

## India Wants to Take Lead in Nutmeg Production



**PUNE, India, March 3, 2012 (PTI)** – In the backdrop of the reverses suffered by Grenada in the production of nutmeg, India can now take a lead in increasing the area of cultivation of the expensive spice commodity, according to experts.

Grenada (an island country in the Caribbean), which along with Indonesia, was a major producer of nutmeg, has lost much of its leadership in the sector after being hit by hurricane Ivan which damaged its nutmeg trees, said a presentation made at the recently held 11th World Spice Congress here. The meet was hosted by Spices Board of India.

“After a series of hurricanes lashed Grenada (an island country in the Caribbean), about 90 per cent nutmeg trees were damaged. Of the damaged trees, 40 per cent were toppled, 25 per cent “injured”, 30 per cent inaccessible and 5 per cent died.

“Prior to hurricane Ivan, the nutmeg sector provided income to about 30 per cent of Grenada’s population and earned 22.5 per cent of its total merchandise export,” said a paper presented at the congress noted, quoting an International Trade Corporation (ITC) report.

Stating that India was better positioned to surge ahead in the nutmeg sector, the paper said: “The production area (for nutmeg) in India hit the peak of 16,400 hectares in 2008.

With a sectoral expansion of around 11.2 per cent, India, for whom the Arab counties have has been a major export destination, is in an advantageous position“.

In the last three years, the prices of nutmeg have gone up by 200-265 per cent globally, it pointed out.

Nutmeg is used as condiment, particularly in sweet foods, and as a standard seasoning agent in many dishes, while its fleshy outer cover is crystallised or pickled or made into jellies.

It is also used as a drug because of its stimulant, carminative, astringent and aphrodisiac properties.

In India, nutmeg is used in sweet as well as savoury dishes in temple rituals, while in Indonesia the commodity is used to make jam, cooked with sugar and crystallised to make candy.

Posted by [Michael Bascombe](#)