



REPORT ON THE PARTICIPATION OF COIR BOARD



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IN

Singapore Garden Festival 2012

07 - 15 JULY 2012, SINGAPORE

Singapore Garden Festival is Asia's best garden and flower show held at Suntec City, Singapore from 07 to 15 July 2012. The Ministry of Micro Small and Medium Enterprises, Govt of India vide letter No 4(17)/2012-Coir/464 dated 3rd July 2012 approved the proposal of the Coir Board for participation in the Singapore Garden Festival 2012 from 07 to 15 July 2012 and approved the deputation of Shri C.U. Abraham, Accounts Manager for organizing Board's participation in the fair at Suntec City, Singapore.



The organisers



The fair was organized by M/s National Parks Board (Nparks), Singapore, which is a statutory board of Singapore Govt. Nparks is actively engaged and responsible for enhancing the greenery of Singapore, a city of Garden. Nparks manages over 300 parks and is involved in the extensive streetscapes or road side greenery in Singapore. They are also working closely with partners in the landscaping and horticulture industry.



The Board's participation in the Singapore Garden Festival was for the first time. Singapore is a dynamic and lucrative market, especially for garden articles such as coir pith, coco lawn, coir pots etc. since Nparks has launched a public engagement exercise to establish world class gardens, rejuvenate urban parks and enliven streetscape and enrich biodiversity in urban environment in Singapore. Singapore is a small country with total area of 710 km² and a population of about 5.2 million. Despite its small size, Singapore is a world leader in several areas. It is the world's fourth leading financial centre and one of the five busiest ports in the world. The world Bank notes that Singapore is the easiest place in the world to do business. The country has the world's third highest GDP with per capita of USD 59, 936; making Singapore one of the world's wealthiest countries.



The Fair

The fair was held at International Convention Centre, Suntec City, Singapore. Coir Board participated in the Garden Festival from 07 to 15 July 2012 directly by reserving 18 Sq Mtr space in Stall Nos 7 & 8 and made a beautiful display of different varieties of coir products, which attracted most of the visitors. The five exporters who participated in the fair alongwith Coir Board are:-



1. M/s GCC Landscape, Kochi.
2. M/s United Global Traders, Mumbai.
3. M/s Natures Coir Pvt Ltd, Tuticorin, Tamil Nadu.
4. M/s Rehoboth Impex, Pudukottai Dist, Tamil Nadu.
5. M/s Eden Fresh, Pudukottai Dist, Tamil Nadu.

It is for the first time Coir Board participated a fair in Singapore. Being a Garden Festival, Board focused on exhibition of coir garden articles, such as coir pith, coir pots, coco chips, grow bags, needle felt, geo textiles, etc. Other allied products such as coir handicrafts and coir mats were also exhibited. Attractive posters depicting diversified uses of coir and coir products, especially for gardening, landscaping etc were made and exhibited. Publicity pamphlets and brochures on coir and coir products enlightening diversified uses of coir were also distributed to visitors during the course of fair. The products exhibited were highly appreciated by the visitors. Board was able to create an awareness among the visitors regarding diversified uses of coir for landscaping and horticulture, particularly coir pith as a growing media for plants. In the fair Coir Board highlighted the advantages of coir pith for agricultural purpose on account of its water retention capacity and as an organic manure. The usage of coir needle felt and geo textiles for landscaping purpose were also highlighted. A total number of 69 trade enquiries were received in the fair. Eventhough the total volume of export likely to be materialized from these enquiries cannot be quantified at this stage,



the enquiries are capable of bringing a handsome prospective business deals. More than 10000 visitors passed through the stall and most of them were Singaporeans. Board's stall attracted a large number of visitors who evinced keen interest in coir products, especially in coir pith and other garden articles and expressed their desire for import from India. The details of name and address of the interested people have been recorded in the Visitors Book for pursuing with them.



*Shri. Amitesh Bharat Singh, First Secretary (Commerce)
with Shri C.U Abraham, Coir Board Official.*

The undersigned also visited the Office of the High Commissioner of India to Singapore on 13-7-2012 and had a meeting with Shri Amitesh Bharat Singh, First Secretary (Commerce) in the High Commission. He assured all possible help for opening a new market in Singapore for coir products, especially for garden articles. Pamphlets and brochures on diversified use coir products were handed over to him for distribution to those who are interested in doing business in coir and coir products.



Bottlenecks of the Market

Most of the people visited to the fair were in need of coir pith and other garden articles in small quantity for their gardening and landscaping. The exporters who participated in the fair alongwith Coir Board were constrained to inform some of the potential customers to the stall that unless they order for a minimum quantity, it may not be feasible for them to export the material in containers. The major problem faced by the exporters in exploring the Singapore market is that there is lack of wholesalers who are able to import coir products in large quantities and distribute among the retailers in the country. The exporters have to identify some importers who can import coir products in bulk and do retail in Singapore. Some of the exporters who participated in the fair have already commenced discussion with people who are interested in import in bulk and do retail, especially for coir pith and garden articles.



Cost Benefit Analysis

As regards the cost benefit analysis, it may please be noted that there is vast potential for coir pith, needle felt and allied garden articles since Singaporeans gives much importance to gardening and landscaping. It is for the first time the Board participated a fair in Singapore. The Board could create a very good images about the diversified uses coir products among the visitors. The exporters who participated in the fair were able to get considerable amount of trade enquiries amounting to Rs 146 lakhs. The leads generated could be transformed into genuine business. Hence, the expenditure incurred for the event seems to be reasonable since the purpose was served effectively to the entire

satisfaction of the exhibitors and visitors/buyers/importers.



Suggestions / Recommendations

1. More exporters may be encouraged to participate in the fair.
2. The space taken for the fair was only 18 Sq Mtrs. More space and furniture may be taken to accommodate exporters in the stall depending upon the number of their participation.
3. Feasibility of exhibiting some live plants grown in coir pith may be examined to make the stall more attractive.
4. The exporters may be asked to

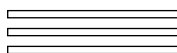
identify some importers at Singapore who can import coir products in bulk and do retail in Singapore.

5. The Board may continue to participate in Singapore Garden Festival to tap the great possibilities of a potential market.



Conclusion

The participation of Coir Board in the Singapore Garden Festival opened a new gateway to a potential market of Singapore and created awareness among people of Singapore about the various uses and importance of coir as an eco friendly product. There is a great potential for coir pith and allied garden articles in Singapore. Hence, the Board may continue to participate in Singapore Garden Festival to tap the great possibilities of a potential market.



23 August, 2012

C.U.Abraham
Accounts Manager, Coir Board