

## COCONUT WATER is it



Picking coconuts

**Forget about artificial sports drinks.** Now the natural thirst killer is here: Coconut water. Biologically pure, tasty and full of the salts, sugars and vitamins needed by athletes - both the Olympic kind and weekend warriors.

And it may be coming your way soon. FAO has recently been granted the first-ever UN patent for coconut water and is making the patented process available to all interested companies.

"What could be better than a natural beverage product with the delicate aroma, taste, drinking characteristics and nutritional value of pure, fresh, tender coconut water, plus all the functional characteristics required of a sports drink?" says Morton Satin, Chief of FAO's Agricultural Industries and Post-harvest

Management Service. He developed the product along with Italian food technologist Giuseppe Amoroggi. They also developed a cold sterilization processing method that will allow manufacturers to bottle coconut water without losing its flavour and nutritional characteristics.

And bottled coconut water, which contains the same level of electrolytic balance as we have in our blood, could be a boon for developing nations. "The new technology holds tremendous promise for tropical countries," says Mr Satin. "Countries that process or export coconuts and small farmers who grow them will be the main beneficiaries."

The beverage industry has already shown interest in the product, and consumers are likely to follow. A panel of tasters could detect no difference between fresh coconut water and the product that came out of the laboratory.

The patent was granted by the United Kingdom, and FAO has also requested patents in Canada and Japan.

Sport drinks vs. coconut water		
Component	Sports drink (mg/100 ml)	Coconut water (mg/100 ml)
Potassium	11.7	294
Sodium	41	25
Chloride	39	118
Magnesium	7	10
Sugars	6	5
Source: <a href="#">Spotlight 1998, No 3</a>		

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