

Farmer's Notebook: Debt increases with dependence on fertilizers, pesticides

M. J. Prabu



The Hindu PRACTICAL: Vishwasrao Narayanrao at his vermicompost unit at Washim. Photo: Special Arrangement

All technological progress minus agriculture is like a mirage in the desert

“Farmers first” becomes an ideal motto for any nation to progress.

“Unless farmers are empowered the economy of the country can collapse. India boasts of development, scientific advancements, and achieving self sufficiency in food grain production. But malnourishment, suicides, and health problems are stark realities that still exist in many rural areas.

Unfortunate

“It is a well known fact that farmers in our country are considered unfortunate as there seems to be no great future for them in their profession,” says farmer Mr. Vishwasrao from Washim, Maharashtra.

For Mr. Vishwasrao, both his profession and health did not prove to be conducive. Born with a single kidney, blind in one eye, and surrounded by abject poverty, he worked as a farm labourer for many years.

“Though life proved frustrating, the desire to live made me invest the small amount of money I saved from my hard labour in buying a thorny and weed-infested fallow land deemed unfit for cultivation in my village.

Some consolation

“I worked hard on the land, and the presence of a river near the land proved beneficial for irrigation. Within a year, I harvested a good yield of jowar, cotton and wheat.

“But after some time I realised that growing crops is not all only about irrigation as the outputs started declining.”

A local agriculture official explained to me about chemical and organic fertilizers, insecticides, and water management.

“I followed his advice and the yield increased but even this lasted only for a few years,” he says.

According to the farmer, overuse of chemical fertilizers and neglecting organic manures could be the reason for the declining yield, and he again started looking for the cause.

Search for a guide

Mr. Vishwasrao's search brought him in contact with several farmers practising organic farming.

They impressed on him the need for making one's own input for the crops and that it drastically saves money for the farmer and helps get a good yield.

Own inputs

The farmer started dumping all the cut weeds, refuse and other wastes he could find in a three foot pit he dug and added urea and superphosphate to the waste to accelerate the process of decomposition.

“It proved economical. I got nearly 30 cartloads of manure for my fields and it cost me about Rs. 600,” he says.

He is now using his well decomposed manure, vermicompost, and neem extract as spray for the crops. He is getting a very good yield of soyabean, greengram, bengalgram, tur and wheat.

“Recently, I harvested a record yield of 16 quintals from 2 kg of tur dhal seed. I sold the seeds at Rs. 200/ kg and got a gross income of Rs. 3,20,000. Farmers also benefited as they got it at a much cheaper rate, at Rs. 200/ kg instead of original price of Rs. 500/ kg,” he says.

Advance booking

In fact Mr. Vishwasrao's tur dhal became so famous in the region that many farmers started booking the seeds in advance for the next sowing.

The farmer also gets good yield of 35-40 quintals of chilli from an acre and gets an additional amount of Rs. 52,000 from selling them.

“As a farmer, I am able to realise that many of us incur debt mainly because we buy fertilizers and pesticides. If this dependence can be reduced, it can in turn reduce indebtedness and distress. Give a man a fish, he will eat for a day but teach him how to fish, he will eat for a lifetime, goes the popular saying. The same is the case for farmers, ” he says.

Need today

“What we need today is a means to sustain throughout our lives. If our country needs to grow faster, empower the farmers. Only then true growth and development can take place. Without agricultural improvement all technological progress is like mirage in the desert,” he says prophetically.

For more details contact Mr. Vishwasrao Narayanrao Bunde at Pedgaon taluka, Risod district, Washim, mobile: 9765815472 and M. S Swaminathan Research Foundation village resource centre, Karda district, phone: 07251-226544.

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Women also trained in coconut plucking

Coconut plucking is no longer a male bastion as the first batch of all women 'Friends of coconut' in the state completed their six day training at the Peruvannamuzhi Krishi Vigyan Kendra of the Indian Institute of Spices Research (IISR) Kozhikode, Kerala.

A group of 20 women aged between 20 and 35 years from Perambra in Kozhikode district has proved that gender is not a barrier for them before the “heights” of coconut trees.

Training programme

The training was organised as part of the “Friends of coconut tree” programme being implemented by the Coconut Development Board, Kerala to train unemployed youth in the art of climbing coconut trees and caring for them.

“This is the first ‘all women’ training programme on coconut climbing conducted in the entire state,” said Dr. M Anandaraj, Director, IISR.

The programme covered introduction to coconut palm, climate, soil requirements and varieties, sessions on climbing machine-main parts, working and trial, nutrient management, recycling of palm waste, intercropping and mixed cropping, etc.

Besides practical lessons, sessions were also held on harvesting, tender and mature nut identification, identification of pests and disease and their management, crown cleaning aspects, seed nut procurement, safe handling of seed and tender nuts, coconut nursery and its management etc.

Physical exercise towards the beginning of each day's training was another highlight of the programme. According the trainees, coconut climbing is an easy task and they felt no physical exhaustion while using the machine. During the last session of the training, a “Coconut Olympics” was also conducted in which the trainees were able to climb the trees within 48- 50 seconds.

Climbers' bank

“KVK is now in the process of establishing a Coconut Climbers' Bank” in which people trained from KVK can register their names. Anyone who needs the services of a coconut climber can contact the bank and avail the services of registered coconut climbers in their own at a reasonable rate.

Thus this scheme will be beneficial to both the customer and climber,” says Dr. T Arumuganathan, Programme coordinator, KVK Peruvannamuzhi. For details contact Mr. Riyas on email: riyaskpa@gmail.com and mobile: 9048321644.

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Farm Query - Internship programmes

Is there any organisation in Chennai that trains, gives placements as interns for IT, business administration students in agriculture sales and marketing?

Suresh Hemdev

Chennai

You can contact an organisation called efarm at No 22A, Thirumurgan Street, Lakshmi nagar, Porur, Chennai-116. They conduct workshops, absorb interns from different disciplines to work on agri supply chain model. For more details talk to the CEO, Mrs. Valli Krishnan at 07418844275, email: svrivali@efarm.in, web: <http://www.efarm.in> and Mr. Venkat, MD at 9884761354.

Published: November 10, 2011 00:00 IST | Updated: November 10, 2011 04:21 IST

As rain stops, farmers take up harvest

Staff Reporter

People in different parts of the district heaved a sigh of relief as there was no rain in the district on Wednesday.

Farmers could take up harvest of their paddy crops in the tail end areas of the district particularly Eesanthimangalam, Myladi, Chenbhagaramanpudur and the surrounding areas as the rainwater had started reseeding from the fields.

However, the farmers in the tail end areas have demanded that the Government must pay due compensation for the crops damaged in the rain.

Tapping affected

The tapping of latex was affected in Kulasekaram, Arukani, Pathukani, Thiruvattar, Thirparappu and the surrounding areas.

As the coconut shells attached to the rubber tree was full of water the tapers could not tap the latex.

Owing to the heavy rain the loss in the rubber industry was estimated at around Rs. 15 crore.

Hence the members of various trade unions have urged the Government to provide relief assistance during rainy season to them similar to the assistance given to the fishermen during the off-season period.

As many as 52 houses were damaged including 22 in Agastheeswaram taluk, 15 in Kalkulam taluk, 7 houses in Vilavancode taluk and 8 houses in Thoivalai taluk, according to official sources.

Water level

The water level in Pechipparai dam stood at 23.50 feet, 51.45 feet in Perunchani, 3.97 feet in Chittar I and 4.06 feet in Chittar II and 1 feet in Poigai dam.

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Rs. 1.92 crore sanctioned for development of agriculture

Special Correspondent

A sum of Rs.1.92 crore has been sanctioned to the district for developing agriculture and allied activities during the current financial year.

While Rs.1.03 crore has been released under the 'Drought-Prone Area Development Programme' (DPAP) and 'Integrated Wasteland Development Programme', a sum of Rs.88.56 lakh has been sanctioned under the 'Integrated Watershed Management Programme in Rain-fed areas', said Collector Darez Ahmed.

In a release, the Collector said that it had been planned to implement the scheme in 87 watershed areas, each comprising about 500 acres. In the DPAP and Integrated Wasteland Development Programme, administrative sanction had been accorded for the implementation of 149 works. In the third scheme, 15 watersheds would be developed. Entry-point activities and capacity-building programmes have been taken up in these watershed areas.

The objective of the programmes, he said, was to ensure soil conservation, protection of water sources. The livelihood of farmers would be protected and guaranteed.

The Collector has appealed to the farmers to extend their cooperation for the successful implementation of the above schemes.

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Despite growth in economy, country still faces food inflation: VC

Special Correspondent



K. Muthchelian

“Despite significant growth in economy, the country is reeling under stress from food inflation, massive unemployment and deprivation for the marginalised,” said K Muthuchelian, Vice Chancellor, Periyar University, Salem.

Workshop

Presiding over the inauguration of 10-day training course workshop on “Research Methodology and Computer Application in Social Sciences” organised by Department of Economics in association with Indian Council of Social Science Research, on University premises on Wednesday, the Vice-Chancellor emphasised the need for such workshop.

“Indian economy is fast growing surpassing most of the world economies. The community's purchasing power has increased and consumption pattern has changed. Saving behaviour has also undergone a change and the investment climate is conducive. But still we face food inflation,” he said.

Research

Against this backdrop the ICSSR-sponsored training course on Research Methodology and Computer Application would unfold many methodological difficulties in social science research, he further pointed out. K.K. Kaushal, Special Officer and Managing Director, Sago Serve, Salem inaugurated the workshop. Professors from various universities and research institutes from South India would attend the programme on computer application in social science research. More than 35 doctoral researchers in social sciences from various departments of economics, commerce, sociology, management and education also are expected to participate in the training workshop.

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Mettur level

The water level in the Mettur dam stood at 103.55 feet on Wednesday against its full level of 120 feet. The inflow was 14,531 cusecs and the discharge, 1,000 cusecs.

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DPCs opened to buy 'kar' paddy

The district administration has ordered the opening of direct procurement centres at six places to buy 'kar' season paddy. In a statement, Collector R. Selvaraj said 'kar' paddy would be procured in the direct procurement centres opened at Cheranmahadevi, Ambasamudram, Ravanasamudram, Vadakku Ariyanayagipuram, Kallidaikurichi and Munneerpallam.

Farmers could sell their produce in these centres, Dr. Selvaraj said.

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'Cost of paddy cultivation up by 40 p.c. in last five years'

Staff Correspondent

The cost of paddy cultivation has gone up by about 40 per cent in the last five years on account of the increase in the prices of fertilizer, insecticides and labour. In the last two years, farmers have not been getting back even the cost of cultivation in the sale of paddy crop.

As a result, farmers are reluctant to take up paddy cultivation. If farmers are not encouraged to take up paddy cultivation, there will be scarcity of rice in the country in the next few years," convener of the Akhila Bharata Batha Belegarara Okkoota Prabhu Dev Kathalagere said on Wednesday.

He was speaking to presspersons here.

Mr. Prabhu Dev said that the paddy growers' union had organised a seminar on paddy on November 12 at the Agricultural Produce Marketing Committee auditorium.

“The problems that are confronting paddy growers will be taken up for discussion. . Agricultural experts, scientists and farmers will make recommendations to the Government in the interests of the paddy growers,” he said.

“The seminar will also discuss what a fair profit margin is for paddy growers and the steps that need to be taken by the Union Government to protect them in case of a crash in prices of paddy,” he said.

Mr. Prabhu Dev said the seminar would urge the Government to provide fertilizer and insecticides at lower prices.

He said Minister for Horticulture, Sugar and Davangere district in-charge S.A. Ravindranath would inaugurate the seminar and G.M. Siddeshwar, Davangere MP, would be the chief guest.

He said Sri Siddalingeshwara Mahaswami of Panchamasali Math and Sri Panditharadya Shivacharya Mahaswami of Sanehalli Math would take part in the seminar.

Mr. Prabhu Dev said honorary president of the Bharatiya Kisan Sangh K. Ramachandrappa, working president of the Kisan Sangh Ranganath Yelandur and organising Secretary of the Bharatiya Kisan Sangh, Puttaswamy, would take part in the seminar.

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- *'Farmers not getting back even the cost of cultivation'*
 - *'If they are not encouraged to cultivate paddy, there will be shortage of rice soon'*
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Protest against cocoon price crash

Staff Correspondent

Members of the Karnataka Rajya Raitha Sangha and Hasiru Sene staged a dharna outside the government cocoon market here on Wednesday in protest against the crash in silkworm cocoon prices.

The import duty on raw silk has been cut to 5 per cent and this is the reason for the problems being faced by sericulture farmers, they said.

They submitted a memorandum addressed to the Prime Minister to the Deputy Director of Sericulture Department, urging that import duty on raw silk be fixed at 31 per cent.

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Grow native varieties of paddy, farmers urged

Staff Correspondent

Expert says native variety is rich in fibre and nutrients compared to hybrid rice



Working President of Karnataka Rajya Raitha Sangha K.T. Gangadhar seen with progressive farmers at the farm of Jagadish Naik at Malavagoppa village in Shimoga on Wednesday during 'Bhatha Vaibhava' programme on Wednesday. — PHOTO: VAIDYA

The native varieties of paddy, which are endowed with medicinal qualities and are rich in nutrients, enjoy great demand in urban markets. Farmers engaged in the cultivation of native varieties of paddy should learn the skills to market their produce, said Krishnaprasad of Sahaja Samrudha organisation.

'Bhatha Vaibhava,' a programme to enlighten farmers on the need to conserve native varieties of paddy, was held on the farm of Jagadeesh Naik where 32 native varieties of paddy were grown at Malavagoppa near here on Wednesday.

Dr. Krishnaprasad said that as the high cost of production had pushed farmers cultivating hybrid varieties of paddy to the debt, it was time for farmers to shift to cultivating native varieties of paddy in natural farming method. Rice produced from native varieties of paddy was rich in fibre content and medicinal values. As a chunk of the population in urban areas was suffering from ailments such as diabetes, hypertension, digestion problems, and the rice produced from native varieties of paddy enjoy great demand there.

Farmers engaged in natural farming should form a conglomeration of their own, and release their produce to the market under a brand name. Instead of selling paddy at a low price, farmers should convert it into rice and market it in a proper way to get additional income. The self-help groups in the villages could undertake value addition on the rice produced from native paddy varieties cultivated in organic farming method, he said.

The State had more than 3,000 varieties of native paddy which were known for their unique taste, aroma, adaptability, and medicinal value. He apprehended that the western farming method had posed a threat for the very existence of native paddy varieties.

Karnataka Rajya Raitha Sangha working president K.T. Gangadhar, who inaugurated the programme, demanded the Government to fix scientific price for the agriculture produce. The western farming practices, which were promoted in India to enhance the food production, had proved to be detrimental to the interests of farmers. He pressed the Government to convert the agriculture loans into incentive for food production.

The programme was organised by the Department of Agriculture in association with Sahaja Samrudha forum and Bhatha Ulisi Andolana. Leader of Raitha Sangha H.R. Basavarajappa was present.

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Delhi waives VAT on fertilisers

Special Correspondent

Farmers were facing difficulties due to high tax rate

The Delhi Cabinet has decided to waive Value Added Tax on fertilisers in order to provide some relief to the farmers.

After a meeting with her ministers, Chief Minister Sheila Dikshit said her government had received representations from farmers calling for relief on VAT being levied on fertilisers. It was stated that farmers were facing difficulties due to the high tax rate on the same.

The farmers had claimed that due to the high tax on fertilisers, a significant difference had emerged in the prices in Delhi and Haryana. In Delhi, fertilisers mentioned in Serial No.73 and 188 of the First Schedule were being taxed at the rate of five per cent, while those mentioned in

Serial No. 20 of the Third Schedule were attracting VAT at the rate of 12.5 per cent since April 1, 2010.

Henceforth, after issue of the notification, fertilisers — including pesticides, weedicides and insecticides — and bio-inputs like bio-fertilisers and micro-nutrients will not attract any VAT. The Government said an amount of Rs.14,07,619 and Rs. 22,04,513 were collected as VAT on fertiliser in 2009-10 and 2010-11 respectively. At the meeting, the issue of imposition of VAT on pieces of art sold through art galleries was also discussed. It was decided that the galleries will not be charged the tax for displaying the works and that VAT would only be imposed once the work is sold.

The meeting also discussed the issue of discontinuation of sale of reasonably-priced wheat flour through various government outlets. It was stated that stocks of wheat, which were being supplied by the Centre, had dried up and as no fresh stocks were available, the scheme needed to be discontinued for the time being.

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By Express News Service

10 Nov 2011 12:49:29 AM IST

Rains gone, Vaigai flood threat too

MADURAI: The flood threat in the Vaigai abated on Wednesday as the catchment areas of the dam experienced no rainfall. Owing to a depression in the Bay of Bengal, Madurai and its neighbouring districts have been experiencing torrential rainfall. As there was continuous rain in catchment areas of the dam, Mullaiperiyar and Vaigai dams have been receiving copious inflow and the storage level in the two dams rose rapidly.

At 3 pm on Monday, the storage level stood at 69 feet with an inflow of 3,037 cusecs, which resulted in the authorities sounding the third flood alert. About 1,877 cusecs was released from the dam. The causeways at Arappalayam-Thathaneri, Petchiammal Padithurai-Sellur,

Obulapadithurai-Madhichiyam in the city were under water and police banned movement of vehicles along these causeways.

With 1,302 cusecs of water flowing in the river with canals also emptying into the river, another flood alert was sounded on Tuesday evening.

There was no rain in Madurai and its neighbouring districts on Wednesday and only water from the streams was flowing into the dams.

The level in Mullaiperiyar dam at 8.30 am on Wednesday was 132.30 feet with an inflow of 2,966 cusecs and it was releasing 1,258 cusecs.

Vaigai dam was getting an inflow of 2,449 cusecs and 1,300 cusecs was discharged for irrigation and 60 cusecs for drinking purposes. This abated the flood threat. The ban on movement of vehicles on the causeways has also been lifted.

09 Nov 2011 03:09:00 AM IST

'Milk mission in AP soon'

CHITTOOR: The state government has decided to launch a milk mission with an outlay of Rs 6,000 crore to boost milk production.

Speaking at a Grama Sabha held at Gangavaram village on Tuesday as part of the second phase of Rachchabanda programme, chief minister N Kiran Kumar Reddy said financial aid would be provided to small farmers to purchase milch cattle under the milk mission. Under Kamadhenu scheme, more Bulk Milk Chilling Centres will be set up to increase the procurement of milk from farmers.

He reminded that the first bulk milk chilling centre was set up in Gangavaram in 2004 with a daily milk procurement of just 250 litres. The milk procurement of the chilling centres have increased to 2.5 lakh litres a day in the district now.

Chittoor, a droughtprone district, has become a model one for other districts in the state in procurement of milk, he said.

Admitting that several villages and towns in the district were facing drinking water problem, he said a scheme with an outlay of Rs 4,500 crore was evolved to quench their thirst. Under the scheme, six tmc of water will be drawn from Kandaleru reservoir to solve the drinking problem in villages and towns on a permanent basis.

Giving a resume of steps taken for the welfare of ryots, he said interest free loans (up to `1 lakh) would be provided to farmers from the rabi season benefiting 95 lakh ryots in the state.

Under the second phase of Rachchabanda, 54,000 ration cards and 22,000 pensions would be issued in Chittoor district, he said.

Kiran Kumar launched several works worth `143 crore in Palmaner constituency and other other places in the district on the first day of his visit.

The Rural Water Supply Department took up a scheme with an outlay of `110 lakh to supply drinking water to 306 schools.

Toilets would

09 Nov 2011 08:03:07 AM IST

Government promotes desi varieties of paddy

BHUBANESWAR: At a time when traditional varieties of paddy are fast disappearing due to institutional promotion of high yielding varieties, the State Government chipped in to protect the rights of farmers over 760 rice species.

The Agriculture Department had sent samples of the 760 varieties of paddy for registration with the Protection of Plant Varieties and Farmers' Rights Authority (PPV&FRA), New Delhi. It aimed at preserving the varieties of paddy and protecting farmers' rights.

The authority has now decided to confer an award on the Director of Agriculture and Food Production RS Gopalan for the outstanding job. "The award is for promoting maximum varieties of rice for registration," said an official communique from the authority.

The award will be presented on the foundation day ceremony of the authority in Delhi on November 11.

More than 1,700 varieties of paddy were recorded during a survey conducted in Jeypore region in 1970. The species, *Oryza sativa* (commonly known as Asian Rice) originated in the State and the name *Oryza* was derived from Orissa.

Kala Jeera, the aromatic rice and a member of the most popular Basmati rice family, is grown in Koraput district.

The Swaminathan Research Foundation is popularising the Kala Jeera in the tribal-dominated areas of other states. Credit also goes to former agriculture minister Damodar Rout who took the initiative for protection of the native varieties of paddy.

The Orissa University of Agriculture and Technology (OUAT) has registered eight of its own

varieties while the Central Rice Research Institute (CRRI) has developed 70 rice varieties till date.

Only a few local varieties of paddy are now grown in the State after emergence of a number of high yielding varieties. While the local varieties have the capacity to adapt to adverse conditions like untimely rain, deficient rain, excess rain, water submergence, salinity and resistance to diseases and pest attack, the high yielding and genetically modified paddy has failed in such conditions.

09 Nov 2011 02:30:25 AM IST

Coconut climbers go online

THIRUVANANATHAPURAM: It is not the low price or pest attack, but non-availability of coconut pluckers that is the major crisis affecting the coconut farmers. With the intervention of Coconut Development Board, a solution is just a mouse-click away. Log on to the website of CDB, you will be surprised to see a long list of coconut climbers or 'Friends of Coconut Tree', according to CDB.

A district-wise list, which includes name, address and even phone numbers, of over 1,200 climbers are given on the website www.coconutboard.nic.in/Friends-district.htm.

As part of the 'Friends of Coconut Tree' initiative, the CDB aims to develop a professional group of youths for harvesting and coconut plant protection operations. "We plan to impart training for as many as 5,000 people from various parts of the state. Training is provided on climbing techniques, crown cleaning, pest control measures, etc. The programme was launched on Chingam 1. The training is conducted with the support of Krishi Vigyan Kendras," said K Muralidharan, director, CDB. The CDB also plans to introduce insurance scheme for the climbers and aims to include minimum 30 percent women for the training.

As many as 1,512 unemployed youths were imparted training as part of the programme. Various agencies such as Kudumbashree units, Kera Karshaka Samithis, Krishi Vigyan Kendras, Clusters, Coconut Producers' Societies (CPS), youth clubs under Nehru Yuva Kendras, Primary Agricultural Societies, Coconut Growers Cooperatives, NGOs and Self-Help Groups of NGOs have been asked to identify the climbers.

Currently the website has a list of 97 coconut climbers for Kasargod, 166 for Kannur, 162 for Kozhikode, 52 for Malappuram, 205 for Palakkad, 120 for Thirssur, 97 for Ernakulam, 61 for

Alappuzha, 61 for Kottayam, 20 for Pathanamthitta, 136 for Kollam and 104 for Thiruvananthapuram.

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Paddy procurement in Bargarh from November 15

WEDNESDAY, 09 NOVEMBER 2011 23:58

PNS | BARGARH

A meeting was held at the district Collectorate on Tuesday under the chairmanship of Collector Bhabagrahi Misha regarding paddy collection in the district .In irrigated areas Regulated Market Committees (RMC)'s will collect paddy from November 15 and in non-irrigated areas RMC will collected it from November 18 or 20.

The general paddy would be purchased at Rs 1,080 per quintal (75kg) and grade A paddy at Rs 1,110 per quintal will be purchased by purchasing agencies like Odisha Civil Supplies Corporation, NAFED, MARFED and FCI from the farmers. The farmers will get their payment by cheques or money would be transferred directly to their accounts.

During the paddy procurement season the farmer identity card will play an important role. More than 40,900 identity cards have been distributed in the district to the farmers. RMCs will open 65 market yards for paddy procurement where as PAX will open 97 yards during the procurement period.

The purchasing agencies will bear the cost of paddy transportation. During paddy collection period officials who will neglect duties and disobey the rules and regulations of the administration will be punished, said Collector Mishra.

Among others, Bargarh MLA Sadhu Nepak, Attabira MLA Nihar Ranjan Mahanand, Bhatili MLA Sushanta Singh, MP nominee Panchanan Mishra and delegated members of paddy purchasing agencies, millers and farmers were present.

Punjab to provide subsidy of Rs 500 per quintal on wheat seed

THURSDAY, 10 NOVEMBER 2011 00:15

PNS | CHANDIGARH

Punjab Government has decided to grant subsidy of Rs 500 per quintal on wheat seed to the farmers of the State during the current season, and five lakh quintal seeds would be distributed on subsidised rate.

The time period from October to November is considered to be most favourable for sowing of wheat.

Government's spokesperson said that State Government would distribute seed of prescribed variety through sale centres of Agriculture Department, Agriculture University, and Cooperative societies, PUNSEED, Punjab Agro, KRIBCO and IFFCO.

He said that PBW-550, PBW-502 variety of seed has been procured from private seed growers and are being distributed to the farmers at a rate of Rs 1,400 per quintal with a subsidy of Rs 500 per quintal. He added that variety of DBW-17 has been distributed to farmers at a subsidised rate of Rs 1,300 per quintal.

Business Standard

Thursday, Nov 10, 2011

Coffee Board plans to create database of plantations

Mahesh Kulkarni / Bangalore November 10, 2011, 0:57 IST

The Coffee Board and the ministry of commerce were planning to introduce several new schemes in the 12th Five-Year Plan, beginning April 2012, to encourage growers to increase the production of coffee and strengthen the plantation sector, a top Coffee Board official said.

“We are fine-tuning draft proposals of the 12th Plan for the coffee plantation sector. The proposals will be finalised within a month. Our existing schemes serve the purpose quite well. But we think some modifications may be required in some of those,” Board chairman Jawaid Akhtar told Business Standard on the sidelines of the 53rd annual coffee conference of the Karnataka Planters Association.

He said the Board was planning to come out with a database of coffee plantations in the country to find how much area was under the commodity, which estate was growing how much and the type of coffee grown in each estate. The database would be created with the satellite map data. “It will help us introduce new schemes for the growth of the sector,” he said.

Apart from this, the farm mechanisation scheme will be fine-tuned. “The industry has accepted the scheme introduced during the fourth year of the 11th Plan very well. During the first seven months of the current financial year, the Board disbursed a subsidy of Rs 10 crore. This scheme would be further fine-tuned in the 12th Plan with higher allocation,” Akhtar said.

The exact amount of financial allocation for this scheme would be finalised shortly, depending on how much the industry would absorb in the current financial year, he said.

Under the farm mechanisation subsidy programme, the Board is offering a subsidy of 25 per cent for growers who hold 20 hectares or above, with a limit of Rs 4.5 lakh for machines bought. For growers holding less than 20 hectares, the subsidy is 50 per cent, limited to Rs 2 lakh for machines. For self-help groups, the subsidy is 50 per cent, the ceiling being Rs 5 lakh.

The Coffee Board was also in the process of expediting the process of transfer of technology developed at its labs to growers on the field. The system of delivery would be strengthened, he said.

Akhtar added, to achieve productivity enhancement, the Board was working on different programmes. Mechanisation was one such scheme that served twin purposes of shortage of labour and productivity enhancement. It helped growers increase their efficiency by up to 75 per cent, as they did not have to incur any expenditure on laboruers and their skill upgrade.

On the growers’ demand for waiver of interest on the Coffee Debt Relief Package, Akhtar said: “The Board has recommended to the ministry of commerce to waive interest on the loans taken

by small and medium growers holding up to 10 hectares. There was rescheduling of loans for those holding above 10 hectares. There was no expenditure on the part of the government for them.

The ministry is examining the proposal. And, on the basis of their approval, we will implement the proposal.”

He said the Board was also reworking the replanting subsidy scheme for the 12th Plan. This would be announced by the end of the current financial year.

Vijayalaxmi Joshi, additional secretary in the ministry of commerce, said a surplus scenario in coffee production was likely to return on the world scene, with Brazil and Vietnam expected to produce a record 60 million and 20 million bags, respectively, in 2012-13. “This may bring back the surplus scenario, with a profound effect on prices,” she said.

Golden time for India to enter sugar export market: Pawar

BS Reporter / New Delhi November 10, 2011, 0:18 IST

A day after Union food minister K V Thomas said the government was open to the idea of allowing some export of sugar during the current crop marketing year that started in October, agriculture minister Sharad Pawar put his weight behind this, too.

Pawar said the country should enter the export market in a big way and capitalise on higher global rates, as production during the current crop year is projected to be more than domestic demand. Sugar output in India, the world’s second-largest producer and biggest consumer, is estimated at 25-26 million tonnes (mt) in the 2011-12 marketing year (October-September), as against the annual domestic demand of about 22 mt.

The government is yet to announce the export policy for the current year. The country had exported 2.6 mt in the previous marketing year, of which 1.5 mt was through Open General Licence, in three equal tranches.

“There is surplus sugar. This is a golden time for India to enter the global market in a big way and get a better price, which will ultimately be provided to cane growers,” Pawar told reporters on the sidelines of a function on international practices in innovative agriculture.

The Indian Sugar Mills Association has been demanding export of four mt this marketing year to help mills improve their cash flows. At the current global price of \$670-680 per tonne, mills will earn a premium of Rs 3.5 per kg from exports of the sweetener vis-a-vis domestic rates.

Thomas had said an Empowered Group of Ministers on Food, headed by finance minister Pranab Mukherjee, might meet on November 16-17 to decide on allowing exports. Sugar output in India rose to 24.3 mt in the 2010-11 marketing year from nearly 19 mt the previous year. In the current marketing year, the government has pegged output at 25 mt and the industry has estimated 26 mt.

Though overall wholesale price-based inflation moderated to 9.72 per cent in September from 9.78 per cent in August, the rate of price rise in sugar increased to 7.45 per cent from 6.28 per cent over the period.

Meanwhile, on rising food inflation, the agriculture minister said it was true that the rise in global prices of petrol and diesel had an impact on domestic food inflation, but the solution was in increasing farm productivity to bring down prices.

Food inflation rose to a nine-month high of 12.41 per cent for the week ended October 22.

Maharashtra govt presses Centre to allow liberal sugar export under OGL

Sanjay Jog / Mumbai November 10, 2011, 0:00 IST

The Maharashtra government has appealed to the central government to allow a million tonnes (mt) of sugar exports in November. And, that this could be increased by half a million to a million tonnes each in December, January, March and April.

The government has told the Centre that India is in a position to export four to five mt in the current crushing season, in view of the country's estimated production of 26 mt. Chief minister Prithviraj Chavan has, in a communication to Union food minister K V Thomas, said mills in the state would benefit from an early decision.

A senior minister, who did not want to be identified, told Business Standard: "Even after four

mt for food security, a huge balance quantity (after meeting domestic demand) of 5.7 mt would remain with the industry, the share of Maharashtra being 3.4 mt. This needs timely disposal by way of exports before the March 2012 arrival of Brazil and Thailand sugar in the international market.”The minister made it clear that the exports need to be allowed under Open General Licence (OGL).The Federation of Cooperative Sugar Factories in Maharashtra, representative body of 170 mills in the state, has also made a strong pitch for exports. “An early decision is crucial for Maharashtra, as it will enable factories to realise better returns and reduce their losses, and to make timely payments to the sugarcane farmers,” said Vijaysinh Mohite-Patil, chairman.

The state government’s plea comes when sugar mills in the state have a carry-forward stock of 3.5 mt and mills are expected to produce 8.7 mt, against the original estimate of 9.3 mt by the end of the current season.The mills are currently facing rough weather, due to delay in commencement of the crushing season due to a prolonged monsoon, as well as ongoing agitation by cane growers for a higher advance payment.The state government and the Federation have also appealed to the Centre for revision of levy sugar prices (the quantity compulsorily taken for allotment to ration shops). The minister said levy sugar prices had not been revised for five seasons. The revision was essential due to increased cost of inputs.

Jeera futures under pressure on weak spot demand

Press Trust of India / New Delhi November 09, 2011, 13:53 IST



Jeera prices fell by Rs 454 to Rs 13,725 per quintal in futures trade today as speculators preferred to book profits amid a weakening spot market trend.

At the National Commodity and Derivatives Exchange, January jeera tumbled by Rs 454, or 3.20%, to Rs 13,725 per quintal, with an open interest of 4,566 lots.

The November contract fell by Rs 417, or 3.09%, to Rs 13,065 per quintal, with a trade volume of 10,482 lots.

Jeera for December delivery declined by Rs 413, or 2.99%, to Rs 13,397 per quintal, with an open interest of 15,771 lots.

Marketmen said speculators indulged in booking profits at higher levels amid a weakening spot market trend and reports of increased arrivals from producing region.

Bad weather not to hit output

Anindita Dey / Mumbai November 10, 2011, 0:56 IST

The Cotton Advisory Board (CAB) may stick to its earlier projection of 35.5 million bales (of 170 kg each) of cotton output for the current crop season that began in October.

It may even push it up higher in the range of 35.5-36 million bales, said official sources. They said the CAB meeting is expected on November 15 to assess position following reports of output loss in many areas and higher output in others.

According to the latest report of the Cotton Corporation of India, acreage had gone up to 12.2 million hectares in the current season as against 11.1 million hectares last season.

Andhra Pradesh suffered crop loss due to erratic weather and disruption in power supply, while northern states like Punjab had record output. Due to receding productivity of the soil, the ministry of agriculture had advised farmers in Punjab and Haryana to shift to cash crops like cotton and oilseeds.

“The soil productivity as far as rice and wheat is concerned have been overstretched. That is why the ministry of agriculture is now focusing on a second green revolution in the eastern region, where the agro climatic conditions are favourable and have greater potential for rice and wheat,” explained an official source as to why Punjab is focusing on cotton instead of conventional crops.

CAB will also discuss output of loose cotton, also called unpressed cotton, for the first time in 12 years. The review was done by a private agency 12 years before, when the total output was 25-25.5 million bales.

CAB, comprising representatives from the industry, trade, exporters, growers and the government, had at its meeting in August projected a record output of 35.5 million bales, against 32.5 million bales last year. It had projected a total demand of 35.1 million bales for the crop season 2011-12 as against 32.3 million bales last season. This is as against a supply of 40.7 million bales as against 37 million bales earlier.

Cotton price falls despite hoarding

Sharleen Dsouza / Mumbai November 10, 2011, 0:55 IST

Halt in purchase by Cotton Corporation of India tests the nerves of farmers waiting to sell at better prices.



Cotton farmers and traders have been holding back stock in the hope of selling at a better price. This has been reflected in lower arrivals from the onset of the new season, in October.

Cotton arrivals in October were 1.48 million bales, compared to 2.1 million bales in the same month last year (a bale is 170 kg). This year's production is expected to be an all-time high of 35.5 million bales, compared to 32.5 million last year.

"Hoarding is on. Last year, farmers had received a good price and now, too, they hope prices would pick up," said A B Joshi, textile commissioner for the Union government. Rain towards the end of the monsoon season in Saurashtra had also affected arrivals, traders said. On the spot markets, daily arrivals are 80,000 to 90,000 bales.

"Farmers have been hoarding, but this practice will stop in the next 15 days and arrivals are expected to increase on the spot markets. Also, despite farmers' hoarding, cotton prices have not shot up; they are falling," said Arun Dalal, an Ahmadabad-based trader.

The price of cotton on the spot markets was Rs 39,600 a candy (356 kg) last week; it is now Rs 37,600 a candy. The Cotton Corporation of India has stopped buying cotton from the market. This will test the nerves of farmers waiting for a higher price. Sources in the corporation said as the arrivals are expected to go up and domestic demand is slow, their buying will begin when prices reach a reasonable level.

In February, the price of the benchmark Shankar-6 variety went as high as Rs 63,000 a candy. Traders expect prices to fall by another Rs 2,000 a candy in the next fortnight. Higher arrivals will also begin to weigh on prices, traders said.

This year, there is no cap on cotton exports. Last year, exports were initially capped at 5.5 million bales and later another million bales were allowed. "This cotton year, 1.5 million bales have been exported so far and two mn bales have been registered for export by December," said an exporter.

Prices of coffee to remain firm

BS Reporter / Chennai/ Bangalore November 10, 2011, 0:42 IST

Global coffee prices are likely to remain at comfortable level during the year 2011-12 with Brazil, the major producing country, going to have a off-year, a top commerce ministry official said.

"The production of coffee in Brazil is estimated at 47.2 million bags. As such, it is estimated that during 2010-11 there was a surplus of around 5 million bags, which is expected to refill the inventories in importing countries," Vijaylaxmi Joshi, additional secretary, ministry of commerce said.

Addressing the 53rd annual coffee conference of Karnataka Planters Association and United Planters Association of South India (KPA-Upasi), here on Wednesday, she said the main reason for buoyant prices is attributed to overall tight supply position for the past three years decided by more or less stagnant production and increasing consumption.

For the past three years in a row, the global supply situation remained tight triggering the price boom which reached its peak during early half this year to a 14 year high of \$3 per pound in case of Arabica and \$2,600 per tonne in case of Robusta.

The prices have since started correction during August and now settled at a favourable level of \$2.65 per pound for Arabica and \$2,100 per tonne for Robusta. These are almost at the double the levels they were before the present price rally which began in mid-2010, Joshi

pointed out.

However, with the rising prices most of the producers worldwide have started taking better care of their crops thereby increasing the chances of increasing overall production by 2012-13. Add to this, the 2012-13 is going to be the on-year for Brazil crop with estimations of all time record crop of 60 million bags (each bag = 60 kgs).

Vietnam is also expected to deliver a bumper crop during the current season with an estimated crop of about 20 million bags.

Columbia, which is reeling under crop setbacks for the past three years may also recover by next cropping year and produce a high crop. This may bring back the surplus scenario with profound effect on prices, she said.

Jawaid Akhtar, Chairman, Coffee Board said global coffee prices showed a marked downward correction in September 2011, after a great surge in the previous 6-8 months.

“Due to declining stock levels in consuming countries, buoyant world consumption and an off year in Brazil everyone expected the prices to be firm. Many analysts say that the decline is caused by disinvestments in commodities in response to anxieties about the world economy. But the facts remain that to a substantial extent, price fluctuations are not correlated to fundamentals. Too much speculation witnessed in the international market is a cause of worry to all the stakeholders,” he added.

The domestic coffee consumption is showing rapid growth during the past few years with a 5-6 per cent growth rate, breaching the 100,000 tonnes mark during the last year. The prevailing high prices have shown no major impact on the domestic market since most of the growth is happening in the non-traditional coffee drinking areas, where coffee has taken over as lifestyle drink. However, if the uptrend continues for another couple of years, it may dampen the pace of domestic consumption, he said. The world production during the current year (2011-12) is estimated at 129.4 million bags which is a 3 per cent drop over the last year crop of 133.6 million bags. The production in India is likely to see an increase of 7 per cent over the final estimation of 302,000 tonnes of last year.

The post-monsoon estimation of current crop capturing the impact of monsoon rains is under

progress. Majority of the coffee growing regions have received well-distributed monsoon rains and hope that this will help in achieving the projected figure of 322,000 tonnes, he added.

Natural rubber production up 5% consumption flat

George Joseph / Chennai/ Kochi November 10, 2011, 0:19 IST

Natural rubber (NR) production recorded an increase of 5 per cent during April-October period of the current financial year, while consumption almost remained flat.

This is the lowest growth recorded in consumption during the current financial year. Total production increased to 480,700 tonnes (provisional) as against 457,650 tonnes in the same period last year. According to the Rubber Board data, the seven-month consumption increased to 551,425 tonnes as against 550,230 tonnes. Production in October increased to 89,300 tonnes as against 82,400 tonnes, registering a growth of 8.4 per cent, while consumption increased only 2.7 per cent at 76,000 tonnes.

For the first time during the last one year, the total NR stock of the country recorded a nominal dip of 6,877 tonnes. The total stock as on 31st October was 247,000 tonnes as against 253,877 tonnes on the same date last year.

Exports registered a 412 per cent increase in April- October to 19,995 tonnes as against 4,738 tonnes in the same period last fiscal. Import of natural rubber dropped 30 per cent to 95,919 tonnes as against 138,245 tonnes.

THE HINDU Business Line

Southern sugar mills demand decontrol

Our Bureau

Chennai, Nov. 9:

The South Indian Sugar Mills Association – Tamil Nadu has appealed to the Union Government to free the sugar industry from excessive State control.

According to a press release from the sugar industry association, the Centre should emulate its stand on petroleum prices, where it has allowed market forces to play, and apply similar 'logic and economic' rationale to the sugar sector.

It is high time the Government decides on early decontrol of this core sector.

PM statement

Taking note of the recent statement by the Prime Minister, Dr Manmohan Singh, who has said that petroleum prices will be left to be determined by market forces and there would only be more deregulation of the sector, the SISMA-TN said the salutary stand of the Government obviously stemmed from gross under recoveries by petroleum companies.

But the sugar industry, even if not on the scale of petroleum companies, finds it 'odd and hard to understand the differential and discriminatory stand being taken by the Government when it comes to sugar'.

Interference

The Government not only corners 10 per cent of the industry's production as levy to supply over the public distribution system but also controls the balance 90 per cent in the form of monthly releases and depresses the market prices.

It also interferes with sugar exports, denies the industry the opportunity to tap the international markets even when domestic prices rule below cost of production and global prices are higher.

After supporting the population below the poverty line through the public distribution system, there is no reason to interfere in the market to depress the price of sugar consumed by the industrial and commercial segment.

This only affects the ability of the mills to pay the sugarcane farmer.

(This article was published in the Business Line print edition dated November 10, 2011)

Pests continue to bug cotton growers

M.R. Subramani

Solution for one species found; Govt nod awaited for implementation

Mumbai, Nov. 9:

Pests continue to cause problems to growers despite the widespread and increasing use of genetically modified cotton in the country.

According to Dr C.D. Mayee, President of Indian Society for Cotton Improvement, farmers are not facing problems any more from the bollworm that led to the introduction of Bt cotton in the country.

This year, Bt cotton has been cultivated in 93 per cent of the total 118 lakh hectares of land under cotton.

Currently, sucking pests, mealy bug, para wilt, thrips, mirid bugs, jassids and pink bollworms are causing problems in cotton.

“Mealy bugs have been noticed in a number of places in the country,” Dr Mayee said, addressing a plenary session at the fifth World Cotton Research Conference here on Wednesday.

According to Dr Sandhya Kranthi, senior scientists with the Central Institute for Cotton Research (CICR), Nagpur, a solution has been found to mealy bugs and sucking pests.

“For mealy bugs, we have come up with bio-insecticide. We have uploaded details on our Web site,” she said.

Last evening, presenting a paper on ““Emerging and key insects pests on Bt cotton”, she said a team of entomologists has found a solution to the problem of sucking pests in Bt cotton. It is now awaiting the Government's approval to go ahead in implementing the solution, found under the All-India Cotton Project.

Government approval

She said research findings by the team on emerging pests in Bt cotton will be presented to the Government early next year. Though new problems with pests were emerging in Bt cotton across the world, the issue in India was slightly different, Dr Kranti said.

“Jassids are causing more damage in central and southern parts of the country,” she said.

Entomologists from the CICR, Indian Agricultural Research Institute and State agricultural varisities are engaged in finding solutions to overcome these problems, she said.

In another presentation on “Global markets for organic cotton and India's opportunities and challenges as primary producer”, Ms Prabha Nagarajan of Textile Exchange said that the

country contributed 80 per cent to the global cotton organic market. But tighter regulation through introduction of Tracenet, an online traceability system, was required as also availability of non-Bt cotton seeds.

Mr P. Ramasundaram, in his presentation on economic effects of GM cotton in India, said that there was a need for technology upgradation to counter the dampening effects of technology depreciation as years roll by.

(This article was published in the Business Line print edition dated November 10, 2011)

Spot rubber declines on global cues

Aravindan

Kottayam, Nov. 9:

Physical rubber prices went below the Rs 200-mark once again on Wednesday. According to sources, there were no quantity buyers even at lower levels and the market slipped sharply amidst low volumes.

Concerns over demand continued to drive natural rubber prices down in the domestic as well as in the international markets.

However, quotes prevailing in the local markets were still on a premium compared to TOCOM, Bangkok and Malaysia and the gap has widened significantly as it might attract imports despite the weakness in rupee.

Sheet rubber declined to Rs 195 (200) a kg according to traders. The grade moved down to Rs 196 (200) a kg both at Kottayam and Kochi as quoted by the Rubber Board. RSS 3 (spot) fell to Rs 174.70 (180.20) a kg at Bangkok. The November futures nosedived to ¥264 (Rs 170.06) from ¥273 during the day session and then to ¥255 (Rs 164.28) a kg in the night session on the Tokyo Commodity Exchange.

Spot rates were (Rs/kg): RSS-4: 195 (200); RSS-5: 193 (197); ungraded: 183 (188); ISNR 20: 177 (180) and latex 60 per cent: 118 (121.50).

(This article was published in the Business Line print edition dated November 10, 2011)

Cardamom steady as demand matches supply

G.K. Nair



Kochi, Nov. 9:

The cardamom market ruled steady on matching demand and supply last week and a similar situation has prevailed so far this week at auctions held in Kerala and Tamil Nadu.

Arrivals continued to remain fairly good, consequent to better crop this year. The weather continued to be favourable and as a result the arrivals are to likely to maintain at higher levels in the coming days compared to previous seasons, market sources said.

Exporters were buying to cover their pending commitments while upcountry dealers were also active. But the supply was slightly above the demand and hence the prices were not moving up, trade sources in the major cardamom trading centre in the country, Bodinayakanur, told *Business Line* today.

Total arrivals last week at auctions were at around 478 tonnes. Arrivals at the Sunday auction held by the KCPMC were at 77 tonnes against 92.26 tonnes the previous Sunday and almost the entire quantity was sold out. The maximum price was Rs 721 and the minimum was Rs 383 a kg. Auction average stood at Rs 557.26, Mr P C Punnoose, General Manager, CPMC told *Business Line*.

Total arrivals during the current season up to November 6 stood at around 6,015 tonnes against 2,950 tonnes in the same period the previous season.

Sales during the period were at around 5,850 tonnes and 2,830 tonnes respectively. Weighted average price as on November 6 was at around Rs 545 a kg while that on the same day last year was at around Rs 1,185 a kg.

At the same time second-quality capsules constituted over 75 per cent,” Mr Ranganathan, a Bodi-based dealer told *Business Line* today. Good colour 8mm bold was fetching Rs 900 to Rs 950 a kg, he said.

Prices of graded varieties in the open market ruled steady at previous levels on Monday. At Kumily, prices in Rs per kg were: AGEB 720 -750; AGB 630-650; AGS 600-610 and AGS 1 – 580-590 while that in Bodinayakanuur in were: AGEB (7-8 mm) 675-700; AGB (6-7mm) 610-620; AGS (5-6 mm) 580-600 and AGS 1 – 570-580. a substantial quantity was being sold at Rs 625-650 a kg in Bodinayakannur.

(This article was published in the Business Line print edition dated November 10, 2011)

Edible oils slip on higher inflow

Our Correspondent



Mumbai, Nov. 9:

Edible oils weakened on Wednesday on lack of new demand and mounting pressure of higher arrivals of seeds at producing centres.

Groundnut oil lost Rs 5 a quintal while rapeseed oil declined by Rs 4 a quintal. Soya oil, sunflower oil and cotton oil were unchanged. Palmolein rose in the open market after local refineres increased prices by Rs 2-5.

Crude palm oil (CPO) futures on Bursa Malaysia Derivatives (BMD) Exchange fell as investor booked profits on Eurozone concerns.

Resellers sold palmolein at Rs 535. Liberty offered palmolein at Rs 540-541 for November delivery, super palmolein at Rs 570 and soya refined oil at Rs 616. Ruchi quoted palmolein at

Rs 536 for November delivery, soya refined oil at Rs 611 and sunflower refined oil at Rs 671 for delivery between November 20 and 30.

Allana offered palmolein at Rs 538 for delivery between November 20 and 30. In Saurashtra and Rajkot, groundnut oil declined by Rs 5 to Rs 1,280 for a *telia* tin and to Rs 830 for loose (10 kg). Cotton wash oil was down to Rs 590 from Rs 602.

Malaysia's BMD CPO's December contracts closed at MYR3,038 (MYR3,050) and January at MYR3,034 (MYR3,045) a tonne. Soya oil for November delivery closed lower at Rs 620.80 (Rs 622) while December settled at Rs 617 (Rs 616) on National Board of Trade in Indore.

Bombay Commodity Exchange spot rates (Rs/10 kg): groundnut oil — 840 (845), soya refined oil — 605 (605), sunflower exp. ref. — 620 (620), sunflower ref. — 680 (680), rapeseed ref. oil — 696 (700), rapeseed expeller ref. — 666 (670), cotton ref. oil — 605 (605) and palmolein — 533 (530).

(This article was published in the Business Line print edition dated November 10, 2011)

Chana gains on improved buying

Our Correspondent



Indore, Nov. 9:

After hitting the lower circuit on the National Commodity and Derivatives Exchange (NCDEX) on Tuesday, chana (kanta) gained in the local mandis on improved buying support at the lower price on Wednesday.

In the spot market, chana (kanta) was quoted at Rs 3,425-3,450 a quintal. Chana (desi) sold at Rs 3,350 a quintal. On Tuesday, chana (kanta) had declined to Rs 3,375-3,400 a quintal with chana futures declining by 4 per cent on NCDEX. Chana futures rose by Rs 20 on Wednesday.

Dollar chana or chickpea zoomed by Rs 200 a quintal on improved buying support in local and foreign markets. In the spot market, dollar chana ruled at Rs 7,600-7,800 a quintal amid arrival of around 1,000 bags.

Masoor was unchanged despite subdued demand, with masoor (bold) at Rs 2,875-2,900 and masoor (medium) at Rs 2,650-2,700.

Urad was unchanged despite limited queries, with urad (bold) quoted at Rs 3,600-3,700 a quintal and urad (medium) at Rs 2,900-3,100. Arrival of urad in local mandis was recorded at 1,500-2,000 bags. Similarly steady demand kept moong (bold) firm at Rs 4,400-4,500. Tur (Maharashtra) quoted Rs 25-50 up at Rs 3,625-3,650, while tur (Nimari) sold at Rs 2,500-2,800.

(This article was published in the Business Line print edition dated November 10, 2011)

Sluggish offtake takes flavour off aromatic rice

Our Correspondent



Karnal, Nov. 9:

Prices of aromatic and non-basmati rice were flat amid restricted business in the market on Wednesday.

After witnessing a decline at the beginning of this week, the market managed to maintain its previous quoted level despite sluggish demand, said Mr Tara Chand Sharma, Proprietor of Tara Chand and Sons. "Due to fall in domestic demand, prices are getting softened continuously and if the situation remains the same, rice prices could witness another downtrend," he added.

Pusa-1121 (steam) quoted at Rs 4,500 a quintal while Pusa-1121 (sela) was at Rs 3,500 a quintal.

Pure basmati (raw) sold at Rs 5,350 a quintal while basmati (sela) sold at Rs 3,700 a quintal.

Sharbati (steam) fetched Rs 2,900-2,940 while Sharbati (sela) was at Rs 2,770 a quintal.

PR-11 (sela) sold at Rs 2,100-2,160 a quintal while PR-11 (raw) quoted at Rs 1,900-2,100 a quintal.

Permal (sela) sold at Rs 1,800-1,950 a quintal, Permal (steam) was at 2,030 a quintal and Permal (raw) was around Rs 1,900 a quintal.

Just around 1.1 lakh bags arrived at the Karnal grain market terminal. Around 55,000 bags of PR arrived and sold at Rs 1,080-1,140.

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Higher cane price in UP lifts spot sugar



Mumbai, Nov. 9:

Sugar prices at the Vashi spot market shot up by Rs 30-35 a quintal on improved sentiment at the upper level on Wednesday because of a hike in sugarcane price by Uttar Pradesh Government by Rs 35-40 a quintal.

In the spot market, M-grade sugar crossed Rs 3,100, the highest in the current calendar year. In Maharashtra, agitation for higher cane price is going on. The delay in announcement of cane price by two major sugar producing States has slowed production, Mr Mukesh Kuwadia, Secretary of Bombay Sugar Merchants Association, told *Business Line*. Besides, hopes of the

Centre allowing more exports have created a bullish sentiment in the last two to three days, he said.

Higher cane price would raise the retail price of sugar by at least Rs 2-3 a kg and output has been lagging behind normal level despite peak crushing period to boot, Mr Kuwadia said.

He added that demand for more exports, especially in Maharashtra for 20 lakh tonnes, has pushed up sugar futures by more than Rs 60 in the last two days. Tracking firm trend and a sharp price rise in Uttar Pradesh, mills in Maharashtra sold sugar through tender offers at Rs 30-40 more on Wednesday evening. State mills sold 1.25-1.5 lakh bags, including a rake of 27,000 bags to eastern buyers. Market sources said on Tuesday evening 18- 20 mills offered tenders and sold about 1.5 lakh bags to local and neighbouring States' stockists at Rs 2,780-2,840 (Rs 2,750-2,800) for S-grade and Rs 2,850-2,960 (Rs 2,840-2,930) for M-grade. Arrivals in the Vashi market were at 50-52 truckloads and local dispatches were at 49-50 truckloads. Bombay Sugar Merchants Association's spot rates: S-grade — Rs 2,896-2,965 (Rs 2,862-2,932) and M-grade — Rs 2,981-3,102 (Rs 2,956-3,071). Naka delivery rates: S-grade — Rs 2,870-2,930 (Rs 2,830 2,880) and M-grade — Rs 2,950-3,060 (Rs 2,930-3,030).

(This article was published in the Business Line print edition dated November 10, 2011)

Turmeric falls as farmers retain produce



Erode, Nov. 9:

Spot turmeric prices fell by Rs 150-300 a quintal as over 14,000 bags arrived in the market on Wednesday.

Traders bought limited quantities to fulfil pending orders and for local spices firms as North Indian buyers rarely placed any new orders, said Mr R.K.V. Ravishankar, President, Erode Turmeric Merchants Association. Some farmers refused to sell at such low prices, he added.

Orders from the North have declined by half with the onset of winter and within a fortnight traders there might stop placing new orders. Turmeric futures dropped by Rs 100 a quintal.

Farmers held back 500-odd bags at the Regulated Marketing Committee, where spot turmeric dropped by Rs 300 a quintal. The hybrid variety decreased by Rs 100-200 a quintal on poor quality.

In the Erode Turmeric Merchants Association Sales yard, the finger variety was sold at Rs 3,549-5,034 and the root variety at Rs 3,319-4,717.

Salem crop: The finger variety was sold at Rs 5,060-5,369 a quintal and the root variety at Rs 4,789-5,009. Out of the 3,612 bags that arrived, only 498 were sold.

At the Gobichettipalayam Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Society, the finger variety was sold at Rs 4,199-5,210 and the root variety at Rs 3,410-4,860. All the 435 bags which arrived were sold.

At the Erode Cooperative Marketing Society, the finger variety was sold at Rs 4,000-5,155 and the root variety at Rs 3,800-4,759. Out of the 1,214 bags that arrived, 1,044 were sold. At the Regulated Marketing Committee, the finger variety fetched Rs 4,672-5,057 and the root variety at Rs 4,489-4,717.

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