



Unit 4 Topic 1&2

Cashew-Importance & harvesting

Introduction

The cashew tree, native to Brazil, was introduced to Mozambique and then India in the sixteenth century by the Portuguese, as a means of controlling coastal erosion. It was spread within these countries with the aid of elephants that ate the bright cashew fruit along with the attached nut. The nut was too hard to digest and was later expelled with the droppings. It was not until the nineteenth century that plantations were developed and the tree then spread to a number of other countries in Africa, Asia and Latin America.

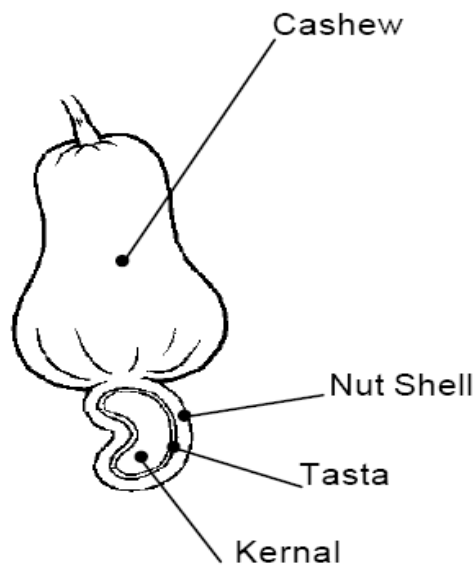


Fig : Cross-section of a Cashew Fruit

Cashew processing, using manual techniques, was started in India in half of the twentieth century. It was exported from there to the western markets, particularly the United States. In the 1960s, some of producing countries in East Africa began to process nuts domestically sending them to India for processing. This allowed them to benefit sale of both processed nuts and the extracted cashew nut shell liquid. The **cashew** is a tree in the family Anacardiaceae. Its English name derives from the Portuguese name for the fruit of cashew tree, *caju*, which in turn derives from the indigenous Tupi name, *acajú*. It is now widely grown in tropical climates for its cashew nuts (see below) and cashew apples. The name *Anacardium* refers to the shape of the fruit, which looks like an inverted heart (*ana* means "upwards" and *-cardium* means "heart"). In the Tupian languages *acajú* means "yellow head".



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The main commercial product of the cashew tree is the nut.



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In the main producing areas of East Africa and India, 95 per cent or more of the apple crop is not eaten, as the taste is not popular. However, in some parts of South America and West Africa, local inhabitants regard the apple, rather than the nut kernel, as a delicacy. The origin of the cashew is Brazil, which is in the Latin American Zone. The cashew apple is used to manufacture jams, and soft and alcoholic drinks. In Goa, it is used to distil cashew liquor called “feni”.

In the world scenario, India occupies a premier position contributing about 43 per cent of the cashew nut production. Despite India being the largest producer and exporter of cashew nut, the production of raw cashew nut in the country is far below the requirement of the processing sector. The maximum production of raw cashew nut was 5.2 lakh tones obtained from an area of 6.86 lakh ha during 1999-2000. This production is hardly sufficient to meet 50 per cent of the demand of about 825 cashew-processing units in the country. The average demand growth rate for kernels for export and internal consumption is around 13 per cent per annum. The demand of the industry is about one million tonnes of raw cashew nut. In India it is grown in the west coast, east coast and a few plain areas parts in Karnataka and Madhya Pradesh. The highest productivity is noticed in Maharashtra.

MAIN VARIETIES

STATE	VARIETY
Andhra Pradesh	BPP 4, BPP 8 and VRI 2
Karnataka	Chintamani 1, Sel. 1, Sel. 2, Ullal 1, Ullal 2, Ullal 3, Ullal 4, UN 50, VRI 2, Vengurla 1 and Vengurla 4.
Kerala	Dhana, K 221, Madakkathara 1, Madakkathara 2 and Priyanka
Madhya Pradesh	T No. 40 and Vengurla 4
Maharashtra and Coa	Vengurla 1, Vengurla 4 and Vengurla 6
Orissa	Bhubaneswar 1 and VRI 2
Tamil Nadu	VRI 1, VRI 2 and VRI 3
West Bengal	Jhargram 1

Importance:

1. Highly delicious and nutritive (comparable with almond, walnut etc)
2. Zero cholesterol nut
 - a. high content of unsaturated fatty acids, proteins and carbohydrates with right combination of aminoacids, vitamins and minerals
3. Kernel – consumed as such or used in confectionery items
4. Kernel oil – pale yellow- pharmaceutical and cosmetic industry



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5. CNSL- for making paints, resins, flame retardants etc.
6. Testa- rich in tannin- leather industry
7. Cashew apple – rich in Vit C, used to cure scurvey, diarrhea, uterine comaplaints and dropsy.
 - a. used for the prepration of squash, jam, feni etc.

Harvesting

- Flowering starts – from 3rd year onwards
- Full production potential – by 10th year
- Economic yield – for further 20 years
- After fruit setting ,nuts develop quickly and reaches full size 3-4 weeks.
- Fruits mature in 60 days, harvest when fully ripe
- Allowed to fall down – collect manually
- Nuts are separated from apple, dried in sun for 2-3 days and stored temporarily
- Yield of nut: 1-45 kg/tree/year
- National average of India: 3 kg/tree/year
- Yield of cashew apple is 8-10 times of nut yield
- Improper post-harvest handling and storage of nuts, such as high moisture, temperature and insect or mechanical damage can influence the incidence of fungus that produces toxins like aflatoxin.