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Agricultural University admissions to begin on May 6

Staff Reporter

New college at Nagapattinam, new course in sericulture from this year

Admission process of TNAU	
Date	Category of admission
06.05.2011	Issuance of application
31.05.2011	Last date of issuance and receipt of application
10.06.2011	Publication of rank list
15.06.2011 to 19.06.2011	Counselling session for Phase I - 150 candidates / Session (300 candidates / day)
25.06.2011	Counselling for Special reservation - Ex-serviceman / Differently abled / Sports quota / Vocational stream
02.07.2011	General category - Phase II counselling
06.07.2011	III Phase of counselling
14.07.2011	IV Phase of counselling
18.07.2011	Registration of course and beginning of session

COIMBATORE: The Tamil Nadu Agricultural University (TNAU) will begin the admission process for its 13 undergraduate programmes on May 6 with the issue of applications, Vice-Chancellor of the University P. Murugesu Boopathi told a press conference here on Friday.

There is an addition of a new college and a new course this year. The new constituent college will function from Kelzvelur, Nagapattinam. The new course is a four-year B.Sc. in Sericulture.

Pointing out that there were 1,365 seats this year as against the 1,224 last year, Mr.

Boopathi said the university and its 11 constituent colleges in Coimbatore, Madurai, Tiruchi, Killikulam, Periyakulam, Kumular, Nagapattinam and Mettupalayam would follow the single window system for admission. "There are six basic courses and seven technology courses. The fee for the basic courses is Rs.7,310 a semester and for the self-supporting courses it is around Rs.33,000."

The B.Sc. Agriculture programme would be offered at Coimbatore, Madurai, Killikulam, Tiruchi, and Nagapattinam campuses. B.Sc. Horticulture would be offered at Periyakulam, B.Sc. Forestry at Mettupalayam, B.Sc. Home Science at Madurai, while B.Tech. in Agricultural Engineering would be offered at Kumular. The new B.Sc. Sericulture would be offered at the Agricultural College and Research Institute, Coimbatore. These were the basic courses.

The agriculture course was also offered in the five affiliated colleges of the university at Karaikal, Kalavai, Perambalur, Pollachi, and Theni.

The B.Tech. programmes in Horticulture, Food Processing, Energy and Environmental Engineering, Biotechnology, Bioinformatics, and Agricultural Information Technology, and B.S. in Agribusiness Management, would be offered in Coimbatore. These were the self-supporting courses.

The eligibility was Plus-Two with four science subjects, viz., physics, chemistry, mathematics and botany/zoology. The electives could be one of the following: computer science, microbiology, biochemistry, biotechnology or home science.

Reservation

Five seats were available under the Non-Resident Indians and industrial sponsorship quota for all the programmes.

Five per cent of seats are reserved for candidates from the vocational stream and they would not be considered under general category.

Reservation for ex-servicemen wards, differently-abled, dependents of freedom fighters and sports personnel are also available.

Applications could be obtained from the Dean (Agriculture), and Chairman Admissions, TNAU, or from any of the constituent colleges. The cost of applications is Rs.600 for general candidates and Rs.300 for SC/ST candidates. They can also be downloaded from the university website www.tnau.ac.in.

Referring to the modified infrastructure in the university, Mr. Boopathi said it had incorporated the modern learning environment with the introduction of personal laptops, ICT-enabled lecture halls, Wi-Fi connectivity, e-learning, online examinations, etc.

As regards the Horticultural University to come up in the State, the Vice-Chancellor said once an announcement was made after the Assembly elections, admissions to courses would be finalised. For details regarding admissions contact 0422-6611210 / 6611322 / 6611328.

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Mango lovers, beware of hazardous chemicals

S.Annamalai

— File Photo



Deceptive:Artificially ripened mangoes seized by officials in Madurai.

MADURAI: Next time, when you walk into a market to buy your favourite mangoes, double check for extraordinary sheen and black spots. If the fruit looks very ordinary, go for it. Because the sheen is always deceptive as it is acquired through artificial means. This is an

equivalent of fast food.

The drive undertaken jointly by civic, health and civil supplies authorities in fruit markets across the southern districts in the last few days has created awareness among the public of the harm in consuming artificially ripened mangoes.

Ripening of mangoes using calcium carbide has gained wide acceptance among traders in recent years.

Against traditional methods of ripening, which are time consuming, traders find it easier to ripen mangoes as they are shifted from the groves or stored in godowns. It takes about 12 hours for mangoes to ripen this way. Traders blame the public for this phenomenon, which is harmful to health.

“People now start asking for mangoes from February itself. Usually, good mangoes arrive in the market by the end of May. Since there is a need to cash in on the demand, we buy sub-standard fruits and ripen them using calcium carbide,” says a wholesale trader on East Masi Street here. A wholesale trader of ‘Sappattai’ variety in Rajapalayam says that he waited for more than a month to open shop as he did not want to hurry up by using chemicals to ripen the fruits. Most of the traders are aware of the ill-effects of using calcium carbide.

A trader says that very small quantity of the chemical is placed alongside mangoes in crates, without direct contact. The moisture in the atmosphere reacts with calcium carbide to produce acetylene gas. This heats up the atmosphere, resulting in ripening of mangoes.

One can feel the heat inside a godown, a result of calcium carbide, even during midday. The difference, though not clearly visible to ordinary people, could be spotted by the sheen of the fruit, according to P. Senthilvel, a wholesale fruit trader. Fruits that are a couple of days old develop black spots. The idea behind artificial ripening is to deliver the fruit to consumers as early as possible, he explains.

The disadvantage for the retail vendor is that he is not able to say for sure that the fruits he sells are ripened the natural way.

He is also not in a position to grade them.

Some industrial varieties of calcium carbide are known to contain traces of arsenic and phosphorous.

Acetylene gas has the potential to affect the nervous system, causing headache, dizziness and mood disturbance.

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'Horticulture sector developing rapidly'

Special Correspondent

Photo: M. Sathyamoorthy



Focus on growth:The Deputy Director General (Horticulture), H.P. Singh, inaugurating a meeting on onion and garlic in Udthagamandalam on Friday.

Udthagamandalam: A two-day group meeting of the All India Network Research Project on Onion and Garlic organised by the Tamil Nadu Agricultural University and the Directorate of Onion and Garlic Research (DOGR), Pune, got underway here on Friday.

Objective

With the objective of the scheme being collection of germplasm types and development of high yielding varieties apart from formulation of production and protection technologies, the meeting in which delegates from various parts of the country participated was to take stock of the progress made during the last fiscal.

Inaugurating the meeting, the Deputy Director General (Horticulture), H.P. Singh, said that the horticulture sector in India was growing very fast.

Pointing out that the growth was faster than in China, he said that its contribution to the GDP was significant.

Urging scientists to evolve ways to meet the domestic requirements and export demands of crops like onion and garlic, he said that they should help the country avoid imports and facilitate new technologies.

Climate change

Developments like climate change should be converted into opportunities, which would pave the way for raising production and productivity. Changes should be used profitably and research should not be confined to boundaries.

Stating that scientists should change their mindset, he said that experiments should not be location- specific. Intensive trials should be carried out. They should ensure that the basic data provided to the farmers was accurate.

The Registrar, TNAU, P. Subbian, who presided over the meeting, said that the total annual production of horticulture crops in India was 149 million tonnes.

Area

Pointing out that India ranked second, next to China, in onion and garlic production, he said that over the last 10 years area under onion has increased from 3.8 lakh hectares to 8 lakh hectares and the production from 40 lakh tonnes to 130 lakh tonnes.

During the same period, area under garlic had also increased from 1.0 to 1.4 lakh hectares and production from 4 to 5 lakh tonnes.

A variety of garlic called Ooty 1, which was released by the TNAU was popular among the farmers of the Nilgiris district.

Consumption

Underscoring the need to increase productivity in onion and garlic, he said that their consumption is predicted to increase by 25 per cent in another 10 years.

Scientists should adopt biotechnological approaches in breeding.

The Director, DOGR, K.E. Lawande, said that research should be need-based.

The Dean (Horticulture), TNAU, N. Kumar, welcomed the gathering. L. Pugazhendhi, Head, Department of Vegetable Crops, TNAU, proposed a vote of thanks.

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Farmers urged to take to cattle breeding

Staff Reporter

ONGOLE: The Government Cattle Breeding Farm at Chadalwada in Prakasam district has produced superior Ongole male calves in an effort to kindle interest in farmers to take to cattle breeding, a highly profitable venture.

“A farmer can get the male calf at a price ranging from Rs. 2,000 to Rs. 20,000 from the farm at the time of auctioning and sell after rearing for two to three years an Ongole bull for Rs. 75,000 to Rs. 1 lakh each, Cattle Breeding Farm Assistant Director P.V. Subbaiah said while talking to The Hindu on Friday.

“We have produced over 60 high quality young male calves through artificial insemination of semen collected from high quality bulls, on elite cows maintained in our farm and kept ready for auctioning,” he said.

“We want farmers, particularly small farmers to benefit by the breeding programme,” he said, adding that a superior Ongole male calf had fetched a premium price of Rs. 22,500 during auctioning last year.

“A committee of scientists is being constituted to decide on the male calves to be offered to farmers by way of auctioning in late May or early June this year,” he said.

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Price of Bt cotton seeds increased by 24 per cent

Special Correspondent

Bt-II variety will cost Rs. 930 a packet and Bt-I Rs. 830 High input costs cited as the reason for the increased price

Bangalore: Bt cotton seeds will now cost more to cotton growers in the State as the Government has permitted increasing its price by 24 to 27 per cent for the upcoming cotton sowing season (kharif 2011 season).

The Government has allowed the seed manufacturing companies to raise the price of Bt cotton seed by Rs. 180 per 450 gram each for Bt-I and Bt-II. About 250 gram seeds is sufficient to raise the crop on a hectare.

Bt-I cotton seeds provide protection from American Bollworm attack, while Bt-II variety prevents attack of both bollworm and tobacco caterpillar.

The price of Bt-II variety has been increased from Rs. 750 per packet of 450 gm to Rs. 930 a packet. Similarly, rate of Bt-I variety has been raised from Rs. 650 a packet to Rs. 830 for the new season, a senior official of Agriculture Department told The Hindu here on Friday.

“We have been forced to increase the price of Bt cotton seeds as many States in north India have already done the same,” the official said.

Minister for Agriculture Umesh V. Katti defended the price hike, which was recommended by an expert committee comprising Vice-Chancellors of Agriculture and Horticulture universities.

The companies which manufacture and supply Bt cotton seeds had sought permission from the State Government for increasing the prices of seeds.

The State Government had constituted a committee of experts to look into the issue and based on the recommendations of the committee it granted sanction to increase the prices.

Representatives of farmers were not involved in the price fixation committee, he said.

High input costs, including labour, raw materials, power and other factors have been cited as the reasons for the increased price. The companies have agreed to print the MRP price of Rs. 930 and Rs. 830 on each packet of seeds to avoid exploitation by traders, Mr Katti said.

Supply

On the issue of farmers' agitation opposing short supply of Bt cotton seeds in Mysore, a few days ago, the Minister said the Government had made arrangements to ensure availability of seeds in both Mysore and Chamarajanagar.

Attributing the shortage of seeds which forced the farmers to come to streets to early showers, the Minister said that the department had supplied over 80,000 packets of Bt cotton seeds against the demand for 1,25,000 in both districts.

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Use technology to improve low milk yields, says NDDB official

Special Correspondent

'Rising cost of fodder is a major problem'

— Photo: Sampath Kumar G.P.



B.N. B. N. Belawadi, Executive Director, NDDB (second from right), at a seminar in Bangalore on Friday.

Bangalore: The Executive Director of the National Dairy Development Board (NDDB), B.N. Belawadi, has urged dairy technologists to develop solutions to the problem of low milk yields.

Delivering the keynote address at a two-day national seminar on 'Emerging Technologies in the Dairy Industry' here on Friday, Dr. Belawadi said that the rising cost of fodder posed a threat to the competitiveness of the Indian dairy industry.

"In some parts of the country, fodder is priced at about Rs. 10 a kg, which makes dairy unviable, especially for small producers," Dr. Belawadi said. He suggested that densification or pelletisation of fodder could help in reducing transport cost.

"Although the dairy sector has made rapid strides in the last four decades, especially after Operation Flood, we have only achieved mixed success, not commendable success," Dr. Belawadi said. "There are cracks visible in the structure of dairy cooperatives," he remarked. "Women in most cooperatives are still sidelined," he observed.

Many of the milk cooperatives in the country still "lack transparency", Dr. Belawadi said. He suggested that IT-enabled solutions, such as those that ensure "direct payments to farmers", can make cooperatives more accountable to milk producers. Building databases of cooperatives and putting them online can also benefit participants, he added. Wider deployment of smart tags on cattle can help in monitoring the efficacy of animal husbandry programmes, he said.

Dr. Belawadi pointed out that Indian dairying is still largely built on the effort of small producers. Most of the 70 million producers in the country produce on average about 6-8 litres of milk per day.

Observing that about 70 per cent of the tasks are performed by family labour, he said rapid urbanisation is causing youth to move out of the dairy industry.

R.M. Vasagam, former Vice-Chancellor, Anna University, said Operation Flood had “completely transformed the manner in which India produces milk”.

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MSP for tomato, onion, potato announced

Special Correspondent



Helping farmers: The minimum support price for tomato has been fixed at Rs. 225 a quintal, onion Rs. 500, potato Rs. 550 and chilli (green) Rs. 315.

Bangalore: In order to ensure remunerative prices for farmers, the State Government has fixed the Minimum Support Price (MSP) for tomato, onion, potato and chilly (green).

Minister for Agriculture Umesh Katti told presspersons here on Friday that price of tomato has been fixed at Rs. 225 a quintal, onion Rs. 500, potato Rs. 550 and chilli (green) at Rs. 315 a quintal. The Government would intervene if the prices of farm vegetables crash below the MSP, he said.

An expert committee constituted to recommend the MSP for 12 crops, including maize, paddy, bajra and others, had finalised the report and prices would be announced soon, he said.

The department had received over 12 lakh applications for financial assistance under 'Suvarna Bhoomi' scheme in which each farmer would get Rs. 10,000 in two instalments.

A total of 5,000 farmers would be selected in each taluk and a lottery system would be adopted if more number of farmers submit applications, he said.

Appealing to farmers to concentrate on preparing their lands for the coming kharrif season, he assured of adequate supply of seeds, fertilizers and pesticides to meet their requirements. The Minister said the State Government had invested over Rs. 500 crore to get five lakh tonnes of fertilizers to meet the immediate requirements of farmers. Sowing operations commenced in several districts on account of pre-monsoon showers.

Legislature session

Mr. Katti the next session of both the Houses of the State Legislature would be held in July in the newly constructed "Suvarna Soudha" in Belgaum. Mr Katti, said that the ongoing work of the building would be completed soon.

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Cotton farmers stage protest

ADILABAD: Cotton farmers staged a protest at the local agriculture market yard on Friday following a drastic decrease in price of the produce.

About hundred farmers who brought their produce to the market found to their consternation the price being pegged at Rs. 4,000 per quintal in the open quotation made by private purchasers

This was almost Rs. 700 below the price quoted on the previous day. Angered over the development, they accosted market committee staff and demanded enhancement of the day's rate. The officials summoned private traders for a meeting which ended in the price being increased by Rs. 200 per quintal.

Low prices hit sugarcane farmers

A Correspondent

Farmers cite lack of procurement agencies Efforts to popularise Marayur jaggery sought

KATTAPPANA: The sugarcane farmers of Marayur are facing a crisis with low prices for jaggery and severe shortage of labourers.

Jaggery production is a round-the-year work in Marayur as sugarcane is harvested throughout the year.

At present, the price per kilogram of jaggery is Rs.30 and farmers say that it will be remunerative if they get at least Rs.45 a kg. Though the price per kg had gone up to Rs.55 earlier, the farmers say that they did not received the benefits. The lack of a procurement agencies force the farmers to sell the product to middlemen who decide the market prices.

G. Murugesan, a sugarcane farmer, says that even though the prices in the open market have increased, the farmers are not getting its benefits.

Marketing efforts

One reason for this is the influx of low-quality jaggery from Tamil Nadu. Though Marayur jaggery is famous for its quality, the consumers usually prefer low-quality jaggery from Tamil Nadu, he says. There should be some genuine efforts to market and popularise Marayur jaggery among consumers, Mr. Murugesan says.

Jose Thomas, another farmer, says that the shortage of labourers and scarcity of water are forcing farmers to leave sugarcane cultivation. Farmers either leave the fields barren or cultivate crops like areca, coconut or plantain.

Crop loss

Decay diseases that affect sugarcane, crop loss and increased use of pesticides have increased the cost of production, he said.

The area under sugarcane cultivation has fallen from nearly 2,600 acres to 1,000 acres. Last year, a team of scientists and agriculture experts collected data on the diseases affecting. However, there was no follow up action, he says. Genuine efforts to protect farmers are required to prevent further fall in the area under sugarcane cultivation.

Adulteration

Traders who mix low-quality, adulterated jaggery from Tamil Nadu with Marayur jaggery are also responsible for the fall in popularity of Marayur jaggery, he says.

Shortage of labour is affecting the crusher units where mostly workers from Tamil Nadu are employed. The local workers preference for MGNREGA work has also led to shortage of farm workers.

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THE HINDU Business Line

India agrees to ban endosulfan, wrests sops

Gets 11 years to phase out chemical; consensus at Geneva meet



Chennai, April 29:

India has agreed to a ban on endosulfan, a chemical that is used widely in the country as an insecticide.

In a surprising softening of stance, India, however, has wrested time for phasing out the chemical from the country. Until Thursday, India was among the nations that had been opposing a ban on endosulfan.

At a 5-day key meeting of an United Nations Environment Programme body in Geneva, a consensus was arrived at in listing endosulfan in Annex A. Under the Stockholm Convention, in which 172 countries are members, listing in Annex A means the chemical is considered to be persistent organic pollutant (POP). When a chemical is listed as POP, signatories of the Convention will have to ban it.

India has listed 15 crops for exemption and sought 11 years to phase out the controversial chemical. The time has been sought to also find an alternative to endosulfan to control pests in plants.

Not just that, India has also obtained an assurance from the convention for getting technical and financial assistance for implementing the consensus.

According to Mr R. Hariharan, Chairman of International Stewardship Centre, all of India's concerns have been addressed and accommodated at the meeting that ended Friday. Mr Hariharan was in Geneva as a neutral observer.

Along with India, other developing nations such as Indonesia have agreed to the ban. Japan and China, which supported India in initially seeking deferment of the ban, too, are also party to the consensus.

A lot of heat and dust was raised before the Geneva meet, especially in India, where the Kerala Chief Minister, Mr V.S. Achuthanandan, went on a fast on Monday demanding a ban on endosulfan across the country.

Kerala and Karnataka have already banned use of endosulfan.

On Friday, the Left Front in Kerala observed a bandh demanding country-wide ban on the chemical. The demand has found support from the BJP, the principal opposition party in Parliament.

Already 27 European Union countries and 21 African nations have banned endosulfan.

India had till now contended that the ban has been imposed by these nations due to trade compulsions.

The country's share in the global endosulfan market is over 70 per cent. Annual production in the country is 12 million litres, valued at Rs 4,500 crore. It also exports the chemical valued at Rs 180 crore.

The Indian industry is also against the ban. Its contention is that endosulfan is soft on pollinators such as honeybees and beneficial pests such as ladybird beetle while killing harmful ones.

India had also contended that the recommendation to ban endosulfan at a meeting in Geneva in October 2010 lacked scientific data. Then, the recommendation was made with a consensus, India argued.

India opposed a ban on endosulfan in view of gaps in scientific data for blacklisting the chemical. Besides India, China and Argentina also opposed such a move.

The Indian pesticide industry says that Europe is inspiring the ban as companies in the continent have decided to stop marketing the compound. For over 55 years, European firms marketed endosulfan and no problem was found then.

On the other hand, those seeking ban pointed out to the harm caused to people in Kerala and Karnataka. People were reported to have been affected by aerial spraying of endosulfan in cashew plantations.

Welcoming India's shift in stance, the Centre for Science and Environment said the Centre should expedite steps for phasing out the chemical.

All eyes on India at global pulses convention

Barcelona (Spain), April 29:

At the global pulses convention here, all attention is on India. Why not? After all, it is the world's largest producer, importer and consumer of pulses and has been in the import market for nearly 30 years. Many exporting countries are substantially dependent on India as a major outlet for marketing their produce.

No wonder, if India sneezes, the world pulses market catches cold. Unfortunately for some supplier countries, India started to sneeze a few months ago which has made many exporters shiver.

Import volumes into India have begun to slow; and one can well imagine what impact it will exert on international prices when the world's largest importer starts to import less, contrary to expectation.

India's domestic pulses output has expanded substantially in 2010-11. The incremental output has been unprecedented in the annuals of the country's agriculture. From 14.7 million tonnes in 2009-10, pulses production expanded to a record 17.3 mt in 2010-11, perhaps for the first time exceeding the annual target of 16.5 mt by a good margin.

Pulses prices that had reached unconscionable levels – Rs 100 a kg – this time last year, have eased considerably under the weight of domestic harvest. Prices have corrected down by 25-40 per cent.

In recent weeks, world prices have begun to decline in the wake of bumper Indian harvest and slowdown in import volumes.

The global pulses convention organised by International Pulses Trade and Industry Confederation has a record number of delegates (over 700 from 60 countries, including about 100 from different parts of India) assembled here. They are keen to know how Indian market would pan out in the coming months. Will India harvest a bumper crop again? Weather is of course an unknown factor.

Global pulses production is an estimated 60 mt and trade is worth \$100 billion.

Lankan tea falls on quality issues

Colombo, April 29:

The last auction in April saw tea prices decline all around even as 8.1 m/kg went under the hammer. Lower quality and higher volumes were among the reasons, brokers said. Ex-estate offerings totalled about 1.6 m/kg and low grown, 3.6 m/kg in leafy/tippy catalogues. "A greater availability of this week's offerings comprised plainer quality which created further downward pressure on the process for teas in this category," said Forbes and Walker Tea Brokers. Nuwara Eliyas too declined. CTCs sold better even though these too lost LKR 10-30 a kg compared with last week. In tippy catalogues, a select range of FBOP/FF1s were firm to irregularly dearer, but others declined by LKR 10-15 a kg. Better pekoes sold firm to dearer. There was good demand from CIS, Turkey, Dubai, Iran, Kuwait and Saudi Arabia.

Kenya tops tea exporters list

Coonoor, April 29:

Kenya continued to be the world's largest tea exporter in 2010, reveals an analysis of the latest data available with the Tea Board.

In black tea exports, Kenya has been outstripping Sri Lanka since 2007.

In 2010, the world tea exports rose to 1,733.27 million kg (mkg) from 1,582.95 mkg in 2009. This is the highest amount of export in the last five years.

Kenya topped at 441.01 mkg (compared to 342.48 mkg in 2009). China's exports totalled 302.42 mkg, marginally down from 302.95 mkg in the previous year. But green tea constitutes most of China's exports.

Sri Lanka exported 298.59 mkg significantly up from 279.84 mkg in 2009. It is close to the export figure it reached in 2008, that of 298.82 mkg. For the third consecutive year, India's exports showed a declining trend. In 2010, India exported 193.29 mkg against 197.90 mkg in 2009 and 203.12 mkg in 2008.

Onion prices ruled firm in Maharashtra and Gujarat markets, the major growing States, on lower arrivals and export demand.

The modal price or rates at which most trades took place ruled at Rs 500 a quintal at the Pune Agricultural Produce Marketing Committee yard. Compared with last week, prices were up Rs 10. In markets such as Lasalgaon, Pimpalgaon and Umrane, prices ruled between Rs 550 and Rs 600 a quintal.

“Prices have increased marginally as growers are holding back their produce,” said Mr Rupesh Jaju, Director of Nashik-based United Pacific Agro Pvt Ltd. The holding back of produce has seen arrivals in markets drop, compared with volumes seen a month ago.

On Thursday, Pune received 1,300 tonnes, while in Mumbai arrivals were 1,265 tonnes. “Nashik and Lasalgaon, together, saw arrivals of 800 tonnes and in Umrane arrivals were 600 tonnes,” said Mr Jaju.

Two weeks ago, arrivals in each market exceeded 1,500 tonnes.

Export demand

Domestic demand for onion continues and it is a reason why prices are ruling firm. “Export demand, too, continues to be good. Shipments are going to countries in Europe, West Asia and Far-East Asia,” Mr Jaju said.

Indian onions are the most competitive in the global market after the Government reduced the minimum export price to \$175 a tonne. The Centre had banned onion exports in December when prices soared to around Rs 100 a kg at retail outlets.

The ban, however, was relaxed in February with the Centre fixing a minimum export price. Initially, it was fixed at \$600 but four revisions in March saw the floor price drop to \$175. “Prices are expected to be rule stable with a bias towards the upper side,” said Mr Jaju.

Cotton drops with mills staying away



Cotton prices dropped Rs 4,000-5,000 for a candy of 356 kg this week with buyers, particularly mills, keeping off the market. They are keeping away after the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs did not take any decision on allowing export of cotton on Thursday.

Gujarat Sankar-6 was traded Rs 40,000-50,000 a candy, based on quality. Price of Kalyan cotton dropped to Rs 31,000-32,000 from Rs 40,000-41,000. Raw cotton was traded at Rs 1,100-1,140 for a *maund* of 20 kg. About 15,000 bales arrived in Gujarat and 50,000 all over the country.

A Rajkot-based cotton broker said: “There are no demand of any kind for cotton. Price will fall further in the coming days. Market will see some change in fortunes only when mills buy to buy.”

At the beginning of the week, lint cotton ruled at around Rs 55,000. Raw cotton has plunged about Rs 150 a *maund* this week.

According to market sources, mills are having stocks for a month. Emergence of fresh demand is unlikely now.

The acreage under cotton crop next season sowing for which will begin next month is expected to increase 7-10 per cent following high prices and expectations of higher minimum support price from the government.

Pulses rule sluggish on weak purchases



Indore, April 29:

Pulses continued to rule sluggish in Indore mandis on weak buying interest. Besides tight payment schedule and rise in inventories are also stated to be the reasons.

Local mandis on Friday witnessed improved demand in chana from the millers. Chana (kanta) increased to Rs 2,300-2,310 a quintal in the morning but fell to Rs 2,290-2,300 as demand declined at the higher rate. Chana (desi), on the other hand, was quoted at Rs 2,250-2,260, while chana (mausmi) was quoted at Rs 2,400 a quintal.

Chana dal (bold) quoted steady at Rs 2,925-2,950 a quintal, chana dal (medium) quoted at Rs 2,800-2,825, while chana dal (average) quoted at Rs 2,700-2,725 a quintal.

Sluggish demand dragged masur (bold) Rs 25 to Rs 3,000, while masur (masra) quoted at Rs 3,010 and masur (medium) at Rs 2,700. Masur dal (bold) in the spot quoted at Rs 3,625-3,650 a quintal, masur dal (medium) at Rs 3,525-3,250 and masur dal (average) at Rs 3,400-3,425 a quintal.

Downtrend continued in tur with rise in selling pressure in tur and its dal in Maharashtra. Tur (Maharashtra) quoted Rs 50 down at Rs 3,200, while tur (red) and tur (Nimari) at Rs Rs 2,900-3,000, respectively. Tur dal ruled firm with tur (marka) quoting at Rs 6,100-Rs 6,200, tur dal (full) at Rs 5,400-5,500.

With limited queries, urad and its dal ruled firm. Urad (bold) in the spot was quoted at Rs 3,900-4,000, while urad (medium) quoted at Rs 3,500-3,700.

Similarly, urad mongar quoted at Rs 6,600- 6,900, urad dal (bold) at Rs 5,700 and urad dal (chilka) at Rs 4,600-4,650 a quintal. Dollar chana ruled steady at Rs 5,600-5,700 a quintal.

Sugar surges on lower free sale quota for May



Mumbai, April 29:

Sugar market appears to be in the grip of a bull run with spot sugar prices on the Vashi wholesale market shooting up Rs 25-30 a quintal on Friday. The announcement of the free sale quota for May including extension of 15 days for unsold quotas this month and the continued uptrend in sugar futures played a role in the sentiment turning positive in the spot market. Naka and Mill tender rates increased by Rs 30-35 a quintal.

According to traders, the free sale quota for May seems to be less for a month during which summer is likely to be harsh. Mills are selling at their own sweet will, forcing desperate traders to offer higher price. Arrivals, dispatches and volume increased marginally. Sugar futures price rose Rs 30 further on Friday taking the total rise in the last three days to Rs 70-75.

Mr. Jagdish Rawal, joint Secretary of the Bombay Sugar Merchants Association, told *Business Line* that the spot market tracked rise in sugar futures and announcement of sugar quota.

A wholesaler said that the price rise in last two days is because mills have started selling for delivery in forward, like May 5 and 10.

With the extension given to last month's balance unsold quota, mills have increased their rates. In other producing centres also, prices shot up sharply, supporting the positive sentiment.

Consumer demand is expected to rise further in May. According to traders, about 28-30 mills offered tenders and sold about 70,000-75,000 bags (100 kgs each) to local stockists in the range of Rs 2,630-2,675 for S-grade and Rs 2,700-2780 for M-grade. Mill tender rates are expected to rise further by Rs 10-15.

Arrivals in the market were 54 -55 truckloads (each 100 bags) and local dispatches were 50-52 truckloads.

: Spot: S-grade Rs 2,752 -2,800 (Rs 2,741-2,771) and M-grade Rs 2,801-2,896 (Rs 2,741-2,891).

Naka delivery rates: S-grade Rs 2,730-2,770 (Rs 2,710-2,735) and M-grade Rs 2,780-2,830 (Rs 2,735-2,795).

Heavy arrivals sink turmeric



Erode, April 29:

Spot turmeric prices dropped by Rs 150-200 a quintal on Friday as arrivals flooded markets in Erode.

“Due to heavy arrival, of more than eighteen thousand bags and limited demand, the price of the commodity has decreased by Rs 150 to Rs 200 a quintal. Though the price for Salem crop also dipped by Rs 230, the demand for the Salem crop remains good and all the 400-odd bags of the finger variety of Salem crop were sold,” said Mr R.K.V. Ravishankar, President, Erode Turmeric merchants Association, on Friday.

The Salem crop, with a higher curcumin content and high export orders, arrived in limited quantities at the Erode market. Friday's consignments were sold out immediately as bulk buyers quoted higher price.

He said that in the auction places, the buyers showed good interest in the Salem crop.

Farmers said that within four months, the turmeric price has dropped by Rs 7,000-8,000 a quintal. The crop was sold at Rs 17,000 a quintal in December and now it is selling at around Rs 9,700 a quintal. If the crop fetches Rs 9,000-10,000, they will not get profit as the cost of the production has increased to Rs 10,000 a quintal. At the Erode Turmeric Merchants Association sales yard, the finger variety was sold at Rs 7,369-9,589 a quintal and the root variety Rs 7,196-8,899.

Salem Crop: The finger variety fetched Rs 10,239-11,089, the root variety Rs 9,016-9,589. At the Erode Cooperative Marketing Society, the finger variety was sold at Rs 8,600-9,659 and the root variety Rs 8,319-9,089. At the Regulated Marketing Committee, the finger variety was sold at Rs 9,246-9,659. The root variety was quoted at Rs 8,899-9,199. .

Mixed trend in desi wheat varieties



Karnal, April 29:

The wheat market continued to witness a steady trend and prices continued to rule as they had since Monday. With demand and supply being balanced, there was no change at all in prices, said Mr Subhash Chander, a wheat trader.

Arrivals of new wheat are sluggish and out of total arrivals, around 50 per cent were from Uttar Pradesh, he added.

Only around 150 tonnes wheat arrived and ruled at Rs 1,170 a quintal, which is the minimum support price of Rs 1,120 and a bonus of Rs 50. Mill delivery of the old wheat was at Rs 1,200-1,210 a quintal, while it traded at Rs 1,220-1,225 at retail markets.

More-than 5,45,173 lakh tonnes wheat have arrived at the Karnal grain market terminal till Wednesday.

On the other hand, *desi* wheat varieties witnessed a mixed trend; some buying lifted the prices of Nokia and Dabang varieties, while Tohfa variety dropped marginally.

Around 140 tonnes of different varieties of desi wheat arrived from Madhya Pradesh. Tohfa variety dropped by Rs 30 and ruled at Rs 2,200 a quintal, Bhojan King was quoted at Rs 2,200, Dabang rose by 100 a quintal and ruled at Rs 2,100, Parivar was at Rs 2,050, Lal Quila at Rs 2,050 while the Nokia variety rose by Rs 60 and traded at 2,100 a quintal.