

Supplementary Note on Methods of Destroying Dead Coconut Palms.

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THIS note is supplementary to a short article, on the same subject published in the *Malayan Agricultural Journal* Vol. XV.—No. 8, 1927. Since the publication of the original note, mentioned above, the writer has witnessed another method of burning dead coconut timber which may be of use to those confronted with the problem of destroying felled palms from areas on which it is impossible to burn in situ *i.e.*, on areas where the subsequent crop is too advanced to allow of burning with safety, or where coconuts are cut out from mature rubber as is often done.

In this case it is necessary that the coconut timber be removed to an open space where burning can take place with safety. Having chosen a spot, accessible to all parts of the felled area, a trench is dug, say 3 feet wide, 2 feet deep, and about 12 feet in length, this gives a permanent 'flue' over which are piled, crosswise, first a number of lengths of trunk and on top of these the stumps and other lengths of trunk, up to a height of 8—10 feet.

The trench is filled with dead leaves and other rubbish which can be easily ignited. The burning is just as effective and the same body of heat is obtained. In this case it is quite unnecessary to split the trunks or the stumps. After putting down the first layer of trunks it will be found an easy matter to build others on top by using two lengths of trunks as runners and rolling the remainder up on to the pile with the aid of two coolies with levers.

This method is of course more expensive than burning in situ, as it entails extra labour in carrying out the timber. It is surprising how quickly an area can be cleared of timber by a gang of coolies carrying out the trunks and stumps with the aid of slings.

If space permits, it is advantageous to dig two trenches sufficiently far apart to enable the building of a second pile to be carried on while the other is burning, a gang of coolies is thus kept employed practically the whole time.

For this method to be effective it is essential to see that all timber is packed as close together as possible and all placed the same way, never criss-cross fashion.—*The Malayan Agricultural Journal*. Vol. XV. No. 12, 1927.