

**Mr Pratap Nair, Board Member, Ambassador- International Nut
and Dried Fruit Council**

*This is a transcript of the exclusive interview of Mr Pratap Nair, Board Member,
Ambassador- International Nut and Dried Fruit Council taken on the occasion of
World Cashew Convention & Exhibition 2018*

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For the first time in India, INC congress was held in Chennai- 2017, so how was the response?

It was extremely good, there were around 900 participants; the whole of the cashew industry, almond, pistachios and all other nuts and dry fruits people were there. It was very nice and 80 countries represented.

Brief about the INC Global Cashew Council and its activities

Global Cashew Council was formed under INC umbrella mainly to promote health research specifically on cashews. Until now, cashew specific health research has not been done, but it has done only on almonds, walnuts. For the first time, INC has commissioned the study on cashew consumption is good for heart health and the study has been completed and it is positive and very soon it will come out in medical journals worldwide and soon it will publish that consuming cashew is good for heart. This is one of the great achievements of INC which helps cashew industry.

How was the demand of cashew in India after the introduction of GST since July-2017?

The demand for cashew in India is growing exponentially, but there was a small road block with the GST and demonetization. It has affected the cash flow and the consumption was reduced a bit for the last few months but again it is picking up and India continues to be the largest consumer of cashews in the world

What are the main challenges faced by the Indian cashew industry?

The major challenge facing is import duty which has been from 9.5 percent to 5 percent and now it has been reduced to 2.5 percent which is not enough. We are expecting that it should go down to zero percent and the only way we can beat Vietnam. So I request the government of India to reduce the duty from 2.5 to zero percent.

Recently the government of India has hiked the export incentives on MEIS and today the RCN import duty is halved. Whether it will help the Indian industry to regain the past export glory going forward?

The MEIS has been restored to 5 percent which will boost the exports and to compete with Vietnam, but now the import duty which is 2.5 percent is not enough and should be zero percent.

Your views about WCCE

WCCE was very nice, a great platform to meet old and new friends and have had great time in this beautiful city.

What are your expectations for the next convention?

Cashewinfo is already doing a great job, may be you can attempt in bringing more young entrepreneurs in the cashew business, create a separate panel for them to speak more on cashews which would encourage the industry to achieve more.