ 2019



# New Planting techniques are on trial

- ▶ To increase production a new technique is being trial out in famers plots: 3 Growth per Hill (3GPH).
- ▶ With 1.5 m Triangle and 14.3 m spacing between triangles
- ▶ 3 GPH density would be: 153 palm/ha
- ▶ it's more resistant to the cyclone



# Spacing vs Number of palm

- ▶ DARD is setting up demo plots for new spacing trial in farmers sites

Spacing	Number of palm
9mx 9 m triangle	143
8m x 8m	164
7.3 x 9.2	149



# Way forward for Coconut products

- ▶ **For copra:** the only way forward is to switch from black copra to white copra ( premium copra)
- ▶ DARD Is Working with one buyer in Luganville to buy white copra from farmers
- ▶ DARD is currently undertaking some training on premium copra
- ▶ Premium copra has a more attractive price





## For Coconut Water Market:

- DARD is distributing exotic varieties with high sugar contain( Brazilian Green Dwarf and Thailand)





## Other coconut bio product

DARD and VARTC need to research on other coconut bio products

### • Coir Fibre



### • Coconut Shell Charcoal



# COCONUT VALUE-CHAIN OPTIMIZATION: HIGH-VALUE, HIGH QUALITY PRODUCTS





# Challenges facing our coconut industry today;

Primarily low coconut production and very poor economic returns for our farmers.

Coconut Rhinoceros Beetle (CRB)





## Three (3) priorities that needs to be strategically address in order to boost production are

1. Replanting of old coconut plantations to increase production and value adding of old coconut trees into marketable coconut timber for the furniture industry (this will be addressed under the VaVaC project coconut component);
2. A stable and attractive market price for local copra producers as an incentive to sustain copra production. There must be a smart way to come out of the copra status quo. *“For instance there are 2 fully developed VCO processing factories already established in Santo. The exportable by products are coconut husk, desiccated coconut (for feed production, and food industry), coconut shells for button clothing industry, etc...”*
3. Generating interest amongst our youths that will be coconut formers of tomorrow and set up a criteria to manage employment exports of youth under the RSE. *“The reality at present is that the older generation of coconut famers are dying. The rural youths of today are not interested. They are attracted by the fruit picking RSE scheme”.*

❑ It is best not to reinvent the wheel for copra because it involves too much work for less return.

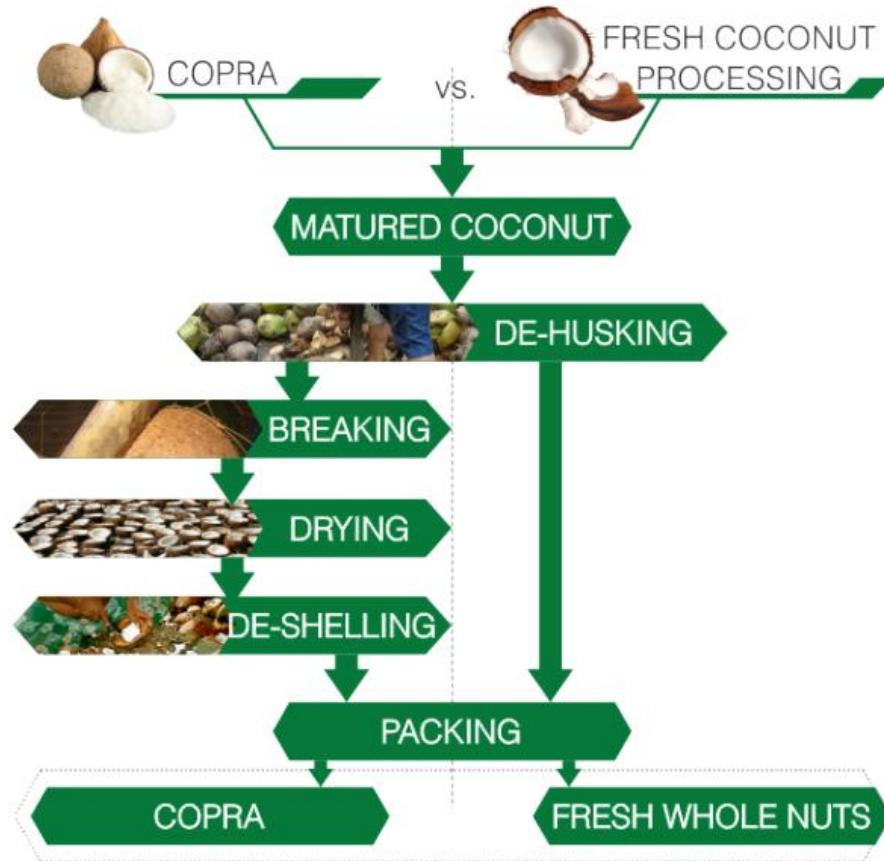
❑ It is important to come up with an innovative strategy to value add coconut and set an attractive local market price for our communities in order to stimulate coconut production, and to retain community youth to proactively engage in the coconut industry development and reduce the urban migration of youth.





# Conclusion

Empowering the Farmers is key to uplifting lives



FARMGATE PRODUCT

FARMERS' SALES W/O FC	US\$176/TON NUTS	+10%	US\$ 194/TON NUTS
FARMERS' SALES W/ FC	+37.5%		US\$242/TON NUTS

Thank you for your attention!







Coconut fibre





# Hemia olgeta products blo skin mo shell blo kokonas



THANK YOU TUMAS