

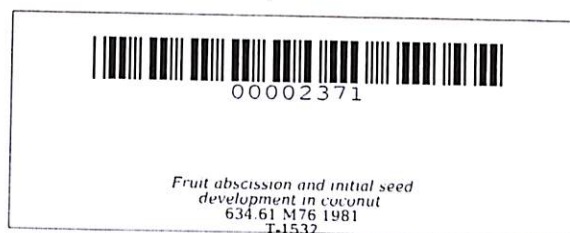
FRUIT ABSCISSION AND INITIAL SEED
DEVELOPMENT IN COCONUT

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INTRODUCTION

The Philippine coconut industry receives a considerable share of the national attention due to its position as a major contributor to our national economy. Each year, the Philippines produces more than 11 billion nuts from about 3.3 million hectares and despite a decline in production in 1979, the industry earned \$1.019 billion (Nagrampa, 1980). Based on production from the area devoted to coconut, the average yield per tree per year is only about 30 nuts. Assuming that the tree will normally produce 14 bunches a year with 6 nuts per bunch, it is clear that the average production is indeed very low compared to its potential.

The low productivity of the coconut can be attributed to so many factors like low level of technology, unfavorable soil and climatic conditions and senescent trees, to mention a few. These factors are all contributory to one important phenomenon that reduces yield of coconut, the abscission of immature nuts and buttons.

Inquiries from people engaged in coconut production on the possible solution to the problem of button