

# WORLD NEWS

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## INDIA

### Good potential for litchi cultivation in Kodagu

Litchi grown in Kodagu during the off-season can be marketed across the country, says an expert. Growers in Kodagu, faced with pest attacks on coffee and diseases in cardamom, orange and banana crops, had something to look forward to during the Litchi Field Day organised by the Central Horticultural Experiment Station (CHES) at Chettalli in the district recently. About 50 progressive growers attended the event. CHES scientists apprised the growers about the soil requirements, fruiting, flowering pattern and yield of litchi.

P.C. Tripathi, head of the CHES, said litchi matures in the off-season, during November-December period, in Kodagu, unlike in traditional cultivation areas in north India where it matures during May and June. As this was the off-season, the fruits were in demand in the market. India is ranked second in the world in litchi production, after China.

In India, litchi is grown on nearly 75 000 hectares with a yield of 4,83 lakh tonnes. Bihar, West Bengal, Uttar Pradesh, Jharkhand and Uttarakhand are the major litchi growing States in the country. **ST**

*(Source: <http://www.thehindu.com/news/national/karnataka/good-potential-for-litchi-cultivation-in-kodagu/article5501600.ece>; shortened; published 26 December 2013)*



### National Research Centre for Litchi (NRCL), Muzaffapur

The National Research Centre for Litchi (NRCL) was established on 6th June, 2001 by the Ministry of Agriculture, Government of India under the aegis of Indian Council of Agricultural Research to act as a Nodal Centre to work exclusively on litchi research and development in India. The Centre collected 52 cultivars of litchi and related species from Bihar, Jharkhand, West Bengal, Karnataka, Punjab and Uttaranchal during the year 2009-2010 and 46 cultivars were planted in the field germplasm repository for detailed evaluation. Efforts are being made to collect more and more indigenous and exotic germplasm. Molecular characterisation using RAPD and ISSR markers

with the help and assistance from CISH, Lucknow for 24 litchi cultivars is in progress. Block plantations of commercial litchi cultivars viz. Shahi (11 ha) and China (4 ha) areas of land have been completed at research farm of the Centre for conducting various trials / experiments. A mother block of 1,2 ha, having 625 plants, were developed with nine commercial cultivars of the region. A new germplasm block consisting of 36 collections of commercial varieties and land races / clones has been maintained as field repository in a systematic manner. Various pre- and post-harvest management studies are in progress. **ST**

*(Source: <http://nrclitchi.org/laboutus.htm>)*

### IG International supplying Bihar Litchi

Litchi occupies an important place in the horticultural landscape of the Indian state of Bihar, owing partially to the magnitude of its share of the overall production of the country; more than 70% of India's litchi volume is grown in the state. However, the market value of the fruit is affected by pericarp browning. The current packaging and marketing practices are not sufficient for Bihar litchi to reach other parts of country, but IG International is changing this. IG International Pvt Ltd., under its two group companies Vaishali AgriVenture and GNS Food Tech, have made Bihar Litchis available across India - with

fresh, high quality, they say and without the pericarp browning. GNS Food Tech with its special air treatment technology helped in extending the shelf life of litchis. However, Vaishali Agri Venture developed a potential alternative method of packaging (MAP) and refrigerated transport network to transport the fruit countrywide. The combined efforts of the two companies of IG International Pvt Ltd. have opened a new horizon of market for litchi producers of Bihar, said Mr Tarun Arora, director of IG International Pvt Ltd. **ST**

*(Source: [www.iginternational.net](http://www.iginternational.net); shortened)*



## Litchi tart

### Ingredients

200 g Tennis biscuits, crushed  
 90 g butter,  
 melted 80 g lemon jelly  
 250 ml boiling water  
 565 g litchis, drained (reserve the  
 syrup)  
 15 ml gelatine  
 397 g Nestlé condensed milk  
 100 ml lemon juice  
 250 g smooth cottage cheese  
 250 ml cream, stiffly whipped

### Method

1. Combine the crushed Tennis biscuits and melted butter and press into a two litre pie dish.
2. Dissolve the lemon jelly in the boiling water and set aside.
3. Mix a little of the litchi syrup with the gelatine and heat over boiling water until the gelatine has dissolved completely.
4. Add the gelatine mixture to the jelly along with the remaining litchi syrup and lemon juice. Mix well.
5. Mash half the litchis and fold into the jelly mixture with the cottage cheese.
6. Chill until the mixture just begins to set.
7. Fold the cream into the mixture and spoon into the prepared pie crust.
8. Decorate with the remaining litchis and a little cream.
9. Chill until completely set. Makes a generous tart. **ST**

Source: <http://www.food24.com/Recipes/Litchi-tart-20091103>



## KENYA

### *Litchi: A new yet old fruit tree for Kenya*

Mangoes, when in season, are available in copious amounts and varieties all over Kenya. But litchi, another exotic tree fruit, is always scarce. Imported and found exclusively in the most upmarket greengrocers and specialty stores in Nairobi, litchi's retail price of 10-18 dollars per kg keeps it firmly out of the reach of the majority. But this year a seed has been sown that could see the local cultivation and vulgarisation of litchi begin in Kenya. The World Agroforestry (ICRAF) recently imported ten litchi plantlets of a popular commercial variety from Mauritius. The plantlets (or marcotts) of the cultivar Tai So (also known as Mauritius), will be scientifically evaluated before being promoted among Kenyan farmers, says Dr Parveen Anjarwalla, the scientist at ICRAF who facilitated the marcotts' acquisition from Mauritius. Dr Ramni Jamnadass, leader of the Science Domain on Tree Diversity, Domestication and Delivery at ICRAF, will lead the research in collaboration with the Kenya Agricultural Research Institute (KARI) to evaluate the suitability of litchi cultivation in various parts of Kenya. The work will be done under the auspices of ICRAF's Fruiting Africa Program, which is funded by the International Fund for Agricultural Development and the European Union. Before popularising the fruit tree, researchers at ICRAF, KARI and local partners will develop guidelines for litchi cultivation in Kenya. Jamnadass



**An old litchi tree in Thika, Kenya. Inset: newly arrived litchi marcotts. Photos by Daisy Ouya and Parveen Anjarwalla /ICRAF**

estimates that it will take around ten years from first evaluations to large-scale introduction of litchi seedlings into smallholder farmers' fields in Kenya. Eventually, litchi might turn into an export commodity, further augmenting the region's strong horticultural sector, which in 2011 earned Kenya alone over one billion US dollars. **ST**

(Source: <http://blog.worldagroforestry.org/index.php/2013/04/24/litchi-a-new-yet-old-fruit-tree-for-kenya/>; shortened; published 24 August 2013)

