2. The land should be planted with improved pasture variety (or varities) recommended by the Department of Animal Production and Health.

3. Lands already under pasture will not be paid the subsidy.

A coconut land is defined as a land carrying over 30 coconut trees per acre and it is the minimum extent eligible for receiving a pasture subsidy, offered by the Coconut Development Board Coconut lands of 1/2 an acre or more in extent, situated in areas with an evenly distributed rainfall over 60" per year, in the following districts are eligible for the pasture subsidy. Colombo, Gampaha, Kalutara, Galle, Matara, Kegalle, Kandy, Matale, Badulla, Puttalam, Kurunegala and Ratnapura. A subsidy of Rs.800/- is paid in two annual instalments of Rs.400/- each.

Other than planting of grass, the planting of Ipil Ipil is also eligible for a subsidy. This is also granted by the Animal Production and Health Department. The subsidy payment is Rs.1500/- per acre.

For application forms and further particulars about the subsidies offered by the Department of Animal Production & Health, please contact the Veterinary Surgeon of the area; details about the subsidies offered by the Coconut Development particulars could be had from their regional offices.

A NOTE ON WATER MELON

H. Samaratunga, Research Officer
Regional Agricultural Research Station,
Maha Illuppallama.

Water Melon (Citrallus lanatus) can be grown during both seasons, Maha and Yala. But it is ideal for Yala cultivation due to better fruit quality. Melon fruits produced during the Maha season are watery and less sweet.

A humus rich soil with a good drainage, and a pH value between 6.0 - 7.3 is suitable for melon cultivation.

Melons need a considerable amount of fertilizer, hence you should give enough manure or other types of organic matter. Since melons have a shallow root system, fertilizer should be applied shallow in the soil. Standard values of fertilizer (pure nutrient in kg/ha) required by the Melon crop is as follows:-

Nitrogen	- 80-100	Kg/ha
P_2O_5	- 60-120	Kg/ha
K_2O	- 100-200	Kg/ha

For melon cultivation the average atmospheric temperature should not be less than 20°C. Ideal spacing is 100 cm between rows) x 50 cm(in the row). For wind protection maize c. sorghum can be planted along the boarder.

Direct seed in planting holes of 45 x 45 x 45 cm, filled with top soil and cattle manure or organic manure. 3 - 4 seeds are to be sown in every planting hole, not too close to each other and after developing the second leaf the plants should be carefully thinned to a single plant per hill. Poor germination can be balanced at this occasion by immediate re-sowing or by transplanting (with plants raised in poly bags). Raising plants in poly-bags and later field planting has been considered as a successful method.

During the entire growth period the soil should be kept loose by repeated hoeing, particularly after heavy showers or irrigation. As soon as the vines cover up the field, hoeing is stopped. Excess evaporation of soil moisture during drought can be overcome by mulching with paddy straw. Mulching suppresses the weed growth.

Preventive measures must be taken against injurious pests and diseases. The most common pests are fruit fly, Aulacophora beetle and Welworm and the most common diseases are downey and powdery mildew, angular leaf spot, anthracnose and cucumber mosaic virus (CMV). Most water melon varieties are resistant and some are tolerant to C.M.V.

Water melon also has a very good yield potential provided that the management practices are done properly in time. Water melon has now been considered as a potential export crop.

Many varieties have been tested at the Research Stations of the Department of Agriculture. The most popular as well as recommended Water melon variety is SUGAR BABY.

In water melon, fruit size, shape (Round to oval) a: also fruit weight (4-13 kg) varies according to the varie (Red to Yellow).

The crop mature in 75 days from sowing (this may var according to the prevailing weather conditions) Number of fruits per vine varies depending on the variety, weather, and the level of management.

Water melon is an easy crop to grow. However, its potential for export depends on the fruit size, shape, appearance and taste. Therefore, careful harvesting at proper maturity is very important, A direct recommendatio: cannot be made about the time of harvest. For example in case of SUGAR BABY formation of an ash (film) layer on th fruit is an indication of its maturity.

Continued from Page 34.

NEW RICE RECOMMENDATIONS

BG 573 - 4½ month, Samba variety.

BG 94-1 (Red) - 3½ month, red rice variety.

BW 288 - 3½ month, red rice variety suitable for low country wet zone.

Characteristic	BG 573	BG 94-1 (Red)	BW 288
Seedling vigour	Moderate	Good	Good
Days from transplanting to 50% flowering.	100	76	79
Days from broadcasting to 50% flowering.	90	70	69
Resistance to gall midge.	Resistant	Resistant	-
Tolerance to brown plant hopper.	Moderate	-	-
Resistance to iron toxicity.	-	-	Moderate
Resistance to Sheath blight.	-	-	Moderate

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