

Glimpses of Black Pepper Production in Vietnam

DR. B. SASIKUMAR

Former Principal Scientist and Head, ICAR-Indian Institute of Spices Research, Kozhikode SEKT D6, Varada, Kurup's Lane, PO Sasthamangalam, Trivandrum-10.
Email: sasikumarsooranadu@gmail.com, Mob: 9496178142

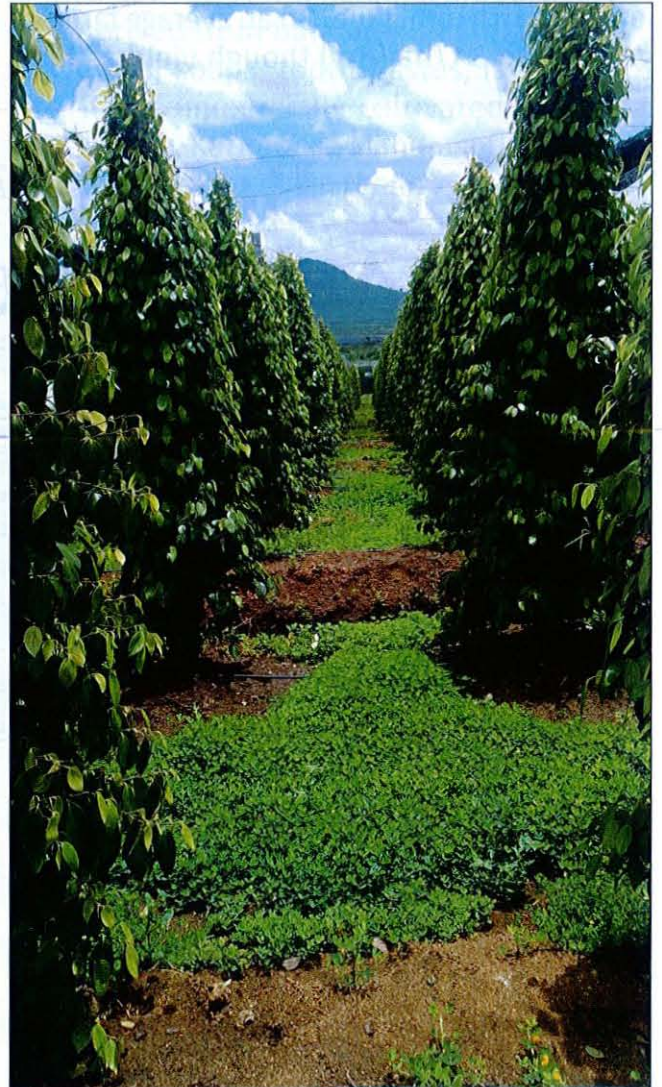
Though relatively a new entrant to the scene, today Vietnam is the leading black pepper producer and exporter in the world. Currently, black pepper is grown mainly in six provinces, including BinhPhuoc, DakNong, Dak Lak, Ba Ria-Vung Tau, Dong Nai and Gia Lai. Among them, the provinces in the Central Highlands and the South-Eastern region rank first in terms of area and productivity. Other pepper growing areas include Phu Quoc and KienGiang.

Vietnam is the leading black pepper producer and exporter in the world, though a new entrant in the scene.

Pepper production in Vietnam more than doubled in the last decade and represents approximately 40% of global production and 60% of global export. Total black pepper area in the country is about 105,000 ha. with an annual production of about 1,85,000 MTs. Vietnam exported 179,233 MTs of black pepper worth \$1.43 billion in 2016. However, it is told that some produce from Cambodia, is also illegally brought to Vietnam and traded as Vietnam pepper.

Black pepper is raised as a mono crop lasting for 15-20 years in Vietnam. Both dead standards (hollow concrete and wooden poles) and live standards such as Subabul (*Leucaena*

leucocephala) and cuttings of silk cotton (*Ceiba pentandra*), *Gliricidia* etc are used as supports. Rooted top shoot cuttings form the most of the planting material though three-noded rooted runner shoots too are used by



A 13 month old black pepper plantation raised from top shoots on concrete poles

some farmers.

Vinh Linh is the leading variety. Other varieties are Loc Ninh, Mrech Bay and Malaysian. Malaysian is very similar to the Panniyur 1 hybrid.

Intensive nutrient and water management practices with high density planting are the norm in Vietnam. At some places it is seen that the young plantations are completely caged in thin shade nets so as to protect the growing vines from the sun.

The harvesting period for Vietnamese pepper is from March until June. On an average farmers get around 3 t/ha (dry) though yield as high

as 10 t/ha is realised by few farmers @1800 standards per ha! Dry recovery is above 40%. Most of the black pepper is traded as whole black pepper, ground pepper (crushed pepper) and to some extent as white pepper.

Farmers bring their produce to the farmer's cooperative society (a sort of farmer's collective) and then sell to the middle men who in turn trade it to the agents of big procurement companies.

Major maladies affecting the black pepper production in Vietnam are foot rot disease, nematodes and viruses. The unscientific application of fertilizers is also a cause of concern, of late. And of course price is the single factor that boost the production.



Spices Board Makes a Mark at Aahar Chennai 2018

Spices Board made an impressive presence at Aahar Chennai 2018, the fair organised jointly by the Indian Trade promotion Organisation (ITPO), the premier trade promotion Organisation in India and Tamil Nadu Trade Promotion Organisation (TNTPO), a joint venture of ITPO & TIDCO, Govt. of Tamil Nadu, at the Chennai Trade Centre from August 23 to 25. Dr. M. K. Shanmuga Sundaram I A S, Secretary, Spices Board, inaugurated the stall that Spices Board put up at the Fair, which was organised with

the support of the Ministry of Food Processing Industries, Gov. of India & APEDA.

Officials of the Chennai Regional Office of Spices Board and representatives of the co-participants were present when the Board's stall as inaugurated. M/s. FSTL participated along with Board's in the fair and the value-added products and spice samples of M/s. FSTL were put for display and sale.

Farmer groups from Konkan region and Kerala co-participated in the fair. Sufficient space was allotted for farmer groups in the stall to display and sell their products, which included organic pepper, nutmeg, cloves, cambodge, cumin and fennel among other exhibits.

In addition to Spices Board, the leading spices processors like M/s. Aachi Masala and M/s. Thillai's Masala also participated in the expo.

