THE HINDU

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COIMBATORE, August 23, 2011

Foodxplore'11 at TNAU in October

The annual event of Tamil Nadu Agricultural University, ‘Foodxplore' 11' will be held on October 14 and 15, to commemorate the World Food Day on October 16.

Theme

The events will be based on the theme of this year – Food Prices: From Crisis to Stability.

A national seminar on “Emerging Technologies in Food Processing for Ensuring Food Safety and Quality” will be conducted. The topics of focus will be engineering approaches for sustaining production, advances in food processing, and food safety and quality. An exhibition will also be held.

Faculty, research scholars, postgraduate and undergraduate students of State Agricultural Universities, Indian Council of Agricultural Research institutes, and colleges, interested in food processing, and those from the related industry, can participate.

Those interested in presenting papers can send in the abstracts by August 31.

Details

For details and registration, contact S. Santhana Bosu, Convenor, Foodxplore'11, or R. Visvanathan, Head, Department of Food and Agricultural Process

Engineering, TNAU, on 0422-6611272 / 6611282; or e-mail to foodxplore2011@gmail.com / processing@tnau.ac.in.

Published: August 23, 2011 00:00 IST | Updated: August 23, 2011 04:09 IST

THRISSUR, August 23, 2011

Training to tap opportunities in coconut-tree climbing

Scaling heights: M.P. Vincent, MLA, presents a coconut tree climbing machine to a youth in Thrissur on Monday.

As many as 5,000 youths will be trained in coconut-tree climbing under a programme conducted by the Coconut Development Board (CDB) and the Kerala Agricultural University (KAU).

First phase over

The first phase of the programme, launched on August 17 in Thiruvananthapuram, Kollam, Alappuzha, Ernakulam, Thrissur, Palakkad, Kozhikode, Kannur and Kasargod, concluded on Monday. Twenty youths in each district were trained in this phase in the Krishi Vigyan Kendras.

The training programme will be launched in Malappuram after Ramzan.

The programme, implemented under the banner of ‘Friends of Coconut,' envisages training 500 youths each in 10 districts.

“With the State having over 15 crore coconut trees, at least 30,000 workers are required for coconut-tree climbing. The CDB is trying to attract youth to the job. People complain about unemployment problem, but fail to see the job opportunities in the farming sector,” said T.K. Jose, chairman of CDB.

Harvesting

Under the programme, youth are being trained in coconut-climbing techniques; harvesting operations; pest-control measures; pollination, hybridisation and plant-protection methods; and identification of tender, mature and seed nuts.

Experts in coconut-tree climbing and scientists with KAU are imparting the training.

M.P. Vincent, MLA, inducted the trainees into the group, ‘Friends of Coconut, at a function at KAU on Monday.

Scientists Joy Mathew, Koshy Abraham, Jim Thomas, Sasi Kumar and farmers Sathi Chandra Gupthan, Haseena Sulaiman and P.G. Jayachandran were present on the occasion.

Published: August 23, 2011 00:00 IST | Updated: August 23, 2011 04:06 IST
DINDIGUL, August 23, 2011

Plan to distribute 80,000 saplings to farmers

Forest Department to foot expenditure of digging pits

The Department of Forests has plans to distribute 80,000 saplings to farmers this year under tree planting in private lands scheme as part of the afforestation

programme with an aim of increasing green cover on earth, according to forest officials.

These saplings will be given to farmers for planting in their farms.

The Forest Department will foot the expenses of digging pits and other input costs for planting these saplings.

Teak, neem, silk cotton, anona, mahagani and kumizh tree saplings will be given to farmers to be grown in their farms.

Some trees have excellent timber value and produces from other trees will fetch them good profit.

After a certain period, farmers will get regular income through this scheme, forest officials said.

Already, sufficient saplings were kept ready for distribution in the forest extension centres in Dindigul and Musuvanuthu village in Nilakottai.

Identification of beneficiaries for this scheme was on. Distribution of saplings will begin only after identifying beneficiaries.

The Forest Department will extend all assistance to farmers in planting and maintaining these saplings.

After three years, the forest officials will inspect the farms of beneficiaries and select best farms.

Awards

They will also offer awards to beneficiaries who have successfully implemented the programme, maintained the farm well and grown trees properly, they added.

The main objective of the scheme was not only to increase the green cover but also to enhance income of farmers and create sustainable income generation activities.

It will also develop semi-arid lands and rain-fed areas of the district as cultivable ones.

This scheme has been implemented in the district for the past three years, forest officials pointed out.

Published: August 23, 2011 00:00 IST | Updated: August 23, 2011 04:10 IST
CHENNAI, August 23, 2011

Ceiling for pledge loan to farmers raised

The ceiling for pledge loan released to the farmers against agricultural produce has been increased from Rs 2 lakh to Rs 3 lakh, Co-operatives Minister Sellur K. Raja told the Assembly on Monday.

Replying to a debate on the demands for grants for his department, the Minister said primary agricultural co-operative societies would give pledge-loans to the tune of Rs 100 crore while another Rs 85 crore would be released through Tamil Nadu agricultural producers co-operative marketing societies for 2011-12. He said primary agricultural co-operative credit societies and primary co-operative agriculture and rural development banks would release Rs 300 crore as capital loans to the farmers. Besides, Rs 50 crore would be given for minor irrigation projects.

The minister said the government would give loans to differently-abled persons to the tune of Rs 15 crore through 23 central co-operative banks to improve their economic conditions.

The government has also decided to set up solar drying units for copra in nine primary agriculture co-operative societies and 13 agricultural producers co-operative marketing societies at a cost of Rs 1.29 crore. Another proposal was to open pharmacies in 100 taluk headquarters.

Earlier, the minister alleged that during the DMK rule between 2006 and 2011 the ruling party men swindled around Rs 100 crore through various irregularities in the co-operative societies and banks. “In Villupuram district alone Rs 6.41 crore has been swindled,” he said.

Mr Raju said “fake jewellery loan” in the central co-operative banks in Kancheepuram, Thanjavur, Thoothukudi, and Tirunelveli had caused a loss of Rs 1.23 crore.

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SALEM, August 23, 2011

Food companies have responsibility to provide consumers with safe food: VC

Periyar University Vice Chancellor K. Muthuchelian addressing the participants at a workshop in Salem on Monday. — Photo: P. Goutham

“All food companies, including the smallest manufacturers, have a responsibility to provide consumers with safe, wholesome foods. Safety is not an option but it is an essential part of the planning, preparation and production of foods. Any lack of consideration of safety can result in a serious threat to public health,” K. Muthuchelian, Vice-Chancellor, Periyar University, Salem, said

Inaugurating one-day workshop of University's Department of Food science on “HACCP (Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point) and Quality control issues in food industry,” here on Monday, the Vice-Chancellor stated that almost all countries in the world had laws governing the production, composition, labelling and safety of processed food and an agency that is responsible for their implementation.

R. Ganesh, Lead Auditor, Q-Net services, Consultancy and Training service providers, Chennai, spoke on HACCP and technique for preventing microbiological, chemical and physical contamination along the food supply chain. He said that the HACCP technique identifies the risks, establishing critical control points, setting critical limits, and ensuring control measures are validated, verified and monitored before implementation.

“The effective implementation of HACCP will enhance the ability of companies to protect and enhance brands and private labels, promote consumer confidence and conform to regulatory and market requirements,” he added.

S. Rajkumar, Lead Auditor, Q-Net services, Consultancy and Training service providers, Chennai, detailed on ISO certification for food industry. ISO, he said,

had developed over 18,500 International Standards on a variety of subjects and some 1100 new ISO standards were published every year.

“The online ISO Standards listing integrates both the ISO Catalogue of published standards and the ISO Technical programme of standards under development. Governments ensure compliance with the regulations by applying internationally accepted methods, which are specified in International Standards,” he said.

R. Jaganmohan, Senior Scientist and Head, Food Product Development Division, IICPT, Thanjavur, on the quality control measures in food industry said that to improve and control product quality it was essential to fully understand the meaning of the term quality. To meet the definition of quality, “achieving agreed customer expectations or specifications” and also to ensure that the product met these criteria on a routine basis, the manufacturer must put in a Quality Control System.

Anwar Ali, Senior Deputy Manager and Lead Auditor for HACCP, Food Management System, Hatsun Agro Product Ltd, Chennai spoke on personal hygiene and sanitation in food industry. “Good manufacturing practices (GMPs) contain both requirements and guidelines for manufacturing of food and drug products in a sanitary environment. GMP regulations are designed to control the risk of contaminating foods with filth, chemicals, microbes and other means during their manufacture.”

Faculty members P.Nazni, T.Poongodi Vijayakumar, R.Parimalavalli, S.Thilagavathi, research scholars, students and non-teaching staff members of the Department of Food Science, participated.

Published: August 23, 2011 00:00 IST | Updated: August 23, 2011 04:09 IST
TIRUCHI, August 23, 2011

Mettur level

The water level in the Mettur dam stood at 79.35 feet on Monday against its full level of 120 feet. The inflow was 9,581 cusecs and the discharge, 10,005 cusecs.

Published: August 23, 2011 00:00 IST | Updated: August 23, 2011 04:05 IST
DAVANGERE, August 23, 2011

Four held for bid to divert fertilizer

The police have arrested four persons on the charge of attempting to divert a consignment of fertilizer to Hubli, which was originally meant to be delivered to a cooperative society in Honnali. More than 300 bags of fertilizer and a lorry have been seized.

H.S. Venkatesh, Superintendent of Police, told presspersons here on Monday that the police, led by Assistant Superintendent of Police Anupam Agarawal, intercepted the vehicle on the outskirts of Harihar. Jayanna and Santhosh, secretary and a clerk at the cooperative society in Honnali respectively, had hatched a plan to divert the fertilizer to Hubli and sell it on the black market there, he said. Besides Jayanna and Santhosh, driver of the truck Basavaraja, and cleaner Khasim Sab, have been arrested.

Published: August 23, 2011 00:00 IST | Updated: August 23, 2011 04:09 IST
KATTAPPANA, August 23, 2011

Kumily targets self-sufficiency in vegetable cultivation

Panchayat to assist farming of vegetables in households

Kumily grama panchayat has launched a project aiming at achieving self-sufficiency in vegetable cultivation through farming in households.

Grama panchayat president Kunjumol Chacko said that vegetable seeds would be distributed free of cost in the 20 wards. She said that Rs. 7.5 lakh had been earmarked for the project and facilities to procure the vegetables and supply them through the open market would also be arranged.

Organic manure

The panchayat once produced the largest quantity of beans items in the State. She said that seeds of French beans of poles varieties would be supplied to the households in addition to the seeds of carrot, potato and tomatoes. Organic manure would also be supplied to the farmers.

Agriculture officer Prince Joseph said that the Kerala State Seed Development Authority would supply hybrid seeds to the farmers.

One of the reasons for farmers shifting away from vegetable cultivation was the lack of availability of quality seeds and it would be ensured that enough seeds are supplied on time for mass harvest during this December-January season, he said. Cool season vegetables are most suited to the topography and climatic conditions of the grama panchayat.

The project will begin in September. “It will not only generate additional income to the farmers, housewives also will be involved in the project," she said. The project titled ‘Complete vegetable development scheme' would help meet household needs, in addition to inculcating the habit of vegetable farming in the younger generation.

The panchayat, with the support of the forest department, had earlier launched a scheme among the tribals to involve them in vegetable cultivation. Vegetables produced by them are already being supplied in the open market. Though the vegetables produced were organic and of high quality, it could not be marketed effectively due to the small shape and poor colour.

Now with everyone involved in the projects and the grama panchayat itself taking the responsibility of procurement and supply through the panchayat open market, it is expected that quality vegetables could be supplied at a lower market rate, Ms. Chacko said.

- *Hybrid seeds to be supplied free of cost*
- *Vegetables to be procured and supplied by the grama panchayat*

Published: August 23, 2011 00:00 IST | Updated: August 23, 2011 04:07 IST
KOCHI, August 23, 2011

An initiative against global warming

Lions Club District 324 E4 is aiming at achieving a unique feat by planting two lakh saplings in six hours on August 25.

The initiative is to mark the visit of Lions Club International President Wing-Kun Tam to South India.

Addressing a press conference here recently, Lions district governor T.A. Varkey said that the planting of saplings would be organised in about 1,000 centres across Ernakulam, Idukki, and Alapuzha districts.

The initiative is part of a larger goal of planting 40 lakh saplings within six hours on the day in 30 Lions districts across South India under the Lions Green Revolution. Mr. Varkey said that the programme, to be taken up with the support of schoolchildren, would help in creating awareness among the public of global warming and the importance of environment conservation.

The main function of district 324 E4 will be held at Vytilla Mobility Hub at 10 a.m. Prominent social, political and cultural personalities and club office-bearers will lead the planting of saplings. Guidelines on organising the programme had already been given to all Lions clubs, Mr. Varkey said.

He said that unlike other similar initiatives in which saplings planted were neglected afterwards, Lions district's programme had been designed to ensure the proper protection of the saplings.

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hindustantimes
Tue,23 Aug 2011

Weather

Chennai - INDIA

Today's Weather

Tuesday, Aug 23

Cloudy

Max	Min
34.1°	22.5°

Rain: 00 mm in 24hrs
Humidity: 79%
Wind: Normal

Sunrise: 5:57
Sunset: 18:26
Barometer: 1005

Tomorrow's Forecast

Wednesday, Aug 24

Rainy

Max	Min
35°	27°

Extended Forecast for a week

Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday	Monday
Aug 25	Aug 26	Aug 27	Aug 28	Aug 29
30° | 27°	29° | 25°	30° | 26°	30° | 27°	31° | 26°
Rainy	Rainy	Rainy	Rainy	Rainy

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express buzz

By Lalit K Jha

22 Aug 2011 10:14:48 AM IST

Mangoes from India, Pakistan now compete in US

WASHINGTON: Three years after the king of fruits "alphanso" from India landed in the US to the delight of diehard mango lovers, the "chausa" variety from Pakistan has also made it here, bringing an element of competition between the two popular varieties in the huge American market.

Traders involved in the fruits' import concede that an element of competition has

been introduced between the mango varieties from the two countries, though both are facing the problem of high costs and are presently quite far away from the reach of the masses and are not readily available in Indian and Pakistani grocery stores in the US.

Jaidev Sharma, President of Mangozz.com, one of the largest importers of the fruit from India and Pakistan, says generally Indian mangoes have an edge over Pakistani fruit.

After the arrival of the first commercial shipment of about 800 boxes of Pakistani "chausa" early this month, a box of six "chausa" mangoes was quickly taken at an unbelievable premium price of USD 60-USD 100.

In the last few years, the Indian "alphanso" has been the costliest variety in the US, with a box (weighing about 3 kgs and containing nine to 12 mangoes) being sold this year at USD 40 to USD 80 in the retail market.

Mango importers from Pakistan hope that as the volume of import of "chausa" increases in the coming years, they would be able to give a stiff challenge to the mangoes from India.

"We hope to give a tough competition to the Indian mangoes," said a Pakistani-origin shopkeeper in the Greater Washington Area, who was one of the lucky few to sell from the first commercial consignment.

All eyes are now set on the second commercial consignment of the variety from Pakistan, scheduled to arrive at Chicago airport ‘the port of entry for mangoes’ on Thursday.

Indian exporters had been apparently told by the USFDA inspector that they could not export varieties of mango other than "alphonso."

This was immediately brought to the notice of APEDA (Agricultural and Processed Food Export Development Authority) in India and FDA in the US.

By the time the issue to remove restrictions was sorted, the inspector had left the Nasik facility leaving requests from American importers and Indian exporters, that

other popular varieties from Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and West Bengal be allowed, to no avail.

Besides "alphonso," importers could import the "kesar" and "bangapalli" varieties in small quantities.

"Last year we had imported Langra, Chausa and Dussehri Mangoes from India to the US.

But this year, we could not," Sharma, who is now trying to compensate by ordering the import of Pakistani "chausa" said.

Eagerly awaiting the arrival of the consignment from Pakistan, Sharma, who has been receiving queries from people across the country, said that there is a lot of demand for mangoes from India and Pakistan.

The US had lifted its import restrictions on Pakistani mangoes last year and the first shipment arrived this summer.

While the "alphonso" variety lasts for about a month in April-May, those from Pakistan are available till September end.

In between is the peak time of other variety of mangoes from India like "langra", "dussehari", "kesar" and "banganpalli".

"So this gives a wide variety and time range to mango lovers in the US," Sharma said.

However, traders from both India and Pakistan face the hurdle of high prices, making it tough to beat the much cheaper mangoes from Mexico, which capture more than 95 percent of the American market.

THE ECONOMIC TIMES
Tue, Aug 23, 2011 | Updated 10.24AM IST

23 Aug, 2011, 02.13AM IST, Madhvi Sally,ET Bureau

With poor apple crop, companies look at imports

AHMEDABAD: A poor apple crop in Himachal Pradesh and higher prices prevailing in the market are expected to increase imports of apples from Fuji in Japan and America. Companies are also looking to increase procurement from Jammu and Kashmir this season.

"Indian apple prices are fluctuating and very high. Import is very cheap with the Fuji apple costing us Rs 1,400 a box of 20 kg. Similarly, apples from China are competitively priced," said Adani Adani Agri Fresh vice-president Shrinivas Ramanujam. The company has the largest CA storage space for apples with an 18,000-tonne capacity in Himachal Pradesh.

Apple production in the hill state is expected to be over 22.5 million boxes which is 50% less than last year's bumper production of 44.5 million boxes (one box weighs 25 kg). India annually imports over 1.5 to 2 lakh tonne of apples from China, the US, New Zealand and Cuba. In July, about 250 containers of 20 tonne each landed in Mumbai and Chennai ports, according to industry sources. "We will be doubling our import of apple this year," said Ramanujam.

The company has been importing apples for the past three years. Adani had paid

farmers the farm gate price of Rs 32 to Rs 35 a kg last year. This year, according to farmers in Kinnaur and Shimla, the company was quoting Rs 60 a kg for quality fruits. "Prices are higher than what they were in 2009 when there was a crop failure. We had then given Rs 55 a kg," said Ramanujam.

Mother Dairy, which has started procuring apples from Himachal Pradesh farms, also is planning to import the fruit this year. "In the apple season, we sell close to 20-25 tonne daily from across 400 booths in NCR. This year, we target to procure 1,000 tonne from Himachal Pradesh and Jammu and Kashmir," said Mother Dairy business head (horticulture) Pradipta K Sahoo.

Container Corporation of India with 12,000-tonne CA storage in Sonepat will start procuring in a week. "The prices are on a higher side this year. We will be exploring availability and quality of the Jammu and Kashmir market before deciding on procurement strategy from the state," said Fresh and Healthy Enterprise CEO NK Jawa. Similarly, Delhi-based Dev Bhumi Cold Chain which imported 2,500 tonne in 2010 and procured over 2,000 tonne from the domestic market expects a huge demand in the domestic market.

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23 Aug, 2011, 12.31AM IST, Nidhi Nath Srinivas,ET Bureau

Recession aftereffect: Cotton won't be the white gold this year, says ICAC

Cotton is not feeling warm and fuzzy anymore. International cotton prices would average 70 cents/lb or below our minimum support price this year, says inter-governmental monitoring body ICAC. With fewer shoppers keen on clothes, there

will be more cotton than the world needs to spin.

Since Indian farmers receive the world price minus exporter's marketing margin, it could be a year of poor crop returns. As the world's second largest producer and exporter, how will India react? That is the question. The timing couldn't be worse. We are headed for second consecutive good harvest in the new 2011-12 marketing year that starts October 1. Spinning is flagging because textile mills have plenty of leftover yarn and clothes are not flying off shelves.

Export is uncertain because main customer China has good options in USA and Australia. In short, the quantity of unwanted cotton in India could cross a record 10.5 million bales.

With its history of farmer suicides, cotton is a political hot potato. So government has a Pavlovian response when prices crash. The last episode was in 2008-09. Cotton Corporation of India (CCI), under the textiles ministry, is made to buy large quantities from farmers at the MSP, and sell at a loss to mills. This satisfies farmers, politicians and mills.

Already events are gathering pace. CCI is preparing to purchase 25% of the new season's crop from October onwards for which it needs minimum 16,000 crore. Nafed will join forces. Since CCI is bankrupt, banks are refusing to lend without a sovereign guarantee. Worried about budget deficit, finance ministry is reluctant to play ball. Hectic parleys are on between ministries, with agriculture adding its weight behind CCI, along with state governments.

But the outcome is predictable. Politics will win. Taxpayers, don't be churlish. Like always, government procurement will trigger a vicious cycle. As long as CCI holds cotton, market prices will stay low because it becomes the dominant seller, ous- ting private tra-de. As long as pr- ices are low, CCI keeps buying.

So if the government really wants to help the market, it should hold off till February. And no, this won't be callous indifference. Look at the facts. Farmers no longer sell in panic immediately after the harvest. They have the financial muscle to stock, monitor prices and time their sales. Cotton continues to arrive in mandis even today, 11 months after harvest.

Growers need to hear correct global price signals so that they have realistic profit expectations and also adjust acreage next year. Government procurement warps the bad news signals by artificially hoisting prices and delays demand-supply equilibrium. This helps no one.

Whatever the MSP, business can't afford to pay more than the real market value of raw material. The steep discount CCI later offers industry reflects this actual value of that cotton. Left to themselves, mills will buy this year's cheap cotton to average out the higher price paid last season. By staying away, government can nudge up mandi buying. It also won't end up carrying inventory for mills using taxpayer money.

Given weather and yield vagaries, the accurate crop size anyway emerges by February. Waiting will allow government to focus on the really distressed districts instead of spreading itself thin in the hurry to be seen doing something.

In fact, it's quite possible prices may inch above MSP by February. Local cotton demand will increase once the Tiruppur hosiery cluster re-opens for business. With so much money and bureaucrat man hours thrown at it, this is only a matter of time. China reduced its cotton reserves in 2010-11 to supply local mills. Now it wishes to rebuild them. A delegation is expected here shortly to talk business. In the neighbourhood, Pakistan crop is hit by floods.

Bangladesh too will eagerly buy if the terms are attractive enough. In reality, all India needs to do by October 1 is free export of cotton without non-tariff barriers disguised as procedural rules. The timing is perfect. Local mills can't complain of raw material shortage.

Exporters will scout for the best deals and farmers will receive maximum value. We are a cotton-and-yarn surplus country that needs exports for farmers and mills to make money. They stay in business by listening carefully to what international prices say about demand and adjusting supply accordingly.

Misplaced government intervention merely garbles this message, helping no one

in the long run except politicians eyeing rural votes. And if the Anna Hazare agitation is any indication, even that seems iffy.

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23 Aug, 2011, 02.20AM IST, PK Krishnakumar,ET Bureau

With demand for CTC teas rising, cos like Harrisons Malayalam focussing more on the local market

KOCHI: Despite a decline in exports, tea prices are looking up in the domestic market. With the demand for CTC teas rising particularly in the south, big companies like Harrisons Malayalam are focussing more on the local market by launching new brands in the auction market.

South Indian tea prices have risen despite a fall in exports in the first six months due to increasing local demand. The best quality CTC teas are fetching anywhere between Rs 90 and Rs 100 kg. The average CTC price till the middle of August this year was Rs 78.86 per kg, over Rs 4 higher than in 2010.

Encouraged by the response to good quality CTC teas, Harrisons Malayalam recently launched 'Moongalaar Gold', a new bulk brand made from its Peermade-Kumili tea estates, for auctioning.

"The company has decided to focus on the domestic market while continuing to develop the export market," said Pankaj Kapoor, managing director of HML, which had stopped the loss-making consumer packet sales a few months ago. The company is also bringing premium quality teas made from its estates in

Nilgiri-Wayanad region and from the high ranges of Munnar regions to the market soon.

Kanan Devan Hill Plantations (KDHP) launched the Ripple brand CTC tea some time ago. "The tea has been receiving encouraging response from the market and we are in the process of consolidating the business," said Mathew Abraham, marketing manager of the company.

According to a leading tea broker, the per capita consumption of tea has gone up from 650 gram a few years ago to 1 kg now and it is growing every year. The festival season starting next week could further raise consumption.

Higher prices for CTC tea due to increasing domestic demand is a good sign as south India's CTC production caters to the local market which is more stable, said Peter Mathias, chairman of The United Planters' Association of Southern India (Upasi).

He noted that despite a drop in production, quantity sold at the south India auction centres were up by 2.3 million kg in the January-June period compared with the corresponding period last year. This pointed to a low carryover stock and hence prices could remain buoyant even if the production rises.

the pioneer

Kerala to have special teams to deal with crop-raider jumbos

August 22, 2011 9:02:10 PM

VR Jayaraj | Kochi

The Kerala Forest Department will soon constitute permanent Rapid Response Teams (RRT) armed with tranquilizer dart-launchers, flash lights and modern communication gadgets to deal with crop-raiding elephants from the wild. Five RRTs to be stationed at different forest divisions are expected to start work in September.

Officials said the initial plan was to constitute the teams with personnel already available with the Department of Forests. The five RRTs will be stationed at Thalipparambu (Kannur district), Sultan Bathery (Wayanad), Nilambur (Malappuram), Palakkad and Ranni (Pathanamthitta), the regions identified as the most threatened by wild elephant intrusions into farm lands.

The decision to constitute the teams was taken after the department was convinced that only a force with special equipments and powers could handle the threat of wild jumbo intrusions into farmlands. The RRTs will have the option of using tranquilizers on the rogue elephants and sending them back into the wild.

The main tasks of the RRTs will be to send the wild elephants intruding into farmlands back into the jungles, bring under control rogue elephants that can be dangerous to lives and properties of farmers on the fringes of forests and to collect data on jumbo movements with the help of local people and eco-development societies.

The RRTs will be provided with sufficient quantities of tranquilizers, antidote, and implements needed for searches and camping in jungles. The tranquilized elephants will have to be given antidote before sending them back into the wild. Particular care will be taken to avoid dangers to the lives of the lone jumbos while darting and trans-locating them.

Officials said that the teams would also attempt radio-collaring the elephants after tranquilizing them so that their movements and behaviour could be constantly monitored later. The Kerala Forest Department had carried out radio-collaring on an elephant last month in Malappuram.

The RRTs will be required to camp in the area from where elephants are sent back to the wild till they reach safe distances from farmlands. There is also a plan to scare away intruding jumbo herds using fire crackers and recorded roars and snarls of tigers and leopards.

Each RRT, headed by a Forest Range Officer, will have a Forester, two Forest Guards and four persons drawn from Eco-Development Committees and forest protection councils (Vana Samrakshana Samiti)) as its official members. Also,

Adivasis and others with thorough knowledge of the particular forest areas will be included in the teams as per requirement.

The RRTs will be required to inform the concerned police stations about the problems being faced by areas facing jumbo intrusions. The police will also be informed of the steps taken to deal with the menace in each case. The teams, with bases in the respective Forest Range offices, will be given mobile phones and vehicles.

The Forest Department has already dug 482-km trenches and erected electric fencing on a stretch of over 450 km in the State in the context of increasing incidents of human-elephant conflicts. Plans are already afoot to relocate inhabitants of 14 settlements in the Wayanad Wildlife Sanctuary.

The Kerala Government has already decided to permit killing of wild boars raiding crops and causing danger to human lives but this has not yet been operationalized due to concerns over the possibility of misuse. Forest Department sources said such measures could be implemented only after ensuring that proper steps are in place to prevent misuse.

National Nutrition Institute to hold workshop

August 23, 2011 1:35:44 AM

Bhopal

National Nutrition Institute, Hyderabad had conducted survey of nutrition level

and other health indices of children of Madhya Pradesh in 2010-11. A workshop is to be held for providing information of the survey report of the institute on Tuesday at 11.30 am.

Business Standard

Tuesday, Aug 23, 2011

Coffee Board, planters differ on output

Mahesh Kulkarni / Bangalore August 23, 2011, 0:00 IST

The Coffee Board estimates of 322,000 tonnes of coffee production (post-blossom estimates) for the crop year 2011-12 beginning October is unlikely to be achieved, as bumper crop in robusta for two consecutive years would not be possible, say industry analysts.

“Last year, we saw a bumper robusta crop and, going by the record, we can conclude that it would not be possible to achieve one more year of bumper crop this year. The Coffee Board seems to be little ambitious this year. Unless new areas come up for harvest this year, we cannot expect bumper crop in robusta,” Sahadev Balakrishna, chairman, Karnataka Planters Association (KPA) told Business Standard.

While, the KPA agrees with the Coffee Board as far as 10 per cent growth trend in arabica coffee production for the current crop year, it does not agree with the Board with regard to robusta coffee output for the year. It also does not agree with the Board as regards to the harvested crop for last year.

KPA also does not agree with the board for the harvested crop for 2010-11. According to KPA, the harvested arabica crop was 85,000 tonnes and robusta was about 205,000 tonnes.

The Coffee Board has estimated 105,000 tonnes arabica crop for the year 2011-12, a growth of 10.5 per cent over the harvested crop in 2010-11. The Board has pegged the robusta crop for the current year at 217,000 tonnes, a growth of 4.8 per cent over the harvested crop last year. The total coffee production for the year 2011-12 is estimated at 322,000 tonnes, a growth of 6.62 per cent.

However, the KPA estimates the arabica output at 95,000 tonnes for the year 2011-12, a growth of 11.7 per cent over the harvested crop for 2010-11. It estimates the robusta production to be around the same level as seen during the last year or it may even drop by 10 per cent, Balakrishna said.

“The Coffee Board is little over ambitious in its estimates. Unless we see the new area converted for robusta from arabica coming to the market this year, we cannot expect bumper output for two consecutive years,” he said.

A large number of growers had converted their arabica gardens into robusta between 2000 and 2005 following white stem borer pest attack. However, there is no official estimates available as to the extent of new area under Robusta, he said adding that 5,000-10,000 tonnes or additional robusta coffee could come to the market this year. “There are several constraints to achieve bumper crop in Karnataka this year. The growers are facing difficulties like shortage of electricity and irrigation facilities that would act as impediments to growth in output,” he added.

Pepper futures up 0.15% on tight supply

Press Trust of India / New Delhi August 22, 2011, 15:29 IST

Pepper prices rose by Rs 47 to Rs 32,450 per quintal in futures trade today on rising spot market demand and tight supply availability amid restricted arrivals from producing regions.

At the National Commodity and Derivatives Exchange, September pepper rose by Rs 47, or 0.15%, to Rs 32,450 per quintal with an open interest for 8,716 lots.

October delivery moved up by Rs 36, or 0.11%, to Rs 32,889 per quintal in 2,047 lots.

Analysts said apart from lower arrivals from producing belts, a rise in spot market demand mainly led to the rise in pepper prices in futures trade.

Gur futures gain on fresh buying

Press Trust of India / New Delhi August 22, 2011, 15:25 IST

Gur prices improved by Rs 15 to Rs 1,053.50 per 40 kg in futures trade today on the emergence of buying by traders amid rising spot market demand.

Marketmen said low levels of buying by traders on the back of a pick-up in spot market demand mainly pushed up gur futures prices.

However, reports of better sugarcane production this year kept the prices under control, they said.

At the National Commodity and Derivatives Exchange, gur for September delivery rose by Rs 15, or 1.44%, to Rs 1,053.50 per 40 kg, with an open interest

for 10,550 lots.

Near-November contract gur also gained Rs 4, or 0.42%, to Rs 964 per 40 kg with an open interest for 1,170 lots.

Turmeric futures up on spot demand

Press Trust of India / New Delhi August 22, 2011, 15:23 IST

Turmeric prices rose by Rs 70 to Rs 6,300 per quintal in futures trade today due to a pick-up in demand in the spot market.At the National Commodity and Derivatives Exchange, turmeric for delivery in October moved up by Rs 70, or 1.12%, to Rs 6,300 per quintal, with an open interest for 2,595 lots.In a similar fashion, the spice for delivery in September edged up by Rs 44, or 0.71%, to Rs 6,200 per quintal in 11,140 lots.

Market analysts said a pick-up in spot market demand mainly helped turmeric prices to rise in futures trade.

Jeera futures rise on spot demand

Press Trust of India / New Delhi August 22, 2011, 15:16 IST

Jeera prices rose by Rs 256 to Rs 16,074 per quintal in futures trade today as speculators enlarged their positions, driven by a pick-up in spot market

demand.

At the National Commodity and Derivatives Exchange, jeera for September contract rose by Rs 256, or 1.62%, to Rs 16,074 per quintal, with an open interest for 18,777 lots.

October delivery gained Rs 249, or 1.53%, to Rs 16,500 per quintal in 16,092 lots.

Analysts said increased buying by speculators on expectations of a pick-up in demand in the spot market during the festive season mainly pushed up jeera futures prices.

Barley futures gain on fresh buying

Press Trust of India / New Delhi August 22, 2011, 15:11 IST

Barley prices rose by Rs 12.60 to Rs 1,214 per quintal in future trade today on fresh buying by traders amid firm spot market demand.

Marketmen said low stock availability amid reduced arrivals in the physical market encouraged traders to raise their holdings of barley futures.

Strong demand from the alcohol, poultry and cattle feed-making industries pushed up barley prices in the spot market, they added.At the National Commodity and Derivatives Exchange, the most actively traded September contract for barley advanced by Rs 12.60, or 1.05%, to Rs 1,214 per quintal, with an open interest for 5,610 lots.

October contract barley also moved up by Rs 6.20, or 0.50%, to Rs 1,236 per quintal in 180 lots.

Chana moves up in futures trade on strong spot demand

Press Trust of India / New Delhi August 22, 2011, 15:02 IST

Chana prices shot up by Rs 82 to Rs 3,202 per quintal in futures trade today as traders enlarged their positions, driven by a firming trend in the spot market on strong demand due to the ongoing festive season.

At the National Commodity and Derivatives Exchange, September chana shot up by Rs 82, or 2.63%, to Rs 3,202 per quintal with an open interest for 318,870 lots.

October contract jumped by Rs 81, or 2.52%, to Rs 3,292 per quintal in 124,160 lots.

Analysts said increased buying by traders, driven by strong demand in the spot market amid the ongoing festive season, mainly led to the rise in chana futures prices.

Crude palm oil up 0.62% on global cues

Press Trust of India / New Delhi August 22, 2011, 14:28 IST

Tracking a firming trend overseas, crude palm oil prices moved up by Rs 3 to Rs 486.40 per 10 kg in futures trade today.

The trading sentiment at home improved after palm oil advanced in overseas markets on concerns that hot weather in the US will impact soybean supply, boosting demand for the tropical commodity used in food and fuel.

Meanwhile, palm oil futures for November contract climbed by 1.1% to $1,020 a metric tonne on the Malaysia Derivatives Exchange.

At the Multi Commodity Exchange, crude palm oil for October delivery moved up by Rs 3, or 0.62%, to Rs 486.40 per 10 kg in business turnover of 47 lots.

September delivery edged up by Rs 2.30, or 0.47%, to Rs 489.70 per 10 kg in 67 lots.

Analysts said apart from a firming trend in overseas markets, fresh buying by speculators on the back of a pick-up in spot market demand, supported by the ongoing festive season, mainly pushed up crude palm oil futures prices.

THE HINDU Business Line

Cashew demand may pick up in 2-3 weeks

Kochi, Aug. 22:

Cashew market remained quiet last week with limited activities but prices were steady, by and large.

Even the few processors who sold few cents lower last week were asking for more this week, trade sources said. This week, some business was done for W240 from $4.85 to $4.90 and W320 from $4.50 to $4.60 a pound (fob).

Nominal levels for other grades were W450 and SW320 at around $4.50, SW360 at around $4.40, Splits and Butts from $4.00 to $4.10, Pieces from $3.85 to $3.95 a pound (fob).

Indian domestic market also stayed dull. However, most processors seemed ready to wait as there was not much material available for immediate delivery. They expect demand from wholesalers to start in two to three weeks depending on the retailers offtake from wholesalers who have built up some inventory during July.

September will be a low-production month in Kerala, the major cashew-processing State.

Raw cashew nut (RCN market) is steady, with Ivory Coast and Ghana trading in the range of $1,275 to $1,400 a tonne and Guinea Bissau being offered at around $1,700 a tonne. As the kernel market is quiet, there is not much interest in RCN.

There is no adverse news about the upcoming Southern crops. So “we can expect normal crops. As usual, there are reports of trades for early shipments from Indonesia at high prices.

In Mozambique and Tanzania, apart from the usual hassles of Government policies and rules and resultant delays, the trade will have to contend with the strong appreciation of the local currency versus the dollar,” Mr Pankaj N. Sampat, a Mumbai-based dealer told *Business Line*.

(This article was published in the Business Line print edition dated August 23, 2011)

Urban waste, no longer trash for fertiliser firms

Solid wastes help derive organic manure

New Delhi, Aug. 22:

Marketing of organic manure from city garbage is becoming a serious business, with even chemical fertiliser companies increasingly incorporating it in their product portfolio.

Take Coromandel International Ltd (CIL), which annually sells around 35 lakh tonnes (lt) of fertilisers mainly di-ammonium phosphate (DAP) and complexes.

In 2010-11, CIL also marketed 50,000 tonnes of compost produced from municipal solid wastes (MSW), which it plans to more than double to 1.1 lt this year. That, at Rs 5/kg, would be worth Rs 50 crore – a fraction of the company's Rs 8,000-crore operational revenues. But it is a business growing by over 20 per cent a year, noted Dr G. Ravi Prasad, President (Marketing), CIL.

Besides CIL, Nagarjuna Fertilisers & Chemicals, Zuari Industries, FACT, Kribhco and National Fertilisers Ltd are also selling MSW-based compost, though the quantities they are doing are only a few thousand tonnes each.

Garbage potential

Moreover, none of the fertiliser concerns, including CIL, are manufacturing the compost themselves. The ones doing it are the likes of IL&FS Environmental

Infrastructure & Services Ltd (IEISL), Hanjer Biotech Energies, Ramky Enviro Engineers and A2Z Infrastructure Pvt Ltd.

Mr Mahesh Babu, Managing Director of IEISL, estimates India's total MSW-based compost production now at 2.5 lt. The potential is much larger, given the roughly 500 lt of MSW generated annually by the cities and towns here. That works out to 140,000 tonnes a day (tpd), with Delhi and Mumbai alone contributing 9,000 tpd each, Chennai and Kolkata 5,000-6,000 tpd, and Bangalore and Hyderabad 4,000-5,000 tpd.

“From every 100 tonnes of MSW, 15-20 tonnes of compost can be made. So, from the entire 500 lt, you can get about 80 lt. And this will only go up with further urbanisation,” Mr Babu pointed out.

IEISL operates composting units at Delhi, Jalandhar, Mysore, Kozhikode, Erode, Pollachi, Mettupalayam, Udumalpet and Coonoor that can together process 1,480 tpd of MSW. By this fiscal-end, it aims to add another 900 tpd through new facilities at Jaipur and Tiruchi and expanding its 200-tpd plant at Delhi to 500 tpd (A2Z Infrastructure has the country's single biggest facility of 1,800 tpd at Kanpur, followed by Hanjer Biotech's 800-tpd unit at Nagpur).

Unique Selling Proposition

The composting firms receive the raw garbage free of cost from municipal authorities, which they process, bag and sell either to fertiliser companies or under their own brands (such as IEISL's “Harit Lehar”). The processing cost comes to about Rs 1.80/kg, with bagging and transport adding another Rs 1.30 or so.

The nitrogen (N), phosphorous (P) and potash (K) content in MSW-based

compost typically ranges between 0.5 and 1.5 per cent each. These are way below the levels in urea (46 per cent N), DAP (18 per cent N and 46 per cent P) or muriate of potash (60 per cent K). But the USP of compost – which fertiliser firms are seeking to project – is its OC (organic carbon) content of over 12 per cent.

“Indian soils have very low OC, which is due to their being farmed continuously and the depleted carbon not getting refurbished through green manuring or putting back crop residues. By adding compost, not only would the OC in their soils go up, but farmers will also see a dramatic improvement in the nutrient use efficiency of the chemical fertilisers applied by them.

To that extent, they can probably reduce urea or DAP consumption,” said Dr Prasad.

Soils with higher OC also have higher water-holding capacity, while exhibiting greater porosity and tilth. “Groundnut seedlings will wilt within six days if there are no rains, whereas in compost-treated soils, they can last for 12 days.

The plants also show better root development and tillering,” he added.

IEISL, similarly, claims that farmers near Agra in Uttar Pradesh have increased per-acre yields of wheat from 16 to 21 quintals by using its compost along with regular fertilisers.

(This article was published in the Business Line print edition dated August 23, 2011)

Erratic supply keeps sugar high

Mumbai, Aug. 22:

Sugar prices strengthened further by Rs 15-20 a quintal in the spot trade on Monday, despite the market being officially closed on account of *Janmashtami*. Naka prices increased by Rs 20-25, while mill tender rates were expected to be higher by Rs 15-20. The sentiment was firm.

In the last three days, sugar prices have gone up by Rs 60-70 a quintal due to erratic supply caused by the transporters' strike.

According to market sources, as the market was closed on Monday , no major deals took place at the upper level on Monday. There were no new arrivals and local dispatches from the Vashi market.

Transporters' strike

Mr Mukesh Kuwadia, Secretary, Bombay Sugar Merchants' Association, told *Business Line* that owing to the uncertainty over an end to the ongoing transporters' strike, freight rates at the producing level increased from Rs 65-70 to Rs 110-120 a bag. Dispatches from mills declined by over 80 per cent. If

the transporters' agitation continues, Mumbaikars may face a shortage of essential commodities during *Ganeshotsav*, which could push up the prices of commodities.

According to Mr Hemant Vora of Kavita Trading Co, due to the transporters strike, new dispatches from the producing centres have been badly affected but not local dispatches as retail transporters have not joined the agitation.

Currently, the local demand is being met from market stocks, which have been declining since last Friday. Tight supply position may lead to prices going up further, he added.According to sources, on Friday and Saturday mills sold about three rail rakes of about 81,000 bags of S-grade sugar at Rs 2,650-2,670 to neighbouring States, which has supported the bullish sentiment further. About 7-8 mills offered tenders last weekend and sold about 25,000-30,000 bags to local traders at Rs 2,650-2,680 for S-grade and Rs 2,710-2,780 for M-grade. Fresh mill tender offers are expected to be slightly higher, by Rs 10.

Spot rates: S-grade, Rs 2,800-2,900; and M-grade, Rs 2,830-3,000. **Naka delivery rates**: S-grade, Rs 2,730- 2,770; and M- grade, Rs 2,815- 2,900

(This article was published in the Business Line print edition dated August 23, 2011)

Cardamom prices steady, bumper crop seen

Kochi, Aug. 22:

Cardamom prices ruled steady last week on demand nearlh match supply at auctions.

Individual auction average oscillated between Rs 600 and Rs 620 a kg.

Upcountry buyers were covering to meet the festival season demand in North India, while exporters bought small quantities as current prices are said to be viable for them, trade sources said.

Export buying is likely to continue beyond Ramzan also, they said.

Arrivals continued to remain high as the second round of harvesting has begun and given the highly favourable weather conditions this year, the crop is likely to be a “bumper one”, they said.

An increase in demand is seen probably because of the growth in the per capita consumption, of late, which is pointed out as the reason for the current equilibrium in demand and supply, Mr P.C. Punnoose, General Manager, CPMC, told *Business Line*.

Weekly arrivals continued to remain at around 400 tonnes due to the good crop.

Arrivals at the Sunday auction conducted by the KCPMC stood at 74 tonnes and the entire quantity was sold out, Mr Punnoose said. The maximum price fetched was Rs 945 a kg and the minimum was Rs 405.

Auction average moved up marginally to Rs 614.19 from Rs 612.16 a kg the previous Sunday, he said.

Total arrivals during the current season up to August 22 stood at 1,180 tonnes against 375 tonnes in the same period the previous season.

Sales during the period were at 1,155 tonnes and 371 tonnes, respectively.

Weighted average price as on August 22 was at Rs 621 a kg while that on the same day last year was at Rs 1,352.

The market in Bodinayakannur witnessed some buying activity, trade sources there told *Business Line*.

Prices of all grades stayed steady at the auctions as well as in the open markets.

Prices in Kumily for graded varieties in Rs/kg were: AGEB 870 -1,000; AGB 685-695; AGS 640- 650 and AGS 1: 610- 620.

Prices in the open market at Bodinayakannur in rupees per kg were: AGEB (7mm) 850-890 AGB (6mm) 650- 675; AGS (5mm – 6mm) 625-650 and AGS 1: 600-610.

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Compost manure sources

New Delhi, Aug. 22:

The municipal garbage processed by composting plants normally contains 50 per cent moisture (which evaporates) and 30-35 per cent non-biodegradable solids from plastics, leather and glass to sand, silt and stones (which mostly go back to the dumpsite).

It is only the balance 15-20 per cent that goes for composting, after the raw garbage is first screened by trommels (heavy-duty rotary sieves) to segregate material below 120-mm size.

The composting itself takes about five weeks, during which inoculants (bacterial cultures) are sprayed and moisture levels maintained at 50-60 per cent to speed up decomposition.

Since the process generates heat (auto-oxidation) that can result in garbage fires, the composting material is turned over frequently using excavators.

Once the composting is over, the material is further screened by trommels to below 35 mm, then 16 mm and finally to four mm. This is followed by magnetic and gravity separation to remove ferrous metals, sand and silt. The end-product is, then, bagged and sold as organic manure.

Apart from municipal garbage, press-mud from sugar mills and spent-wash from distilleries have also emerged as major sources of organic manure for fertiliser companies.

Press-mud is the residual cake from filtered cane juice that cannot be used for further crystallisation into sugar. This filter-cake is sprayed with spent-wash and microbial inoculants, with the resultant bio-compost containing more than 15 per cent organic carbon.

Alternatively, the spent-wash from distilleries can be mixed with charcoal and burnt to run boilers. The ash remaining after this contains 12-14 per cent potash.

Coromandel International, which is the most aggressive player in the organic manures segment, plans total sales of 2.5 lakh tonnes (lt) for 2011-12.

This includes 1.1 lt each of MSW-based compost and spent-wash treated press-mud, and the rest from low-grade potash from spent-wash, poultry manure, press-mud sprayed with rock phosphate, and other variants.

(This article was published in the Business Line print edition dated August 23, 2011)

Edible oils steady despite lack of demand

Mumbai, Aug. 22:

Edible oils ruled steady despite absence of demand as most markets remained closed for *Janmashtami* festival.

In Mumbai, palmolein gained Re 1 for 10 kg as selling by resellers eased. Groundnut oil declined by Rs 5 for 10 kg tracking a weak sentiment at producing centres. Rapeseed oil declined by Re 1 for 10 kg. Short-covering and US crop concerns boosted crude palm oil (CPO) futures on Bursa Malaysia Derivatives (BMD). Resellers quoted palmolein at Rs 552-553. Liberty offered palmolein at Rs 555, soya oil at Rs 637 and sunflower oil at Rs 700. Ruchi quoted palmolein at Rs 554, soya refined oil at Rs 634 and sunflower oil at Rs 700.

Malaysia's BMD CPO September contract closed at MYR3,125 (MYR3,115), October MYR3,056 (MYR3,035) and November MYR3,022 (MYR3,003) a tonne.

Mumbai Commodity Exchange spot prices (Rs/10 kg): groundnut oil 965

(970), soya refined oil 634 (634), sunflower exp ref. 660 (660), sunflower ref. 705 (705), rapeseed ref oil 691 (692), rapeseed expeller ref. 661 (662), cotton ref. oil 655 (655) and palmolein 554 (553).

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Marginal rise in non-basmati varieties

Karnal, Aug. 22:

Some good buying pushed brokens of aromatic and non-basmati varieties marginally up, while full grain varieties were quoted with marginal variations on Monday.

Aromatic varieties are ruling almost unchanged because of low exports and sluggish domestic demand, said Mr Praveen Kumar, a rice miller. Because of payment problems especially with Iran, this year's export is under pressure, he added. Iran imports 30 per cent of total exports from India.

Pusa-1121(steam) sold at Rs 4,950-5,150 a quintal, Pusa-1121(sela) was at Rs 3,850 and while Pusa-1121(raw) ruled at Rs 4,300-4,340 a quintal. After witnessing a drop last weekend, pure basmati varieties ruled flat. Pure basmati (raw) was ruling at Rs 5,945 a quintal while Basmati Sela quoted around Rs 3,970.

Domestic demand of brokens is good and prices may rule firm for next few days, said Mr Kumar. For the brokens of Pusa-1121, Tibar went up by Rs 50 and sold at Rs 3,100-3,420, Dubar increased by Rs 40 and ruled at Rs 2,600-2,700 and Mongra was trading at Rs 1,900-2,225 a quintal, Rs 25 up from previous level. With restricted trading in the market non-basmati varieties were quoted with marginal variations. Sharbati (steam) ruled at Rs 2,800-2,825 while the Sharbati (sela) was at Rs 2,700-2,730 a quintal.

Among the brokens of Sharbati variety, Tibar rose by Rs 25 and quoted at Rs 2,350-2,550, Dubar sold at Rs 2,100-2,270 while Mongra was trading around Rs 1,700-1,770 a quintal. PR-11 (Sela) sold at Rs 2,100-2,340 while PR-11(Raw) quoted at Rs 1,925-2,145 a quintal. Permal (sela) was ruling at Rs 1,800-1,935 a quintal while Permal (Raw) sold at Rs 1,900-2,040 a quintal.

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Soyabean, its oil firm despite holiday

Indore, Aug. 22:

Soyabean and soya oil ruled firm in private trading even as local mandis here

remained closed on Monday for *Janmashtami* festival. In the spot market, soya refined ruled at Rs 633-635 for 10 kg on lack of buying. In private trading, soya refined saw some buying at Rs 633-634 for 10 kg, while soya solvent, for which there was no demand, quoted at Rs 598-600 in the spot market. The National Board of Trade remained closed because for the holiday.

Soya-oil futures, however, closed higher on the National Commodity and Derivatives Exchange on strong projections by Chicago Board of Trade and as Malaysian palm oil futures rose, with September and October contracts closing at Rs 659.05 and Rs 649.05. Soya seeds remained stable in private trading at Rs 2,280-2,320 a quintal, while plant deliveries of soya oil ruled at Rs 2,380-2,410 a quintal. Trading in soyabean futures remained sluggish, with September contract closing Rs 8 lower at Rs 2,405 a quintal and October contact ruling firm at Rs 2,480 on the NCDEX .

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Costlier vegetables

Lorry stir effect: Vegetable prices in Hyderabad have surged since the weekend. Brinjal sold at Rs 30 a kg on Monday, potato at Rs 16-18 a kg, onions at Rs 22-24 a kg, beans at Rs 45-50 a kg, carrot at Rs 35 a kg, tomatoes at Rs 18-22 a kg. Bottle gourd that sold at Rs 10 a piece is now selling at over Rs 20. Traders and wholesalers attribute costlier vegetables to poor arrivals due to the ongoing lorry strike .— P.V.Sivakumar

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Spot rubber improves on short covering Kottayam, Aug. 22:

Spot rubber turned better on Monday. The market opened steady but improved later on fresh buying and short covering led by the moderate recovery in domestic futures. “We are expecting enquiries from major consuming sector as the international indices rule much above the Indian rates,” an observer said. The trend was partially mixed. Meanwhile, in the international market natural rubber prices were seen rising with TOCOM rubber futures tracking the gains in other commodities.Sheet rubber increased to Rs 198.50 (197.50) a kg, according to traders. The grade finished unchanged at Rs 198 a kg both at Kottayam and Kochi, according to the Rubber Board.

In futures, the September series recovered sharply to Rs 204.40 (198.61), October to Rs 201.90 (195.46), November to Rs 201.33 (195.52), December to Rs 201.90 (197.20), January to Rs 203 (198.09) and February to Rs 203 (209.95) a kg on the National Multi Commodity Exchange.RSS 3 improved at its August futures to ¥351 (Rs 209.09) from ¥348 a kg during the day session but then slipped to ¥350 (Rs 208.48) in the night session on the Tokyo Commodity Exchange. RSS 3 (spot) closed at Rs 211.12 (211.07) a kg at Bangkok.Spot rates were (Rs/kg): RSS-4: 198.50 (197.50); RSS-5: 190 (190); ungraded: 182 (180); ISNR 20: 195 (194) and latex 60 per cent: 129 (129).

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