

Trends in Ceylon Cinnamon and Cassia Production

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Cinnamon is the most important tree spice produces from Sri Lanka. Ceylon Cinnamon, which is popularly termed as 'True Cinnamon' is a derivative from the bark of an indigenous to Sri Lanka plant *Cinnamomun zeylanicum* Blume. The competition pertaining to Ceylon Cinnamon in world trade has already become significant, as the closest competitor to Cinnamon, Cassia (*Cinnamomum cassia*, *Cinnamomum burmannii* and *Cinnamomum loureirii*) produced cheaply in the East Asia region, is becoming a threat to the Cinnamon industry where the world Cinnamon market comprised not only of True Cinnamon, but of Cassia as well. According to the opinion of the experts, lack of productivity of Ceylon Cinnamon cultivated lands and insufficient production of Ceylon Cinnamon to fulfill the worlds' demand for Cinnamon is one of the major issues and, which have to be immediately addressed to be cope up with and to withstand the competition in the worlds' total Cinnamon market. In this context, this research aimed to identify the production trends of Ceylon Cinnamon comparing them with those of major cassia producers; China, Indonesia and Vietnam. The FAOSTAT (Food and Agricultural Organization of United Nations) database was used as the secondary data source. The results revealed that the production of cassia bark has almost quadrupled over 1980 to 2013 while Sri Lankan Cinnamon production remains almost constant throughout the years, despite showing a very slight rising trend. Other Cassia producing countries especially Indonesia and China shows a rapid rising trend. The average annual productivity of 'Sri Lankan Cinnamon' remains constant throughout the past thirteen years around 500 kg/ha, while the major cassia producing countries; China and Indonesia have shown an average productivity of about 1350 kg/ha and 1000 kg/ha during the previous thirteen years respectively.

Keywords: Cassia, Ceylon cinnamon, production trends, productivity

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