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Title: Need to promote the Arecanut trading under Indo-ASEAN Free Trade Agreement.

SHRI G.M. SIDDESWARA (DAVANGERE): In India, Arecanut cultivation is mainly concentrated in Karnataka, Kerala and Assam. Tamil Nadu, Maharashtra, Andaman, Goa and West Bengal are also producing Arecanut in small quantity. In Karnataka and Kerala, cultivation of Arecanut is the main source of income for livelihood of lakhs of agricultural families.

At present, Arecanut production in India has outstripped the consumption.

But since 1995 import of Arecanut to India from neighbouring countries like Indonesia and Sri Lanka, is going on due to its better market in India. The quality of imported Arecanut is very inferior. Later the Centre has imposed certain restrictions for import of Arecanut. But even then illegal imports are still going on. Due to this, domestic market is affected severely and small and marginal grower of our country are suffering.

Under Indo-ASEAN free trade agreement, Arecanut is not included in the sensitive list of articles. Hence, I request the Centre to-

(a) arrange to include Arecanut also under the sensitive list of articles while

finalizing Indo-ASEAN-FTA;

(b) to fix floor price of Arecanut at Rs.60j- to Rs.65j- per kgm;

(c) to appoint competent agency to test and certify the quality of Arecanut

imported; and

(d) to restrict import of Arecanut to India through single port.