

Farmers demand extension of insurance cover, subsidy for groundnut cultivation

Staff Reporter

— Photo: B.Velankanni Raj



No holds barred: Collector T.Munusamy speaking at the farmers' grievances day meeting at the Collectorate in Nagapattinam on Thursday, O.S.Manian, second from right, M.P, is in the picture.

NAGAPATTINAM: Adequate water supply to tail-end channels, increasing the number of agricultural equipment, and extension of subsidy and insurance cover for groundnut cultivation were among the demands made by farmers at the monthly grievances meet here on Thursday.

Over 3,000 acres of land was under groundnut cultivation, along the coastal villages of Pradhanaramapuram, Vizhunduhamavadi and Kameshwaram.

Groundnut being a short-term cash crop, its cultivation which incurs an expenditure of Rs.20,000 per acre, warrants support in the form of subsidy and insurance cover.

While Thalainayar and Vedaranyam farmers were provided with crop insurance cover for groundnut cultivation, the same was not extended to Keezhayur block, said Sivashanmugam, from Keezhayur.

Small and marginal farmers who practice ground nut cultivation have captive ponds to ensure good cultivation, but government should ensure adequate supply of quality seeds to prevent farmers from buying low quality seeds.

Voicing concerns over distribution of water, Kaveri Danapalan of Cauvery Farmers Protection Association said that last year inter-departmental coordination ensured judicious distribution of water.

Irrespective of the date of water release, whenever it was conveyed to the administration about water not reaching a specific channel, PWD conducted field visits to rectify the problem, he added. Indiscriminate sand mining had also affected the flow of water in rivers, Mr.Danapalan said.

Farmers also demanded that nationalised banks be directed to grant agricultural loans and must desist from the practice of projecting jewellery loans as agricultural loans.

Tractors

Adequate number of transplanters, harvesters, tractors and other equipment must be maintained by the department of agricultural engineering at firqa-level to help farmers in hiring them.

In Nagapattinam agricultural engineering campus is far away from cultivable areas, and farmers have to cover a long distance to bring the equipment to their land.

This adds to their diesel expenditure. Relocation of machinery to a centralised place would benefit farmers, Mr.Danapalan said.

An appeal was made to fill up the vacancies of drivers to utilise the four tractors that are kept unused at the Mayiladuthurai agricultural engineering division.

The laser land leveller with the department is also lying idle for want of 60 HP tractor. Call for a revival of the Kanganalanchery agricultural depot was also made. Collector T.Munusamy presided.

Mango farmers will be trained in Israeli techniques: Collector

Staff Reporter

Photo: N. Bashkaran



Krishnagiri District Collector C.N. Maheshwaran at the 19th All India Mango Exhibition that began in Krishnagiri on Wednesday. –

KRISHNAGIRI: Farmers in the district will be trained in Israel techniques to get high yield in mango cultivation, said C.N. Maheshwaran, District Collector, here on Wednesday.

In the absence of Agriculture Minister K.A. Sengottaiyan and Minister for Municipal Administration and Rural Development K.P. Munusamy, Mr. Maheshwaran inaugurated the 19th All India Mango Exhibition at Government Boys High School Ground here.

Mr. Maheshwaran said that mango was being cultivated in 40,000 hectares in the district. He said that mango growers were getting Rs. 22,500 as subsidy an acre. This year, Rs. 1.20 crore would be distributed as subsidy to mango growers.

The Collector said that the exhibition would remain open to the public till July 15.

T. Ramachandran, MLA, asked the government to establish a mango procurement centre and mango pulp industry in the district to safeguard the interests of mango farmers.

Expert zones

The government should announce Thalli and Hosur as export zones keeping in view the abundant production of cut rose and chendu malli in the area. It would help farmers avail themselves of many facilities offered by the government. He expressed the hope that Chief Minister Jayalalithaa would fulfil her electoral promises on setting up a cold storage facility for tamarind in the district.

Mr. Ramachandran asked the Horticulture Department to double the area for eligibility for subsidy and raise the subsidy amount to Rs. 6.50 lakh from the present Rs. 3.25 lakh.

K.E. Krishnamoorthy, MLA, asked the District Collector to take the initiative in bringing back the glory of Government Spinning Mill in Uthangarai to safeguard the interests of hundreds of workers.

Manoranjitham Nagarajan, MLA, spoke.

K. Rajan, Joint Director, Agriculture Department, and P. Subbian, Additional Director, Horticulture Department, explained the actions being taken to improve the agriculture and horticulture production in the district and the subsidy available to farmers. C. Prakasam, District Revenue Officer welcomed the gathering.

Later, Mr. Maheshwaran distributed welfare assistance of Rs. 1.53 crore to 238 beneficiaries.

TNALU demand enhanced social security to aged farm workers

Staff Reporter

Tirupur: The Tamil Nadu Agricultural Labourers Union (TNALU), affiliated to AITUC, has demanded enhanced social security to the aged farm workers and sought steps to end the irregularities during the implementation of Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS).

These were among the various issues that figured in the resolution passed at the Union's state executive committee meeting held here few days ago.

TNALU's district secretary V.P. Palanisamy told The Hindu that the State Government should simplify the procedures in the application of old age pension and the amount should be distributed to all workers who attained the age of 58 years instead of 61 years. Likewise, the government should expedite the disbursals of entire surplus land to landless agricultural labourers as well as house site pattas.

House site pattas

"In Tirupur district alone, about 40,000 applications of agricultural labourers seeking free house site pattas are pending with the district administration," Mr. Palanisamy pointed out.

The meeting also sought reconsideration of norms that determine the below poverty line section of the society as cost of living and other factors had changed significantly over the last few years.

Fertilizer retailers cautioned

Special Correspondent

PERAMBALUR: Collector Darez Ahmed has said the licences of fertilizer retailers will be revoked if they fail to display the price list.

At the farmers grievances day meeting on Thursday, he said all shops should clearly display the price of the fertilizers sold by them. He assured support and assistance to farmers. Petitions placed by farmers would be attended to immediately. A resident of Aranarai village, Pitchai, who petitioned the Collector seeking a tri-cycle as he has lost a leg in an accident, was handed over the tri-cycle.

He distributed assistance to five persons granted by the horticulture department.

Farmers upset with agriculture banks

Staff Reporter

Criminal action against secretary demanded



WELL DONE: Collector R.Selvaraj handing over a crop yield prize to a farmer in Tuticorin on Thursday.

Tuticorin: Farmers unanimously raised apprehensions over the maladministration of Primary Agriculture Cooperative Banks across the district. The banks had lost credibility among farmers.

At a meeting held here on Thursday, farmers aired grievances over the secretary of Primary Agriculture Cooperative Bank at Eeratchi under Ettayapuram taluk. They demanded criminal action against the secretary who has allegedly misappropriated the farmers' jewellery which were mortgaged in the bank last year.

The jewellery deposited in the bank by the farmers had been shifted to Muthoot branch in Kovilpatti under the secretary's name.

Presiding over the programme, Collector R. Selvaraj sought explanation from the Regional Joint Registrar of Cooperative Societies M. Murugan.

Mr. Murugan replied that a case had been filed against the official with Commercial Crime Investigation Wing and proceedings were on. The Collector wanted to him to expedite the case to punish the guilty.

S. Mariappan, deputy secretary, Tamil Nadu Vivasayigal Sangam, Tuticorin, said similar problems were happening throughout the district.

Even some primary agriculture co-operative societies were defunct and bankrupt following mismanagement by officials. But the farmers, who deposited money at initial stage, could not receive their money properly.

But Mr. Murugan denied it. A cooperative society was closed at Elavelengal ten years back. The government earmarked Rs. 7. 50 lakh for the disbursal of deposits to farmers. Deposit funds to the tune of Rs. 6 lakh had been given back to 64 farmers and other 12 depositors were yet to receive their money.

The government has failed to provide compensation for 468 sheep, which were reportedly died of blue tongue disease.

Farmers of Usilampatti village, Ettayapuram taluk, were not provided with compensation.

Relief was given only for the death of 106 sheep belonging to 18 farmers, Mr. Mariappan said. The official said the sheep were buried without conducting post-mortem. The Collector asked the authorities concerned to maintain record of these incidents properly.

On crop yield competition in 2010 – 11, five farmers were given cash prizes.

K. Raghavan of Ottapidaram, who received Rs. 10,000, raised 15, 605 kilograms of maize per hectare. He stood second at the State level.

S. Sundaraj of Ottapidaram, who raised 9, 200 kg of maize per hectare, was provided with Rs. 10,000.

A. Ramaraj of Pudhur received a sum of Rs. 5, 000 for maize cultivation to the tune of 9010 kg per hectare.

K. Mariappan of Kayathar got a yield of 4, 660 kg of cumbu and received Rs. 10,000. M. Velraj of Naduvakurichi, Ottapidaram, got a yield of 4, 260 kg of cumbu and got Rs. 5, 000.

Besides, government also extended compensation of Rs. 28.98 lakh under National Agriculture Insurance Scheme for 2009 – 10. As many as 257 farmers, who dealt with banana, green gram and blackgram on 1, 265 acres of land, would be benefitted.

Weather

Chennai - INDIA

Today's Weather



Cloudy

Rain: TRACE
Humidity: 89%
Wind: Normal

Friday, Jun 24

Max Min
38.7° | 27.9°

Sunrise: 5:44
Sunset: 18:37
Barometer: 1004

Tomorrow's Forecast



Rainy

Saturday, Jun 25

Max Min
38° | 28°

Extended Forecast for a week

Sunday
Jun 26



36° | 29°
Rainy

Monday
Jun 27



36° | 29°
Rainy

Tuesday
Jun 28



36° | 29°
Rainy

Wednesday
Jun 29



36° | 29°
Rainy

Thursday
Jun 30



35° | 29°
Rainy

Airport Weather

Delhi



Delhi

Rain: 00 mm in 24hrs
Humidity: 60%
Wind: Normal

Sunrise: 5:24

Sunset: 19:22

Barometer: 0997



Potato prices to stay under pressure

AHMEDABAD: Potato prices, already under pressure due to huge carryover stocks, could witness further weakness in July when Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand and Karnataka harvest the summer crop.

But delayed sowing and dry spells across Maharashtra and Karnataka could ensure prices will remain stable by large.

With a bumper crop in 2010-11, estimated to be over 35 to 36 million tonne by the industry and over 38-40 million tonne by National Horticultural Research and Development Foundation, both traders and farmers are currently holding huge stocks.

"Over 60 lakh tonne is in cold storage and this has ensured the market to stay bearish," said West Bengal Potato Association president Sanatan Santra, who added that prices will remain stable at the current level.

Lack of irradiation facilities holding up Andhra's Mango exports to US

HYDERABAD: "I want my fellow Americans to eat these mangoes," former US president George Bush had said on his visit to the Acharya NG Ranga Agricultural University in Hyderabad in 2006.

Banginapally, the mango variety from Andhra Pradesh, impressed Bush for sure but nearly five years after the US lifting the 18-year ban on export of Indian mangoes, his fellow Americans are yet to taste the fruit. Andhra Pradesh, the largest producer of mangoes in the country, has not been able to send fresh fruit to the US as the state does not have an irradiation facility.

" Andhra Pradesh accounts for about 4-6% of total Indian exports. We mainly export to the Middle-East and Singapore. We cannot export to the US as the only irradiation facility in the country is in Trombay in Maharashtra, which is under the Bhabha Atomic Research Centre," says Suresh Koneru, president, Andhra Pradesh Mango Growers Association.

As a result, only the Alphonso and Kesar varieties are exported to the US, which are produced mainly in Maharashtra and parts of Gujarat.

Uttar Pradesh, the second largest producer with an annual production of about 30 lakh tonne, is also not able to tap the US market. So, the fate of Dussehra from UP which has been registered for a geographical indicator status is no different from Banginapalli. An irradiation facility will require an investment of about Rs 15-18 crore.

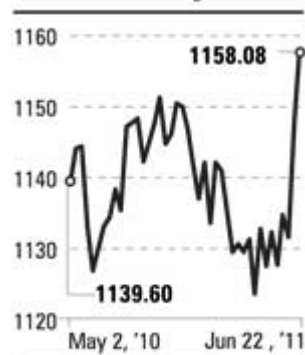
Business Standard

Thursday, June 24, 2011

Agri commodities rise on lower monsoon forecast

Dilip Kumar Jha / Mumbai June 24, 2011, 0:57 IST

NCDEX Dhaanya Index



Compiled by BS Research Bureau
Source: NCDEX

With the monsoon rainfall forecast to remain below normal this year, the prices of agricultural commodities have started rising. Dhanya, an agri index representing almost all majorly traded commodities on the National Commodity & Derivatives Exchange (NCDEX) has risen 2.3 per cent since Monday, when the India Meteorological Department (IMD) forecast this year's rain would be five per cent below the long-term average.

The agri index, which closed at 1,131.71 on Monday, shot up to 1,158.08 two days later. Today, however, it fell a marginal 0.3 per cent, to close the day at 1,154.66. Dhanya represents chana, chili, cotton seed, oilcake, guar seed, jeera, potato, pepper, mustard seed, refined soya oil and sugar (grade) M.

“This is an initial reaction. People do not require to press the panic button, as the forecast by the IMD is based on atmospheric conditions which may or may not come true. Even if the prediction proves true, it does not indicate failure of crop, as much would depend upon the quantum of rainfall and its distribution in July,” said Madan Sabanavis, chief economist, Care Ratings.

Agri commodities also recorded a spike in the spot market, with sugar M-30 traded at Rs 2,691-2,831 per quintal today, from yesterday's close between Rs 2,661-2,811 per qtl. Sugar S-30 also firmed up to trade between Rs 2,626-2,666 per qtl, as compared to Rs 2,601-2,651 per qtl the previous day.

In Nagpur, major pulses closed with a marginal increase, with tur quoted between Rs 2,300-2,710 per qtl today, as against Rs 2,300-2,665 per qtl yesterday.

‘Too early’

“The current price rise is a sentimental boost, which is bound to revert when people understand it was an initial forecast. Even the Sensex zoomed on June 20 on the monsoon news but reverted the following day,” Sabnavis added. “All crops are now sown in the kharif season only. The revival in monsoon rainfall later is likely to benefit the northeastern states, where the rainfall has been deficient so far.”

The department of agriculture has estimated on June 20 a slight increase in the paddy sowing area this kharif season. Paddy has been sown on 1.035 million hectares (mha) till date, as compared to 1.032 mha last year. The sugarcane sowing area has risen four per cent to 5.09 mha as against 4.87 mha last year. The area under cotton so far has increased 40 per cent to 2.16 mha, compared to 1.54 mha last year.

The area under oilseeds is up almost 16 per cent to 347,000 ha till date, against 300,000 ha in the year-ago period. Pulses have been sown in 286,000 ha so far, about 5,000 ha more than last year. An area of 847,000 ha has been covered under the cultivation of jute and mesta so far, as compared to 778,000 ha last year. The actual scenario will emerge with the progress of the monsoon in July, a crucial period for rainfed crops. Hence, the five per cent below-monsoon forecast by the IMD does not matter much at this point. Assessing the impact of deficient rainfall today is too early, said D K Joshi, chief economist at Crisil Rating.

Last year, IMD had forecast a normal monsoon at the beginning. Later, actual rainfall was recorded above normal, resulting in higher agri output.

THE HINDU Business Line

Thursday, June 24, 2011

Export of 5 lakh tonnes more sugar allowed

New Delhi, June 23:



The Centre has decided to allow export of an additional five lakh tonnes (lt) of sugar under the open general license (OGL).

The go-ahead, given by the Empowered Group of Ministers (EGoM) under the Finance Minister, Mr Pranab Mukherjee here on Thursday, will enable the domestic industry to take advantage of rising international prices.

White sugar in London is currently quoting at around \$710 a tonne. Indian sugar of 100 ICUMSA, which is of less premium quality compared with the 45-ICUMSA refined whites traded in London, could fetch \$ 10-15 more in destinations such as Sri Lanka, Yemen, Lebanon, Iran, Iraq, North Africa and Indonesia. There is demand for refined 45 ICUMSA sugar from India at \$750 a tonne or more, trade sources told *Business Line*.

At \$725 or Rs 32,575 a tonne free-on-board, the effective realisation for exports from Maharashtra, after deducting Rs 2,000 towards freight and handling expenses at JNPT or Mumbai port, would be around Rs 30,575. This is more than the prevailing ex-factory prices of Rs 25,000 a tonne on domestic sales in Maharashtra or Rs 27,000 in Uttar Pradesh.

The white sugar contract for August delivery at London, in fact, fell from Wednesday's closing price of \$ 739.90 a tonne, following the news of India's permitting an additional five lt of exports – over and above a similar quantity for which the formal approval notification was issued on April 19. Out of the five lt quota permitted earlier, which included 51,500 to neighbouring countries, the Directorate of Sugar has already allocated 4.26 lt to individual factories and issued release orders for 4.21 lt.

With the first lot of five-lt OGL exports set to be exhausted soon, the EGoM's decision today is likely to be welcomed by the industry, even though it had sought clearance for an additional 15 lt of exports under OGL.

While the Union Agriculture Minister, Mr Sharad Pawar, has favoured a lifting of the current ban on shipments, his counterpart at Food and Consumer Affairs, Prof K.V. Thomas, has been advocating a more cautious opening up in view of the coming festival season.
