

Published: October 19, 2011 00:00 IST | Updated: October 19, 2011 04:03 IST

Training in making vegetable and fruit products

Staff Reporter

A training in commercial production of fruit and vegetable products will be held at Tamil Nadu Agricultural University on October 19 and 20.

According to a TNAU release, the training will cover making of dehydrated fruits and vegetables, mixed fruit jam, squash, pickles, candy, fruit bar, and ketch-up.

Those interested can undertake the training by paying Rs. 1,000 in the form of a Demand Draft drawn in favour of Dean (Agricultural Engineering), payable at Coimbatore. For details, call 0422-6611268.

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Desperate bid to save standing crop

Staff Reporter

They deploy diesel-run pumps obtained on a rent of Rs 1,000 a day



A farmer watering crop using diesel-run pump at Basireddypalem in Darsi mandal of Prakasam district. – Photo: Srinivas Kommuri

Farmers in rain-fed areas of Darsi mandal in Prakasam district are leaving no stone unturned to save their standing cash crops in the wake of prolonged dry spell and severe power crisis.

Undeterred by the power cut for long hours in the wake of the coal miners' strike in Telangana, enterprising peasants of Basireddypalli, Battuvaripalli, Chadaluru, Gagadevipalli, Reddannapalli and other villages have deployed diesel-run pumps to save crops raised on lands taken on lease. Now they look to arrival of northeast monsoon.

Not to depend completely on power supplied by the APSPDCL at odd hours, the ryots have taken pump run by diesel engines on rent of Rs 1000 each per day to give the crops the much-needed wetting.

"We go to Darsi early and purchase 20 litres of diesel paying a higher price of Rs 50 per litre to give a wetting for an acre of land," said 40-year-old Srinivasa Reddy, who had grown cotton on two acres of land.

"If it was unseasonal rains that had proved the bane last year, it is the prolonged dry spell which is troubling us now," said 40-year-old farmer Ramana Reddy of Basireddypalli.

"The authorities are giving power at odd hours in the night and power supply is also inadequate to water our fields. We are finding it difficult to pull on with cost of farm inputs including fertilizers going up," said another farmer R Venkata Reddy, who has grown Chillies taking on lease two acres of land. Yet another farmer Ch Siva Reddy, who has also grown chillies in three acres of land, said "we have already spent Rs 20,000 to Rs 30,000 per acre. We have to sustain our crops till monsoon rain comes late in October or early November". The farmers urged the government to ensure uninterrupted quality power supply for seven hours at a stretch to save their standing crops even if it meant purchasing power from other states. "The authorities supply power in rotation. While one group of farmers are supplied power from 12 midnight to 6 a.m. for a week, another group of farmers is given power from 6 a.m. to 12 p.m", APSPDC officials said.

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- *Farmers seek uninterrupted power supply at a stretch*
 - *They are hopeful of rain late in October or early November*
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Introduce millets in PDS, demand growers

Staff Correspondent

Support bonus of Rs. 10,000 per hectare of millets sought



'Popularise its use': Millet growers want the Government to create awareness among schoolchildren on the nutritional value of millets. — File Photo: K. Gopinathan

The two-day national convention of millet growers held at the University of Agricultural Sciences (UAS) Dharwad here on Sunday and Monday has come up with 'Dharwad Declaration' for consideration of the policy makers, administrators, scientists, farmers and civil society groups in India and abroad.

The declaration demanded introduction of millets in the Public Distribution System besides encouraging production, storage and distribution of millets at the local level. Lack of encouragement for farmers to take up millet cultivation could facilitate capture of millet production by large industrial houses and corporations.

Besides introducing millets in the PDS, the Government should ensure the use of millets in Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS), school meal programmes, welfare hostels, government canteens, and state celebrations. This will not only ensure a large market for millets but also recapture for millets their just position in the food culture in the country. This will also enhance the nutrition status of the population, the declaration said.

The Government should withdraw the Initiative for Nutritional Security through Intensive Millets Promotion (INSIMP) as it destroys the millet cultivation environment by insisting on hybridisation, mono-cropping and use of chemicals for cultivation of millets. The declarations suggested that the Government should adopt a new policy to promote cultivation of millets using traditional methods besides providing support bonus of Rs. 10,000 per hectare to farmers growing millets.

Use of millets can be popularised only if awareness on its nutritional value is created among schoolchildren. So, the Government should take steps to introduce information on importance of cultivating and consuming millets in school syllabus.

Besides that, the Government should promote manufacture and supply of manual machines to process millets.

Besides, the Government should encourage research on millets and farmers should be involved in research-related activities.

The declaration expressed concern over the promotion of industrial maize, policies on land acquisition, and demanded rightful emphasis of millets' role in safeguarding human health and their recognition as health food.

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Farmers seek early disbursement of relief

Compensation for crop loss in summer rain



Voicing their demand: Fr. Thomas Peeliyanickal, executive director of the Kuttanad Vikasana Samiti, inaugurating a dharna organised by the Upper Kuttanad Nelkarshaka Samiti at Thiruvalla on Tuesday.

The government should ensure participation of farmers in the implementation of Kuttanad Package recommended by the Dr. M.S. Swaminathan Commission, said Fr. Thomas Peeliyanickal, executive director of the Kuttanad Vikasana Samiti.

Inaugurating a dharna organised by the Upper Kuttanad Nelkarshaka Samiti (UKNS) in front of the Revenue Divisional Office in Thiruvalla on Tuesday, he said various projects proposed by the Commission should be executed in an eco-friendly and foolproof manner.

Strengthening of the farm sector was essential for the economic development of the State, and the government should take earnest efforts to promote paddy cultivation for the purpose, Fr. Thomas Peeliyanickal added.

Presiding over the meeting, UKNS president Sam Eapen alleged that the authorities had been delaying the disbursement of relief announced by the government for the poor farmers of Upper Kuttanad who suffered heavy crop loss in the summer rain seven months ago.

The steep hike in the fertilizer prices added to their woes, he said and urged the government to provide subsidy to the farmers.

Elizabeth Mammen Mathai, former MLA; Ipe Koshy, C.N. Balakrishnan and R. Madhukumar, leaders of the paddy cultivators' association in the Kadapra, Nedumpram and Peringara panchayats respectively, spoke.

Office-bearers of 30 Padashekhara Samitis in the villages of Kadapra, Niranom, Peringara and Nedumpram and in the Thiruvalla municipal limits took part in the dharna.

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Rubber prices through SMS

Staff Reporter

The Rubber Board has advised those who have subscribed to the provision of daily rubber prices being sent through SMS, to ensure that they have deactivated the DND (Do Not Disturb) registration of their mobile connections.

In a press note issued here on Monday, the board said that some of the subscribers of the service were experiencing difficulties in accessing prices through SMS, after the TRAI-NCPR regulations came into force on September 27. They will be able to access the service once the DND registration was deactivated, the press note said.

The deactivation can be done by sending a message in the format STOPDND to 1909. It will take seven days to deactivate DND registration, the press note said. The SMS service is available for an annual fee of Rs.300 (half-yearly fee of Rs.150) to those who register with the board.

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Paddy farmers seek water for second crop

The Deesheeya Karshaka Samajam has urged the Water Resources Department to release water from the Malampuzha and the Pothundy reservoirs for the cultivation of the second crop of paddy in the district. Samajam general secretary Muthalamthode Mani said though the first crop was harvested a month ago, the farmers could not start cultivation of the second crop owing to shortage of water.

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Farmers' union threatens to go on six-month farming holiday

Gargi Parsai

The members of Bhartiya Kisan Union on Tuesday threatened to take a six-month holiday every year for 10 years from framing if the government fails to take note of the hardship faced by farmers over rising prices and acquisition of farm land for commercial activity.

Rakesh Tikait of Uttar Pradesh said with increasing input costs, farmers were finding it difficult to cultivate round the year. "If the government does not pay attention, we will be forced to take a six-month holiday every year and the government will be responsible for jeopardising food security."

The farmers, who held a demonstration here, demanded strong State support for small and marginal growers and food producers, as well as a decent social security in villages. The farmers came from several States including, Tamil nadu, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Haryana,

Maharashtra, Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Madhya Pradesh and Delhi. Women farmers also participated.

In their memorandum addressed to Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, the farm leaders charged the United Progressive Alliance government with promoting policies of runaway industrialisation, privatisation and urbanisation at a time when the country was facing climate threat and increasing hunger. "The land needed to produce food is increasingly turning into elite housing complexes and shopping malls and other profitable ventures."

Protesting the over 30 Free Trade Agreements that have being signed, the farmers said they will hold "grave consequences" for rural producers. Between 1995 and 2010, about 2.5 lakh farmers had committed suicide due to unjust policies, they alleged.

Expressing their solidarity with protests against unfair anti-people policies of economic liberalisation, they sought pro-people, democratic and economically-just policies.

Bemoaning the increasing cost of cultivation, they sought a minimum support price of Rs. 2250 per quintal for wheat, Rs. 2200 per quintal for paddy and Rs. 5000 per quintal for sugarcane.

Their other demands included, support for turmeric farmers, direct fertiliser subsidy to farmers, separate policy for dry-land farming, comprehensive crop insurance and medical insurance for farmers and their families, education facilities in rural areas, ban on private seed company, research in public agricultural universities, and a ban on Biotechnology Regulation Authority as it was perceived to be a "clearing house" for genetically modified organisms.

Seeking a separate budget for agriculture, the farmers wanted Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act to be linked to agriculture in peak farming season. There should be price controls and stronger penalties against offending seed companies in the proposed Seeds Bill and reduction in interest of farm loans to four per cent. Saying 'no' to acquisition of farm land for private purposes, the farmers demanded a new Land Acquisition Act to support real public purposes and people's development.

The BKU signatories to the memorandum included, Ajmer Singh Lakhwal (Punjab), Gurnam Singh (Haryana), S.S. Cheema (Uttarakhand), Rakesh Tikait (U.P.), Yudhvir Singh (Delhi), Chukki Nanjundaswamy (Karnataka Rajya Ryot Sangha), K.S. Puttanaiah (Karnataka), Vijay Jawandhia (Shetkari Sangathan, Maharashtra), S. Kannaiyan (South Indian Coordination Committee of Farmers' Movements) and Seila Mutthu (Tamil Nadu Farmers' Association).

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Mettur level

The water level in the Mettur dam stood at 84.35 feet on Tuesday against its full level of 120 feet. The inflow was 13,658 cusecs and the discharge, 8,000 cusecs.

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Cotton farmers go on the rampage

Staff Reporter

Outrage over a trader allegedly quoting a low price at auction



Infuriated: Farmers attacking Farmer Information Centre at cotton market in Khammam on Tuesday. — PHOTO: G.N. RAO

Agitated over the alleged denial of remunerative price to their produce, cotton farmers raided the cotton market yard office and ransacked the furniture at the Farmers Information Centre on the yard premises here on Tuesday.

Measures announced

The incident prompted the authorities to announce a series of measures to streamline the auction process and conduct it in a transparent manner at the yard.

A large number of farmers from several mandals across the district as well as the neighbouring mandals of Warangal district thronged the yard along with their cotton produce on Tuesday morning following the reopening of the market yard, which reportedly remained closed on account of the bandh on Monday.

Trouble broke out when a section of the farmers objected to the alleged low price quoted by a trader at the very beginning of the auction process.

Seek explanation

They entered into an argument with the trader seeking his explanation for allegedly quoting a price much below than the price prevailing at the cotton market yard in Warangal.

A group of infuriated farmers stormed the Farmers Information Centre and smashed the windowpanes of the building and destroyed the computers and other equipment inside.

On being alerted by the staff, the police arrived and dispersed the agitated farmers.

Later, Joint Collector M.M. Naik visited the market yard and held discussions with the representatives of the farmers associations.

The representatives complained that the cotton farmers were offered a meagre price of Rs.3,500 per quintal here, much lower than the price offered at the market yard in Warangal.

Remunerative price

Mr. Naik directed the officials concerned to ensure payment of remunerative price to the cotton farmers either equivalent or even higher than the price offered at the market yard in Warangal district.

Display board

He further asked the authorities concerned to install an electronic display board and maintain an attendance as well as a bid register for smooth conduct of the auction process in a transparent manner.

The Joint Collector also instructed the officials to set up Closed Circuit TVs on the premises of the yard.



Saubhadra Chatterji and Zia Haq, Hindustan Times

Email Author

New Delhi, October 18, 2011

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Last Updated: 23:36 IST(18/10/2011)

Pawar pushes for sugar and onion export, Thomas differs

Union agriculture minister Sharad Pawar has made a fresh move for easing restrictions on sugar and onion export, even as Union food minister KV Thomas appears reluctant, fearing an adverse impact on domestic prices in the festive season.

With the empowered group of ministers (EGoM) on food slated to meet on October 20, Pawar had shot off a letter to Union finance minister Pranab Mukherjee on Monday, that seeking allowing export of sugar and lowering of the minimum price at which onions can be exported.

This will encourage export of the staple vegetable, whose prices continue to be volatile.

Thomas is believed to have communicated to key members of the inter-ministerial panel that he has reservations on allowing exports without a clear picture of exportable surplus. Thomas also argued that easing exports might adversely affect the prices of these two commodities at a time of runaway inflation.

Thomas has said he was "not against" allowing millers to export more sugar, but that decision is likely be based on his ministry's estimates of production, rather than that of manufacturers or farm minister Sharad Pawar's.

"I am not against sugar exports. But a decision will have to be based on scientific estimates of (production and availability)," Thomas told Hindustan Times in an earlier comment.

Thomas has stuck to his production estimate of 24 million tonnes, contrary to Pawar's 26 million tonnes.

Projections made by the Indian Sugar Mills Association, the top body of private millers, are in line with Pawar's estimates.

The government has allowed exports of 2.6 million tonnes of the sweetener in the current sugar year, including 1.5 million tonnes in three equal consignments under Open General Licences (OGL).

The remaining 1.1 million tonnes is the pending export obligation of the mills under the Advance Licence Scheme (ALS).

Aided by a good monsoon, India is poised to enter a second straight year of robust sugar production, but there is no clear picture yet of how much surplus stock it will have for exports.

<http://www.hindustantimes.com/StoryPage/Print/758874.aspx>



Chennai - INDIA

Today's Weather



Partly Cloudy

Wednesday, Oct 19

Max Min

33.2° | 24.5°

Rain: 16.0 mm in 24hrs

Sunrise: 5:59

Humidity: 94%

Sunset: 17:48

Wind: Normal

Barometer: 1008

Tomorrow's Forecast



Cloudy

Thursday, Oct 20

Max Min

34° | 25°

Extended Forecast for a week

Friday Oct 21	Saturday Oct 22	Sunday Oct 23	Monday Oct 24	Tuesday Oct 25

32° 25°	31° 25°	30° 25°	30° 25°	30° 25°
Partly Cloudy	Cloudy	Rainy	Rainy	Rainy

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THE ECONOMIC TIMES

Wed, Oct 19, 2011 | Updated 10.12AM IST

19 OCT, 2011, 07.13AM IST, PK KRISHNAKUMAR,ET BUREAU

Jeera drops on tepid demand, higher supplies

KOCHI: Increased availability, sluggish demand and low exports are pulling down jeera prices which have been ruling high for several months. Analysts say prices may shoot up again because of an unfavourable weather and a likely pick-up in export demand.

High prices had impeded jeera exports till August this fiscal. In the April-August period, exports dropped to 9,500 tonne valued at Rs 131 crore compared with 15,700 tonne valued at Rs 182 crore in the same period last year. Though the volume fell by over 6,000 tonne, the drop in value is around Rs 50 crore as the unit price was high.

Shailesh Shah, director of Jabs International, a leading exporter, said higher Indian price prevented more offtake in the global market. Competing countries like Turkey and Syria took advantage of the situation by selling the commodity at a cheaper price. Indian prices had ranged between \$3,300 and 3,700 per tonne then.

But export demand is showing signs of a rebound now as prices have come down. In the domestic market, prices have dropped below Rs 150 per kg in October after a long time. The spot price is around Rs 149 per kg while the futures contract for November delivery is ruling lower at Rs 148 per kg. "India decides the price in the international market now as other countries have almost liquidated their stock. The coming months could see Indian exports going up," Shailesh Shah said.

Kunal Shah, head of commodities of Nirmal Bang Commodities, said weather will hold the key

to prices. Certain regions in Maharashtra and Rajasthan have experienced wet spells which could push up jeera prices. "Last November, abrupt rains had led to a sharp rise in jeera prices. If the weather continues to be unfavourable, we could see a bullish market," he said. Long-term futures are showing a rising trend.

According to Kunal Shah, prices could increase to Rs 155-157 per kg in the next six weeks.

DECCAN Chronicle

Published on *Deccan Chronicle* (<http://www.deccanchronicle.com>)

Plan to incorporate milk dairy opposed

Directors of The Krishna District Milk Producers Mutually Aided Cooperative Society (KDMPMACS), popularly known as Vijaya Dairy, and majority presidents of the milk societies, unanimously opposed the proposal to change the dairy from the existing Cooperative Act to Companies Act, which will pave the way for privatisation and reduce the powers of directors and milk producers in the future. The KDMPMACS owns properties worth Rs.600 crore in the district and is considered one of the biggest milk dairies in the state. The dairy general body meeting was convened at the milk project in One Town on Monday to discuss its future. The dairy chairman, Mr M. Janaki Ramaiah, presided over the meeting. The agenda included proposal for changing the dairy from Cooperative Societies Act to Companies Act. Soon after the beginning of the general body meeting, the board of directors and presidents of the milk societies unanimously opposed the proposal saying that they are satisfied with the performance and growth registered by the dairy over the years and changes are not necessary. They felt changing of Dairy from Cooperative Act to Companies Act will strengthen the chairman and share-holders while the directors and milk society presidents will gradually lose their power. One of the directors, Mr Vemuri Venkata Sai Ramana, has made it clear that he would oppose the proposal and appealed to the directors to support him. He recalled that the board has made prolonged struggle to save and strengthen the existing dairy. The directors, Mr Adusu-milli Jaganmohan Rao, Mr Kodali Jaganmohan Rao, Mr Gadde Ranga Rao and others expressed

similar views. Majority of the presidents representing 376 societies supported the directors and expressed concern over the future of the milk societies if changed into Companies Act.

Source URL: <http://www.deccanchronicle.com/channels/cities/regions/vijayawada/plan-incorporate-milk-dairy-opposed-436>

express[™]
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By Express News Service

19 Oct 2011 03:32:29 AM IST

Food worth Rs 250 crore being wasted in city

BANGALORE: “Minimising food wastage can bring about stability in food crisis and its price”, Vice-Chancellor of University of Agricultural Sciences (UAS) Dr Narayana Gowda said. Speaking at a programme organised to mark the World Food Day on Tuesday, organised by the Alumni Association, UAS, Bangalore, in association with the National Egg Co-ordination Committee (NECC), he said, “Wastage of food which includes vegetables and plant saplings amounts to Rs. 250 crore from Bangalore alone. If agriculture is affected, it has its effects on the food supply and its prices.”

Professor and Head (Community Medicine) of M S Ramaiah Medical College Dr D Gopinath said, “Food stock is available in government godowns, but there is still a segment of population which does have the purchasing capacity due to poverty.”

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Centre's nod for construction of godowns to tackle foodgrain storage problem

WEDNESDAY, 19 OCTOBER 2011 00:30

Continuous efforts are being made in the State for complete arrangements for food grain storage. Such an effort met success on Monday when the Central Government gave its consent

to construction of godowns having a capacity to store 19.52 lakh metric tonne of foodgrain under 10-Year Guarantee Scheme.

With this, decks have been cleared for the construction of godowns of this capacity through public participation and other agencies.

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan and Minister of State for Food and Civil Supplies Paras Chandra Jain have been urging the Centre for implementing this scheme.

Due to these efforts, sanction of godowns with a capacity of 4.08 lakh metric tonne was also received by the State last year.

How work will be accomplished.

Separate agencies will accomplish this work under PPP Mode. Tenders will be invited directly from private sector for construction of godowns of 10.80 lakh metric tonne capacity. Besides, Central Warehousing Corporation will construct godowns of about 82,000 metric tonne capacity while godown of six lakh 98,000 metric tonnes will be constructed by other agencies. Madhya Pradesh Warehousing Corporation will be the nodal agency for this entire process.

Tenders will be invited from willing parties for the construction of godowns under PPP Mode. Agreement will be signed with the bidder quoting minimum rates. The State Government will give a guarantee on behalf of the Union Government to use these godowns on rent for ten years after their construction. Godowns will be constructed as per norms laid down by the nodal agency. Rent will be reimbursed by the Central Government.

Two separate committees will give consent and sanction for the construction of godowns.

In the first phase, a State-level committee will give its consent and then formalities in this connection will be completed by a high-power committee. The administrative staff has swung into action after getting sanction from the Centre.

It may be mentioned that about 50 lakh metric tonnes of wheat was procured in the State on support price last year. The State Government has made up its mind to procure more food grains than this record quantity in coming season.

THE HINDU Business Line

Farm sector growth to touch 3.5% in 11th Plan: Montek

Our Bureau

Panel targeting 4% growth for the next period



Mr Montek Singh Ahluwalia, Deputy Chairman of the Planning Commission, and Dr D.N. Rao, General Secretary of Vignana Jyothi Institute of Management, at the convocation in Hyderabad on Tuesday. — P.V. Sivakumar

Hyderabad, Oct. 18:

Contrary to certain views that growth in the Indian agriculture sector has stagnated, Mr Montek Singh Ahluwalia, Deputy Chairman of the Planning Commission, said, the panel expects growth to touch 3.5 per cent during the Eleventh Plan Period, as against 2 per cent in the previous period.

“Latest figures show that monsoons were good in the current year and even marginally above normal. So there has been no stagnation in the farm sector and, instead, there has been an improvement,” Mr Ahluwalia told media persons on the sidelines of the 17 {+t} {+h} convocation at Vignana Jyothi Institute of Management here on Tuesday. He said the Planning Commission was targeting a higher growth rate of 4 per cent in this sector during the 12 {+t} {+h} Plan Period.

On rising coal prices, he said during the next Plan Period energy costs will be higher. "India will have to continue to import coal at higher prices. You cannot fight higher energy prices. And the sooner we adjust ourselves to this (high energy cost regime) it is better," he said.

He was, however, confident that the Planning Commission target of adding 100,000 MW of power generation capacity during the 12 {+t} {+h} Plan Period.

"We did fall short of the target during the 11 {+t} {+h} Plan, as when we began we were low on start ups. But, when we enter the 12 {+t} {+h} Plan, we will have projects of 50,000 to 60,000 MW in the pipeline," he pointed out.

On inflation, he said it was high on a year-on-year basis, but expected it to cool down from November and come down significantly next fiscal.

(This article was published in the Business Line print edition dated October 19, 2011)

Jute tumbles on Punjab fiat to use second-hand bags

Shobha Roy

Prices drop Rs 300-400/quintal; Mamata convenes meet



Losing sheen: A farmer drying stacks of jute. (file photo)

Kolkata, Oct. 18:

Concerned over the sudden fall in prices of raw jute over the last couple of days, the West Bengal Chief Minister, Ms Mamata Banerjee, has called for a meeting with the senior officials of Jute Commissioner and Jute Corporation of India on Tuesday.

Raw jute prices have tumbled by Rs 300-400 a quintal following the Punjab Government's recent order on using second hand jute bags for packaging food grains. Quoted at Rs 2,600 a

quintal till about 15 days ago, the ex-Kolkata TD-5 variety of jute is currently ruling at around Rs 2,200 a quintal.

Flouting Jpma act

The lack of adequate purchase by the sugar industry in violation of the order issued by the Ministry of Textiles under the Jute Packaging Materials Act, 1987 was also a key reason for the sharp fall in prices, said Mr Manish Poddar, Chairman, Indian Jute Mills' Association.

“The JPMA Act directs all sugar factories to use jute bags for packing sugar to the extent of 100 per cent. However, close to 80 per cent of the private sugar mills in the country are flouting the order,” Mr Poddar said.

The Punjab Government came out with an order for using second hand bags for packaging foodgrains to the extent of 50 per cent on October 14.

“This has brought the prices tumbling,” Mr Poddar pointed out.

The prices fell by Rs 150 a quintal on Tuesday, according to a senior industry official.

Higher output

Jute prices have also been plunging on account of a higher acreage and production of the crop this year. The production of raw jute witnessed a ten per cent rise to 110 lakh bales this year on account of a favourable weather.

“The arrivals have been good since the beginning of this year and it has picked up further post Pujas. This has also brought down the prices,” said a senior industry official.

Plea to hike msp

Ms Banerjee had earlier urged the Union Agriculture Minister to review the minimum support price of raw jute to protect farmers' interest. The Centre had announced minimum price ranging from Rs 1,700-1,738 a quintal of the TD-5 variety of jute in West Bengal.

Ms Banerjee had requested for a bonus of about Rs 400 a quintal for the current jute season. However, there has been no progress on that front.

(This article was published in the Business Line print edition dated October 19, 2011)

Promote crops that can tolerate drought: Icrisat

Our Bureau

Hyderabad, Oct. 18:

The best way to beat poverty and hunger is to promote drought-tolerant crops on a large scale, the International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics (Icrisat) has said.

“To fight poverty and the world food crisis, we need to promote drought-tolerant crops on a large scale, convince farmers that these are their best bets for higher income, and enable them to set up strategic food reserves to cope with future crises in food,” Dr William D. Dar, Director-General of Icrisat, said here in a statement to mark the World Food Day (Sunday) and International Day for the Eradication of Poverty (Monday).

Partnership based programmes

“We take a serious look at our mission to reducing poverty, hunger, malnutrition and environmental degradation in the dryland tropics.

This we would like to achieve through partnership-based international agricultural research-for-development on five highly nutritious, drought-tolerant crops – chickpea, pigeonpea, pearl millet, sorghum and groundnut,” he said.

Most of the world's poor and malnourished were small farmers, particularly in the dryland tropics of Asia and sub-Saharan Africa.

Low yields

“The dryland tropics are characterised by very low yields, degraded soils and poor social and physical infrastructure. We have shown that average yields of its nutritious and climate-resilient crops can be increased two to three-folds,” he said.

In the last 39 years, Icrisat developed over 735 improved crop varieties in 78 countries.

In India, it released 197 improved varieties, including 35 in sorghum, 80 in pearl millet, 37 in chickpea and 26 in groundnut.

(This article was published in the Business Line print edition dated October 19, 2011)

Coonoor tea auction turnover up 8.29%

P.S. Sundar

Coonoor, Oct. 18:

The turnover at Coonoor Tea Trade Association auctions has increased by 8.29 per cent till September over the same period last year, reveals an analysis of the market reports. This has happened because of 10-lakh kg increase in the volume sold and every kg fetching Rs 3 more on the average.

In all, 39 auctions had been held between January and September, when 3.96 crore kg had been sold against 3.86 crore kg in 2010. The average prices increased to '63.30 a kg from 59.97.' Consequently, the overall turnover increased to Rs 250.67 crore from Rs 231.48 crore. This increase of Rs 19.19 crore marked a growth of 8.29 per cent.

Till May end, the turnover was Rs 2.30 crore less than last year, despite an increase in price, because of lower volume sold.

For the first time this year, in June, both the volume sold and the prices fetched increased resulting in cumulative gain of Rs 8.26 crore in the first half over H1 of 2010.

(This article was published in the Business Line print edition dated October 19, 2011)

Cashew market looks for direction

G.K. Nair

Kochi, Oct. 18:

The cashew market, after showing a downtrend for 2-3 weeks, stabilised during the last fortnight with prices remaining unchanged.

However, the market is delicately poised with indications that it could slip to either way, according to the trade.

The price range remained unchanged from the previous week at \$4.25-4.50 for W240 a pound, while for W320 from \$4-4.20, W450/SW320 from \$3.90-4.10, SW360 from \$3.70-3.80, Splits and Butts from \$3.40-3.60 and Pieces from \$3.20-3.40 (f.o.b).

While some stray business was done for W320, other grades more or less remained neglected, trade sources in Mumbai said.

Domestic demand

In the domestic market, there was some demand for broken grades pushing its prices up by 2-3 per cent. But, hardly there was any movement in 'wholes', which are expected to start moving from mid-November for the marriage season.

Vietnam's domestic markets and its main buyer China continue to be quiet but they are expected to show some activity in November/December for stocking for the Chinese New Year demand, Mr Pankaj N. Sampat, a Mumbai-based dealer told *Business Line*.

He said spot parcels of West African Raw Cashew Nuts (RCN) are being sold in small lots at prices ranging from \$1,400 to \$1,750 a tonne depending on quality.

However, stockists do not seem to be in a hurry to sell. There are some reports that unusual weather in some parts of Indonesia and Tanzania may affect the crop.

Indonesian RCN is hovering at around \$1,700 a tonne, while results of the first Tanzanian auction said to be only small quantity, will be known early next week, he said.

Mozambique RCN arrivals are slow and the price range will be known after a few weeks.

"We do not have firm news about Brazil RCN prices but believe they are expecting a reasonable crop of around 2.75 lakh tonnes."

Unpredictable trend

He said that there was no change in the market trend so far and "it is difficult to predict anything until the receipt of some indication about the 2012 Northern crops".

According to the trade news, RCN availability between now and March/April is limited. Unless shellers are able to buy RCN at significantly lower prices, they will be reluctant to reduce prices for sales.

RCN prices are unlikely to decline too much unless there is a complete lack of kernel activity in October/November leading to a further drifting of kernel prices.

If there is reasonable kernel demand in October/November, prices will stabilise around current levels. If demand is good, prices may move up a bit.

At the same time very limited cover for 2012 shipments means that buyers will need to buy some volume in the next two-three months (even if the roaster/retailer demand is lower than previous years).

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Mixed trend in groundnut oil

Our Correspondent

Rajkot, Oct. 18:

After continuous fall in price, a mixed trend was seen in groundnut oil price. In the retail market, rates were down while in wholesale markets it increased. As arrivals of groundnut have begun, prices have declined nearly Rs 90 a 15-kg tin within a week. Cotton oil prices also decreased.

On Tuesday, groundnut oil declined by Rs 10 to Rs 1,460-1,465 for 15-kg new tin. Groundnut oil 15-kg label tin was traded at Rs 1,440-1,445. Last week, groundnut oil ruled at Rs 1,550-1,555 a tin. Loose groundnut oil increased by Rs 15 to Rs 810-815 for 10 kg and *telia* tin gained Rs 23 to Rs 1,255-1,256. About 100-120 tonnes were traded in groundnut oil.

Groundnut seed was traded at Rs 625-705 for a *maund* of 20 kg in Junagadh APMC, groundnut small price stood at Rs 580-711 and bold ruled at Rs 550-652 for 20 kg. About 1 lakh bags of groundnut arrived in Saurashtra and Gujarat. Cotton oil wash declined by Rs 15 to Rs 610-613 for 10 kg. Cotton oil 15-kg new tin was decreased by Rs 10 to Rs 1,070-1,080 and 15 litre new tin went down by Rs 10 to Rs 995-990. About 250-300 tonnes were traded in cotton oil. According to a retail trader, demand in groundnut and cotton oil is lacklustre. As prices are coming down, festival demand will pick up in the coming days.

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Buyer resistance saps spot rubber

Kottayam, Oct. 18:

Spot rubber turned weak on Tuesday. According to sources, prices fell on buyer resistance following a drop in the domestic and international rubber futures.

Arrivals continued to be low though the peak production season is on, indicating that growers are holding on to their stocks. Hence, volumes were low.

Sheet rubber dropped to Rs 214 (215) a kg, according to traders. The grade slipped to Rs 214.50 (215) a kg both at Kottayam and Kochi, as reported by the Rubber Board.

The November series declined to Rs 213.24 (215.10), December to Rs 215.20 (217.25), January to Rs 216.92 (220.38) on the National Multi Commodity Exchange.

RSS 3 (spot) weakened to Rs 207.74 (208.74) a kg at Bangkok. The October futures declined ¥304.8 (Rs 195.99) from ¥312.5 a kg during the day session and then to ¥298 (Rs 191.62) in the night session on the Tokyo Commodity Exchange.

Spot rates were (Rs/kg): RSS-4: 214 (215); RSS-5: 211 (212); ungraded: 204 (206); ISNR 20: 203.50 (205) and latex 60 per cent: 130 (130.50).

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Heavy arrivals pound turmeric

Our Correspondent



Erode, Oct. 18:

Spot turmeric prices decreased by Rs 100-400 a quintal on Tuesday as arrivals swamped Erode markets that opened after three days of holiday for local elections.

On Tuesday, traders quoted lower prices, despite orders on hand as the quality of the over 14,000 bags that arrived was poor, said Mr R.K.V. Ravishankar, President, Erode Turmeric Merchants Association. A 2 per cent drop in the futures market in the morning also pulled down prices, and by the time the market regained in the noon, auctions had already begun, he said. However, quality arrivals lifted the hybrid variety by Rs 100 a quintal, he added.

Traders despatched stocks immediately to fulfil north Indian orders. Of the arrivals, 60 per cent was sold.

Farmers said they are selling even at these low prices because they need cash for Diwali and don't want to keep stocks as the season nears its end. Traders said farmers still have 10 lakh bags and they have to sell within two months, since the new crop will arrive by the third week of December.

At the Gobichettipalayam Cooperative Marketing Society, the finger variety decreased by Rs 420 a quintal because of quality, whereas the spice fell by 100 due to heavy arrivals at the Erode Turmeric Merchants Association market. Similarly, turmeric dropped by Rs 200 at the Regulated Marketing Committee. In the Erode Turmeric Merchants Association sales yard, the finger variety was sold at Rs 4,311-5,671 and the root variety at Rs 3,836-5,211 a quintal.

Salem Crop: The finger variety fetched Rs 5,017-6,009 and the root variety Rs 4,811-5,510. Out of the 3,186 bags that arrived, only 620 were sold.

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Dara wheat perks up on flour mills' buying

Our Correspondent



Karnal, Oct. 18:

Buying pushed Dara wheat prices up, while desi wheat varieties managed to maintain their previous levels amid slack buying on Tuesday.

Fall in supply against the frantic buying by the flour mills pushed dara prices up, said Mr Sewa Ram, a wheat trader. Market may continue to rule around current levels for next few days, he added.

The Dara variety increased by Rs 5 a quintal and quoted at Rs 1,115-1,130 a quintal.

Around 70 tonnes of dara variety arrived from Uttar Pradesh and the stocks were directly offloaded at the mills. Mill delivery was at Rs 1,115 a quintal, while delivery at chakki was at Rs 1,125-1,130 a quintal.

On the other hand, desi wheat prices remained almost unchanged on account of low trading. Tohfa variety ruled at Rs 2,100, Samrat quoted at Rs 1,850 a quintal, Lal Quila ruled at Rs 1,840 while Rasoi sold at Rs 1,800 a quintal. Following slack demand, traders are not placing new orders, said Mr Ram. On the National Commodity and Derivatives Exchange, wheat for October delivery decreased by Rs 5.20 to Rs 1,080.2 a quintal on Tuesday. On the MCX, wheat for December delivery was at Rs 1,185.40 a quintal.

Flour Prices

Following an uptrend in wheat prices, flour prices improved by Rs 10 and quoted at Rs 1,130-1,140 for a 90-kg bag. Similarly, *Chokar* prices went up by Rs 10 and sold at Rs 580-590 for a 49-kg bag.

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Mixed trend in edible oils market

Our Correspondent



Mumbai, Oct. 18:

The edible oils market witnessed a mixed trend on Tuesday.

Among imported oils, palmolein increased by Rs 2 for 10 kg while soya refined oil remained unchanged. Cotton refined oil was up by Rs 5 on higher demand in producing markets.

Rapeseed oil lost Rs 3. Sunflower oil remained unchanged.

Crude palm oil (CPO) futures fell on Bursa Malaysia Derivatives (BMD) as traders booked profits after soya oil futures dropped on Chicago Board of Trade on concerns about the Eurozone debt crisis. Refiners in Mumbai reduced palmolein prices tracking a bearish foreign market. Liberty directly sold 350-400 tonnes of palmolein at Rs 527-530. Indigenous oils became bearish after cotton-oil producers reduced prices by Rs 5-7. Need-based demand checked prices that rose on tight supplies of imported oils, sources said.

Liberty offered soya oil at Rs 632 and super palmolein at Rs 566. Ruchi quoted palmolein at Rs 523 and soya refined oil at Rs 628. Allana offered palmolein at Rs 525 for delivery between October 25 and Delivery 5.

Malaysia's BMD CPO's November contracts settled at MYR2,819 (MYR2,864), December MYR2,827 (MYR2,872) and January MYR2,835 (MYR2,876) a tonne. Soya oil for November delivery was at Rs 606.50 (Rs 608.90) for November delivery and at Rs 610 (Rs 613.50) on National Board of Trade in Indore.

Bombay Commodity Exchange spot prices (Rs/10 kg): groundnut oil 860 (890), soya refined oil 628 (628), sunflower exp. ref. 655 (655), sunflower ref. 725 (725), rapeseed ref. oil 688 (691), rapeseed expeller ref. 658 (661), cotton ref. oil 650 (645) and palmolein 530 (528).

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Futures drag spot chana

Our Correspondent



Indore, Oct. 18:

Barring chana and its dal, pulses ruled flat in mandis here on sluggish demand.

Chana declined on weak futures and slack demand at higher prices. Against Rs 3,350-3,375 a quintal on Monday, chana (kanta) in the spot market on Tuesday slipped to Rs 3,300-3,325. Similarly, chana (desi) declined to Rs 3,200 (Rs 3,250-3,275). Slack demand and a weaker spot chana also dragged its dal, with chana dal (bold) being quoted at Rs 4,350-4,375 (Rs 4,400-

4,425). Similarly, chana dal (medium) declined to Rs 4,250-4,75 (Rs 4,300-4,325), while chana dal (average) ruled at Rs 4,150-4,175, down Rs 50.

Masoor and its dal remained unchanged despite sluggish demand. Masoor (bold) sold at Rs 2,875, while masoor (medium) was at Rs 2,600-2,650. Masoor dal (bold) sold at Rs 3,500, masoor dal (medium) at Rs 3,400-3,425 and masoor dal (average) at Rs 3,250-3,275.

Tur and its dal also remained unchanged despite weak buying support. Tur (Maharashtra) sold at Rs 3,300, while tur (Nimari) was at Rs 2,300-2,600. On the other hand, tur (marka) ruled firm at Rs 6,200, tur dal(full) at Rs 5,500-5,600 and tur dal (*sawa* no.) at Rs 4,800-4,850.

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Diwali offtake lifts fair-quality sugar

Our Correspondent



Mumbai, Oct. 18:

Fair-quality sugar rose by Rs 5 a quintal in the spot market on Diwali demand while the fine variety remained unchanged.

Prices at the naka level have remained unchanged for the last three days now. Mill tender rates moved in a range of Rs 5. There was no demand from eastern states.

Sugar in Maharashtra remains cheaper compared with other centres, where prices remained unchanged, a wholesaler said. This month's free-sale quota is at 17.5 lakh tonnes but traders expect the Centre to reduce next month's quota as demand will drop after Diwali.

Arrivals in the Vashi market were at 57-58 truckloads while local dispatches were at 55-56 truckloads. On Monday, 18-20 mills offered tenders and sold about 70,000 bags to local traders.

Mills sold S-grade at Rs 2,695-2,780 (Rs 2,699-2,780) and M-grade at Rs 2,795-2,910 (Rs 2,795-2,910).

Bombay Sugar Merchants Association's spot rates: S-grade — Rs 2,816-2,900 (Rs 2,818-2,895); M-grade — Rs 2,914-3,062 (Rs 2,910-3,062).

Naka delivery rates: S-grade — Rs 2,770-2,820 (Rs 2,770-2,820); M-grade — Rs 2,875-3,020 (Rs 2,875-3,020).

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Coconut oil rebounds as demand revives

C.J. Punnathara



Kochi, Oct. 18:

After plunging to Rs 68 a kg in Tamil Nadu's wholesale markets, coconut oil prices have rebounded to Rs 80 a kg. The smart recovery in palm kernel oil prices to Rs 70 a kg and revival in demand are attributed as some of the prime reasons for the price recovery of coconut oil.

Coconut oil prices were quoting at Rs 80 a kg in Kerala markets as well, Mr Prakash B. Rao, Vice-President of the Cochin Oil Merchants Association (COMA), said.

Palm kernel oil is not only seen as a substitute, but is usually used in adulteration of coconut oil when price differentials are quite marked, sources in the trade said. Palm kernel oil prices were reigning as low at Rs 58 a kg last week. There was fair amount of short-covering in the futures market also that generated demand in the spot market, Mr Talat Mehmood, President of COMA said.

Superior quality

The price recovery was also expected as the prices had plunged from a high of Rs 104 couple of months ago, Mr Mehmood said.

The quality of coconut oil produced in Kerala is often superior and most often commands a better price, sources in the trade said. They expected the price differentials to re-emerge, and Kerala coconut oil prices to be higher in the coming days.

Poorer availability of coconut oil is also reported to be another factor affecting prices. But for some of the northern districts of Kerala, there are virtually no surplus copra production from the state.

The Tamil Nadu production has also been affected as local body elections are on in the State and arrivals into Kerala are also down, Mr Anandan, Former Secretary of COMA, said. The impending North-West monsoon is expected to affect conversion of coconut into copra and further into coconut oil. The availability is likely to decrease in the coming weeks and the prices could remain firm.

Meanwhile, there is fair amount of demand, both from Kerala and upcountry buyers, which is helping prices. The industrial demand for copra and coconut oil had also revived, helping the prices to remain firm.

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