

## **Value-added products from tamarind**

The National Chemical Laboratory (NCL), India, has developed a process for recovering value-added products from tamarind, a native tree that is as common as neem. Tamarind fruit contains kernel, pulp and seed; the pulp contains around 13 per cent tartaric acid (as a mixture of tartaric acid and potassium bitartrate), 5 per cent pectin and 33 per cent fruit sugar. NCL has obtained a patent from the United States' Patents and Trademark Office.

Tartaric acid and potassium bitartrate, used in food, beverage and pharmaceutical industry, are presently isolated only from wine argold. Tamarind pulp is the only other source for these neutraceuticals. Pectin, used in food and medication, is a plant polysaccharide traditionally recovered from citrus peels and apple pomace. The NCL technique recovers potassium bitartrate, pectin and fruit sugar from tamarind pulp in a sequential manner. It has been standardized on the bench-scale and technical viability of the process, based on yield, has been established. The novel process can recover 75 per cent of potassium bitartrate, 50 per cent of pectin and 85 per cent of sugars present in tamarind pulp. (Beverage and Food World, June 2001)