

Published: April 12, 2012 02:36 IST | Updated: April 12, 2012 02:36 IST

A movement to save Kangayam cattle gaining momentum

M. J. Prabu



The Hindu MAGNIFICENT: Karthik Sivasenapathy with his prized bull. Photo: M.J. Prabu

If farmers can maintain latest motorbikes why can't they keep native cattle?

Efforts to save endangered wild animals like the tiger, are afoot today by enacting stringent laws for protecting them.

“Even the house sparrow has attracted attention in bringing about a conservation movement. But sadly, for the livestock sector in Tamil Nadu not much attention is being paid to conserve its native cattle breeds,” says Mr.Karthikeya Sivasenapathy, Managing Trustee, Senaapathy Kangayam Cattle Research Foundation, Kuttapalayam, Erode.

The foundation is situated in Kuttapalayam village, Palayakottai in the Kangayam taluk of Tirupur District (formerly Erode District), Tamil Nadu, and is ideal for cattle breeding.

Origin

The Kangayam breed derives its name from Kangayam division of the taluk spreading from Erode, Karur, Namakkal and Dindigul districts where this breed has been in existence for a long time.

The animals are medium in build although a few large specimens can be found. Considered to be a good draught breed in South India, the breed is hardy and thrives on scanty rations, according to Mr. Karthik.

Many native animals have all become extinct in the last 20 years, thanks to the government policy of introducing cross bred animals and claiming that they can yield more milk than the native ones.

“Though to some extent it may be true that the cross bred yielded some litres more, the fact that these cross breeds also got afflicted with several infections and prone to a number of ailments that their humble native counterparts were not, cannot be overlooked,” he emphasises.

Reason for decline

“Another reason for the decline in their numbers is that the government has invested several crores for the Animal Husbandry department.

“But today we cannot find even one person in the department supporting the cause of maintaining the native breed. The answer is simple. The money cannot be used for the native breeds for maintaining them healthily as the animals are by nature robust.

“So how can they get the vouchers and other documents ready to claim the amount from the government accounting it as for syringes and medicines. It can be done only if there are cross bred ones,” he smiles.

The milk of Kangayam cow has a high nutritious value with no bad fat.

The urine mixed with rotten fruits, vegetables and black gram, can be used as good bio-fertilizer popularly known as ‘amrita karaisal’.

“The urine and dung of the animals is best suited for natural farming practices,” says Mr. Karthik.

Animal price

The colour of the cow is grey or white with black markings. Kangayam cows are poor milkers; but good milkers are also found, giving 18 to 20 litres during their peak milking period.

The price of a cow ranges from Rs 15,000 to Rs. 25,000 and a bull, from Rs. 40,000 to Rs. 70,000.

“In an attempt to save the this native breed our Foundation is planning to submit a proposal to the State Government for setting up a venture on a public-private partnership model for in situ conservation and breeding of this animal. Lack of awareness of the distinct advantages of pure Kangayam breed is a reason for the reduction in popularity among breeders today,” explains Mr. Karthik.

Also reduction of grazing lands called Korangadu pasture-grazing system once abundant in Kangayam tract contributed to the decline of Kangayam cattle.

“Today some 10 lakh and odd acres of Korangadu land exist in the region against the 22 lakh acres in 1990,” he says.

Korangadu is a traditional grazing land It is a typical combination of grasses, legumes and trees, fenced with live thorny shrubs.

But how can a small farmer invest so much money to buy or maintain the breed?

“A kangayam breed or any native breed saves the farmers expenditure in buying chemicals. The waste from one animal can easily be used for 3-4 acres. In a year a farmer can easily save Rs.12 to 15,000 and get a good income from selling the calves.

Need a positive mind

“If farmers in our villages can maintain the latest motorbikes today I dont see any reason why they cannot maintain native cattle. It is all in the mind and a positive approach,” says Mr. Karthik.

Contact Mr. Karthikeya Sivasenapathy at Senapathy Kangayam Cattle Research Foundation, Kuttappalyam, Palayakottai village, Kangayam Taluk, Tirupur District 638108, Tamil Nadu, email: karthikeyasm@gmail.com, web: <http://www.kangayambull.com>, mobile: 9994433456, phone: 422 223 2818.

Cattle wastes for composite fish culture

A.P.Sivamurugan

S. Paul Sebastian

S. Nanthakumar

Composite fish culture has emerged as a vital activity in recent years owing to high net return realized from this enterprise.

Nevertheless, there still exists a large gap in the demand and supply of fish. Intensive aquaculture is not feasible for the rural people as it is expensive and involves more risk.

The low input mixed farming systems in which fish culture is a component, using and regenerating the physical and biological resources efficiently, are more suitable as they are less risky and at the same time give more fish production because of easy adaptability.

More option

The current aquaculture production can be increased to a greater extent if it can be integrated with dairy. Fish cum dairy farming is considered as an excellent innovation for effective utilization of organic wastes.

Composite fish culture comprising rohu, catla, mrigal and common carp can be fed with biogas slurry, cattle shed washings and other organic wastes for reducing the cost of feeding and to improve the growth and yield. Organic wastes on application help in the production of desired planktons, which is basic food for fish and these wastes serve as fertilizer nutrients and also consumed directly as source of feed.

Experiments conducted at Tamil Nadu Agricultural University, Coimbatore revealed that application of biogas slurry from the biogas plant at 15,000 kg ha of fish pond and cattle shed washings at 260 litres day⁻¹ for 73 days as fish feed recorded 40.45 kg and 45.92 kg, respectively .

Nutrient status

Feeding the fish with improved nutrient feed especially organic carbon and plankton status of fish pond, resulted in highest productivity.

Excess supply of cattle shed washings to fish pond resulted in mortality of fish due to high water temperature, carbon dioxide, alkalinity and low dissolved oxygen content of water in the fish pond.

Hence, for obtaining higher fish production and economic returns, growing of polyculture fish with cattle shed washings or biogas slurry as their feed is efficient and economical.

Krishi Vigyan Kendra Virinjipuram Vellore, Tamil Nadu Agricultural University

Published: April 12, 2012 00:00 IST | Updated: April 12, 2012 04:19 IST

TNAU trains tribals in millet production



K. Krishnaveni, Professor, Department of Market Extension, TNAU, explaining farm technologies to tribals in Coimbatore.

Thirty-seven Mudhuvan tribals from Chinnar Tribal Settlement of Udumalpet Taluk underwent a training on enhancing millet production here recently.

Tamil Nadu Agricultural University (TNAU) in association with the Department of Science and Technology, Government of India, organised the training.

The tribals were explained the modern production technologies for maize, ragi, samai, tenai, and varagu, for enhancing their production, by showing them the practices on the field. Different value addition technologies and techniques to increase their marketability were also shown.

There was a demonstration of modern farm implements that will help increase the efficiency of

Funded by the Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana, the project has been taken up under the Vegetable Initiative for Peri- Urban Clusters to enhance production organic vegetables and reduce the dependence on neighbouring States for vegetables.

A seed vending machine installed by the Kerala Agricultural University at the College of Agriculture, Vellayani, became operational on Tuesday.

Published: April 12, 2012 00:00 IST | Updated: April 12, 2012 04:29 IST

Rising jaggery prices bring sweet tidings for cane growers, traders

L. Renganathan

Demand for rural sweetener leaps ahead of Tamil New Year Day celebrations

Jaggery prices have shot up in Karur wholesale market and shanties as demand for the rural sweetener leaped ahead of Tamil New Year's Day celebrations.

The prices, calculated on a week-on-week rates, have recorded a marked increase, and has brought cheers to sugarcane growers who had not registered with sugar mills in the area.

Jaggery manufacturing is a popular trade in the Noyyal, Vettamangalam, Olapalayam, Kombupalayam, Punnam, Chatram, Maravapalayam, Kavandanpudur, Kulathupalayam, Semangi, Nadayanur, Karaipalayam and Muttanur regions of Karur district where sugarcane is the most important cash crop.

While many cane growers register their crops with the private sugar mill at Pugalur , those in the command area prefer to sell cane to jaggery manufacturers who abound the areas of Noyyal, Solakalipalayam and villages such as Pilikalpalayam, Anna Nagar, Ponmalarpalayam as well as Ayyampalayam and Marudur in the neighbouring Namakkal district.

Sugarcane growers claim that the jaggery manufacturers pay them Rs.1,600 per tonne and they deploy their own harvest labour force and buy the produce at the field itself while paying for the purchase straightaway in cash at the end of the harvest.

The jaggery shanty is usually held twice a week during Wednesdays and Saturdays in the region and traders not just from Karur district but also from Dindigul, Madurai, Tiruchi, Pudukkottai, Perambalur, Ariyalur, Namakkal, Salem, Erode, Tirupur and Coimbatore districts participate in the tender process for purchasing jaggery.

The produce is classified according to colour and taste. Those that gleam in bright yellow are quoted high and that which are pale and dark quote a low price.

A 30-kg "sippam" of globular jaggery variety that sold for Rs.820 last week went for Rs.890 this Saturday, while the big mould jaggery that fetched Rs.880 a sippam got producers Rs.910 for the same measure this week.

Similarly the small mould jaggery that was quoted at Rs.830 last week was quoted at Rs.870 this week bringing happiness to the faces of jaggery producers and cane growers. Cane growers and jaggery traders in Karur district aver that the jaggery prices have risen in the past few days and that the trend might hold true over the next few weeks due to festivities and holiday season ahead.

MANGALORE, April 12, 2012

Grow vegetables on the rooftop



Trying new ways:Assistant Horticulturist Keshava Shetty explaining the growth of spinach in Mangalore on Wednesday.—photo: Raghava M.

Visitors to the recently concluded three-day horticulture and floriculture show in Kadri Park would not have missed the way "basale soppu" (spinach) was being grown. The orchard-like structure where ridge gourd was hanging was fascinating too.

Such elegance could be recreated on rooftop, says Keshava Shetty, Assistant Horticulturist, who has been growing vegetables for the horticultural show. "We exhibited these structures to give an idea on how a new look could be given to growing vegetables on the rooftop," he says.

Vegetables, Mr. Shetty says, can be grown either on cement pots or on empty cement bags. “If it is on the cement pot, keep the pot on a brick or a cement block to protect the plant from heat,” he says. Mr. Shetty has been working in the Horticultural Department for over two decades. Here is the way to grow spinach , ridge gourd, bitter gourd, and tomato:

Cement pots to be used for growing vegetables should be filled with wet sand. This, Mr. Shetty says will drain out excess water out of the pot. Over the wet sand, dry cow dung should be filled till about three-fourth of the pot. While seeds of ridge gourd, bitter gourd, and tomato are sown, a shoot is placed in case of spinach. As the plant grows, natural manure is put at regular intervals.

In pots growing spinach, a bamboo shoot or a dry twig is placed in the middle of the pot to which the spinach twig is tied.

Four bamboo shoots are placed in each of the four corners. A circular or a rectangular shaped frame is placed over the four bamboo shoots. “As the spinach grows, it spreads on to the bamboo frame. This gives a canopy look,” Mr. Shetty says.

Creating orchard like structure for ridge gourd and bitter gourd, Mr. Shetty says, requires far more space on the terrace. “It will be better to have the structure on one side of a long terrace.” Around five to six cement pots growing ridge gourd or bitter gourd are placed in a line. Bamboo shoots could be placed at four corners. Rectangular roof like structure can be placed over the four bamboo shoots. “We ensure that there is appropriate spacing in the roof to allow sunlight.” Mr. Shetty says by watering and regular feeding of natural manure, these plants yield in three months. “If there is adequate water supply, people can start preparing from now. If not, you can start in June when there is rainfall,” Mr. Shetty says.

April 12, 2012

Farm query

CASTOR SOLUTION TRAP

How to make use of castor solution trap for insects in sugarcane fields? M. Chittibabu. *Salem*

Fermented castor solution trap is an insect attractant which is used to manage white grubs by attracting the adult beetles towards their source. It is natural, ecofriendly and cost effective. To

know more about it you can contact farmer Mr. G.R.Sakthivel at No. 149, Ganeshapuram, Gettavadi(P.o), Talavadi (Via), Sathyamangalam(T.K), Erode District-638461, Mobile: 94863 16041. Mr. Sakthivel has been using this technology effectively in his sugarcane fields.

BERHAMPUR, April 12, 2012

Low yield in A.P. delays mango arrival in State

Only a few varieties are now available in the wholesale market in the city

Low production of mangoes in Andhra Pradesh has affected the market of the 'king of fruits' in the State. It may be noted that Berhampur is a major transit point of mangoes for the States like Odisha, West Bengal, and Bihar. But the mango market in the city is yet to pick up. Till now the Nilakantheswar Mango market in the city that controls marketing of mangoes that reach here from southern States is not abuzz with much activity in comparison with previous years. The market has 15 wholesalers and 35 retailers of mangoes.

The market opens up from April 1 every year. According to president of the traders' association of this mango market, A. Bapi Raju, during this time every year around 60 tons of mangoes used to reach the market. But this year only seven tons of mangoes reach the market every day. The mango traders say this is due to low production of mangoes in Andhra Pradesh. Odisha mostly depends on Andhra Pradesh for mangoes. Mangoes also reach here from Karnataka and Tamil Nadu.

Only a few varieties of mangoes are reaching the wholesale market in the city. Till now only three varieties of mangoes have reached the market. They include 'Totapuri' and 'Parukulu'.

These mangoes are not of the premier variety. Yet they are highly priced this year due to shortage in supply. The mango traders say this year these mangoes are priced almost double the price in which they were being traded during the same period last year.

Mango traders expect the shortage of mangoes in Odisha market will subside to some extent in the month of May when mangoes from Karnataka and Tamil Nadu would start reaching. But they feel this year, price of mangoes may be high.

According to Soudamini Sahu, a resident of the city, says a few days ago, she bought mangoes at Rs. 50 per kg, but they were not tasty.

- *The market opens up from April 1 every year*
- *The situation may improve next month, hope traders in the State*

hindustantimes

Thu, 12 Apr 2012

weather

Delhi - INDIA

Today's Weather



Sunny

Thursday, Apr 12

Max Min

30.3° | 21.1°

Rain: 06.0 mm in 24hrs

Humidity: 48%

Wind: Normal

Sunrise: 7:14

Sunset: 17:48

Barometer: 1009

Tomorrow's Forecast



Cloudy

Friday, Apr 13

Max Min

36° | 20°

Extended Forecast for a week

Saturday Apr 14	Sunday Apr 15	Monday Apr 16	Tuesday Apr 17	Wednesday Apr 18
39° 22°	39° 23°	40° 24°	40° 25°	41° 25°
Rainy	Rainy	Rainy	Sunny	Sunny

12 APR, 2012, 04.40AM IST, SUTANUKA GHOSAL,ET BUREAU

Fruit, vegetable prices surge on water scarcity

KOLKATA: Food inflation is likely to pinch consumers at least till July as fruit and vegetable output shrinks due to erratic weather conditions and water scarcity. Edible oil and pulses are also becoming expensive on the back of lower domestic production and costlier imports.

Potato prices have appreciated by 30% in the last two weeks while fruit prices have risen 10-40%. "All-India vegetable production is down by at least 25% which is pushing up prices. Middlemen too are playing havoc by jacking up prices. If the water problem continues, vegetable production will take a further hit in April and May," said All India Vegetable Growers Association president Shriram Gadhave.

Fruit production too is down across India due to erratic weather, said Sudesh Sachdev, general secretary, Fruit Merchant Association, Azadpur mandi. In 2010-11, the country produced 230 million tonne of fruits and vegetables and government had indicated that this would go up by 10% in FY12.

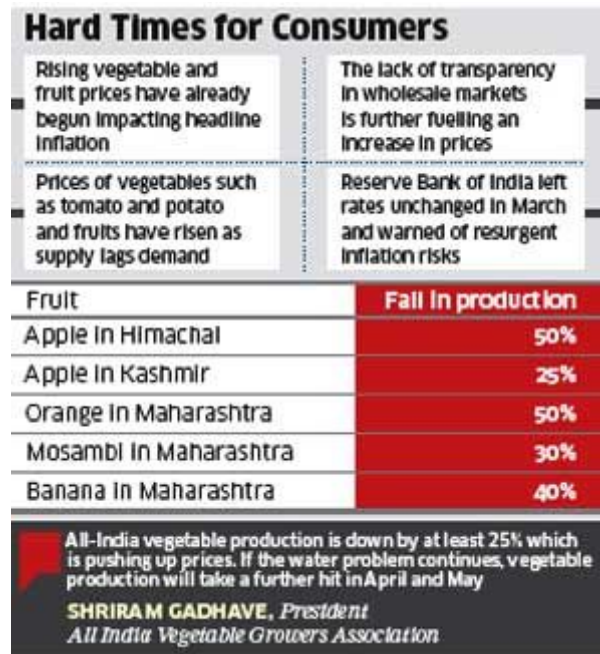
Traders say apple production in Himachal Pradesh and Kashmir has dropped by 50% and 25% respectively in FY12 as compared to the previous fiscal due to excessive heat and lack of rains. The orange crop in Maharashtra is down by half. Sweet lime (mosambi) production is less by 30% while the banana crop in Maharashtra has declined by 30-40%.

Watermelon production in Gujarat has taken a hit due to lower rains. Mango production in Andhra Pradesh has also suffered a setback due to inadequate rains and the production could fall by half. Rising vegetable and fruit prices have already begun impacting headline inflation.

"In January, inflation was at 6.55% and in February it had sprung to 6.95%. In March, prices of vegetables and fruits went up significantly and we fear that headline inflation may cross 7% mark due to this," said Anis Charavarty, director and senior economist at financial advisory firm

Deloitte Haskins & Sells.

In its mid-quarter policy review in March, Reserve Bank of India left rates unchanged and warned of resurgent inflation risks. India's February headline inflation, which is based on the wholesale price index, rose for the first time in five months to 6.95% from a year ago after a spike in vegetable prices fanned food inflation.



Prices of key vegetables, including tomato and potato, have risen in all the metros as supply is lower than demand. In Delhi, tomato has touched Rs 40 a kg due to late arrivals from Himachal Pradesh while potato, brinjal and green peas are also becoming expensive, traders said.

In Mumbai, potato is selling at Rs 15/kg, while seasonal vegetables like lady's finger and ridge gourd are retailing for Rs 50-60 per kg. The price spike will eventually take a toll on consumer diets.

"Price of vegetables and fruits has gone beyond the reach of the middle class, leave alone the poor. It is a matter of real concern because this means that an average Indian will not be able to have a balanced diet," said Dipankar Dasgupta, former professor of economics at the Indian Statistical Institute.

The lack of price transparency in wholesale markets is further fuelling the increase, says Anil Chopra, director, Field Fresh Vegfru. "Unscrupulous traders and middlemen are taking

advantage of the situation. We are buying bananas at Rs 30-70 per kg and a kilo of watermelon is costing Rs 40. This is unthinkable," he said.

Business Standard

Thursday, Apr 12, 2012

Tea production down by 43% in Jan in Assam

Supratim Dey / Kolkata/ Guwahati April 12, 2012, 0:45 IST

Assam tea industry has registered a sharp decline of almost 43 per cent in tea production in the month of January this year, as compared to the corresponding month in the previous year. The tea industry has attributed this sharp decline in production to “unfavourable weather condition”.

Moreover, the tea industry prognosticates the cumulative dip in tea production in Assam till March to be around 50 per cent as rainless weather condition prevailed till March. However, the silver lining is that “good flush (read production)” is expected in April as weather condition across Assam has improved since the onset of April. Nevertheless, the overall dip in tea production till April is feared would be around 20 per cent.

“Weather condition has been very harsh since October 2011 owing to which we are witnessing such drastic dip in production this year. However, we are expecting good flush in April as weather condition has improved now,” said Bidyananda Barkakoty, chairman of North Eastern Tea Association (NETA).

He added that even if production picks up in April, the shortfall till March would not be able to overcome and there would be an overall dip of at least 13 million kgs in the first flush (production till April), which amounts to around 20 per cent as compared to the corresponding period of last year.

As per the figures provided by the Tea Board of India, the total tea production in Assam declined by 1.46 million kgs in January this year, as compared to production in the same month

last year, which is a decline of around 43 per cent.

Assam produced 1.96 million kgs of tea in January 2012, as compared to 3.42 million kgs of tea produced in January last year.

A sharp decline has been witnessed in Brahmaputra Valley where the dip was of 1.12 million kgs (55 per cent).

However, the industry is not pessimistic as it feels the decline in production of first flush could be overcome in later months if weather condition remains favourable as first flush amounts for just 10 per cent of total production of Assam tea in a year.

Barkakoty also said that had the weather condition been conducive in the fag end of last year, the Indian tea industry would have touched the magic figure of 1,000 million kgs of production. The total tea production in India last year was 937 million kgs.

Even though on the production front things aren't very heartening, prices at auction centres are firm. Madhupur tea estate of Lakhimpur district received a record price of new season teas at Guwahati Tea Auction Centre (GTAC) on Wednesday.

The CTC tea of BP grade (grades partially determines the quality of tea at auction centres) was sold at Rs. 281 per kg, which is an all time record for the year 2012. In the same sale, CTC tea of PD grade of Madhupur tea estate was sold at Rs. 236 per kg, which is an all time record at GTAC.

Tea auction price rise highest in India

Press Trust Of India / Kolkata April 12, 2012, 0:43 IST

Among the various centres in the country, price rise in tea auction here was the highest during the period 2004 to 2011, according to the data compiled by Indian Tea Association.

While the average price in the city auction centre was USD 1.77 per kg in 2004, this had gone up to USD 2.78 per kg in 2011, it said. This was followed by Guwahati where prices increased from USD 1.52 per kg to USD 2.33 per kg. Among the international auction centres, price rise in Colombo auction centre was the highest.

In 2004, the auction price was USD 1.78 per kg which went up to USD 3.26 per kg. The Mombasa auction centre in Kenya was second where the price rise was USD 1.61 in 2004 to USD 2.98 in 2011. The North Indian variety fetched a better auction price compared to South India.

The average auction price of north Indian tea increased from USD 1.58 per kg in 2004 to USD 2.50 in 2011, while that for the south Indian variety was USD 1.06 per kg to USD 1.50 per cent.

Jeera prices dip 20% amid record arrivals

Rutam Vora / Ahmedabad April 12, 2012, 0:37 IST

Heavy arrivals and weak demand have brought down jeera (cumin seed) prices by 20 per cent since December. In the spot market in Unjha, prices were Rs 11,000-11,500 a quintal on Monday, with arrivals touching 50,000 bags (55 kg each).

According to traders, jeera acreage had almost doubled during 2011, which resulted in a bumper crop.

“In Gujarat, jeera was sown on 265,000 hectares of land, compared to 130,000 hectares in the previous year. However, there were some climatic fluctuations after Diwali, which were feared to hamper the crop. But the situation has changed and markets are flush with jeera and prices are declining constantly,” said a trader and exporter from Unjha.

In December, jeera was quoted at Rs 13,500-14,000 a quintal in Unjha. Prices have fallen 20 per cent in the past three months to trade at Rs 11,000-11,500 a quintal. In the international market, prices remained firm at \$2,500 a tonne, while that of Syria’s were higher at \$3,300 a tonne.

“We are expecting production to be 3.2-3.3 million bags, against 2.8 million bags reported last year. Domestic demand is weak and arrivals have started mounting from a usual 30,000 bags to about 40,000 bags daily. Prices have come under pressure due to this and may slide below Rs 110 a kg in the spot market amid weak domestic offtake,” said Arvind Patel, an industry analyst and former president of Unjha Vepari Mahamandal, a local merchants association. Gujarat’s jeera production is likely to be 1.2-1.3 million bags, while Rajasthan may contribute

about 1 million bags.

On the National Commodity and Derivatives Exchange, the April contract of jeera futures fell by Rs 350 a quintal and traded at Rs 11,750 a quintal. The contract ends on April 20.

“Domestic buyers are not making fresh purchases, mainly due to sliding prices. The sentiment is dull and arrivals continue to hit markets. However, we expect exports to do well, as Syria and Turkey are not being able to meet international demand,” said a jeera exporter and trader from Palanpur.

Despite domestic buyers staying away from fresh purchases, market insiders maintained exports would rise sharply, as two leading producers, Syria and Turkey, would not be able to meet the international demand due to lower crop.

“Jeera exports may touch 1.2 million bags this year, up from about 500,000 to 700,000 bags reported last year. This may partly support prices. But, looking at the quantum of arrivals hitting the markets, prices may continue to slide till at least the end of this month,” added Patel.

Unfavorable weather hits Kesar mango crop

Vimukt Dave / Mumbai/ Rajkot April 12, 2012, 0:07 IST

The list of crops being a victim to unfavorable weather in Gujarat seems to be growing day-by-day. Now fluctuating temperatures coupled with foggy and cloudy weather since last couple of days in Saurashtra and Kutch regions has damaged the Kesar mango crop.

Along with foggy weather in early morning and heat waves during the day, Kesar mango crop has delayed from mid April to end of May or in June this year.

"Fog works as acid for mango plant and forces the tree to shed the small fruit. Since last one week, mango fruit have been shed from trees in several parts of Saurashtra and Kutch," said Batuksinh Jadeja of Ashapura Farm and Nursery from Kutch.

The phenomena has also been seen in Junagadh district. "An extended period of cold season and now foggy and unstable weather has taken a toll on the Kesar mango crop. Since last one

week trees have shed the fruit prematurely in Gir area," said Harsukh Jarsaniya, secretary Talala Agriculture Produce Market Committee.

According to Jarsaniya, mango fruit in Gir area has not developed properly and as a result t Kesar mango is likely to come at the end of May or in June this year. Moreover, in this condition it is hard to predict production estimate."

In normal condition Kesar mango arrives in mid April but since last two years mango arrival has been delayed by a month due to unfavorable weather.

This year Kesar mango arrival will be delayed by almost one and a half month.

"It is hard to predict but it is sure that mango production in Saurashtra will be less than last year," said Jarsaniya.

Ravajibhai Chovatiya, head of horticulture department, Junagadh Agriculture University said, "Atmosphere is not so good for Kesar mango at present. Weather is neither cold nor hot for mango which is affecting it adversely."

During the season, about 33 percent mango crop comes to Talala APMC for auction. Most of the farmers trade their products in APMCs at Rajkot, Junagadh, and Ahmedabad, among other places. Production of Kesar mango stood at 3.33 million boxes (each box containing 10 kg) in 2011, which had declined by 959,000 boxes from 4.29 million boxes of 2010.

State kharif rice output dips 15% in 2011-12

Sadananda Mohapatra / Kolkata/ Bhubaneswar April 12, 2012, 0:03 IST

The rice output in Odisha, the fifth largest producer in the country, contracted by 15 per cent to 5.12 million tonne due to devastating floods in the 2011-12 kharif season. In the previous comparable period, the rice output stood at 6 million tonnes.

The state agriculture department officials attribute the fall in rice output to back-to-back floods during the harvesting time of the crop in September and October last year, which washed away 289,115 hectares of paddy field and affected around four million people in the state. Last year, Odisha farmers planted paddy in 3.96 million hectares as against 3.93 million hectares sowed in

the 2010-11 kharif.

Rice cultivation is key to Odisha farm output due to suitable climatic condition and food habit of the people of the state. It is the major crop in kharif planting season, constituting more than half of total cultivable area of 6.2 million hectares.

However, rice production has been sliding in the past couple of years in the state due to shrinking area. The rice output in 2010-11 was also lower at 6 million tonne, from 6.3 million tonne achieved in 2009-10 kharif season, statistical data showed.

The Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) report for the year ending March 31, 2011 showed that around 117,000 ha farm land has been diverted in the state since 2005 for non-farming use.

Of late, Odisha has been generously giving away farm and forest land for setting up industries aiming for higher revenue and more jobs, betting on large source of mineral resources it possesses.

The agricultural department has recently taken some pro-active steps to increase rice production in the state, armed by Central financial assistance under the Bringing Green Revolution to Eastern India (BGREI) scheme, aimed at pushing rice output in seven states. Odisha has been allocated Rs 217 crore in 2012-13 for research and other areas to improve yield, up from Rs 63 crore granted in the previous fiscal.

But the funding will not help improving yields overnight and rather will take some years to produce desired result, said state agricultural directorate officials. In 2011-12, the BGREI money helped increasing output by 0.3 per cent and is expected to provide 0.9 per cent growth in 2012-13 as the area that comes under funding scheme is a small fraction of total area, they said.

The farm officials also attributed the rice output fall to crop switch as farmers preferred cash-rich crops. For example, in 2011-12 crop year, corn output rose to 627,000 tonne, up from 603,000 tonne produced during 2010-11.

Turmeric loses sheen on swamping arrivals



Erode, April 11:

Spot turmeric prices decreased by Rs 300 a quintal as arrivals flooded Erode markets on Wednesday. The markets opened after being shut for 10 days for local festival.

“Over 21,000 bags arrived for sale. Stockists and local traders purchased about 40-50 per cent of total stocks that arrived. They quoted lower price,” said Mr R.K.V. Ravishankar, President, Erode Turmeric Merchants Association.

Polished turmeric fetched only 3,200/quintal at Nizamabad and it was sold at Rs 3,000 at Sangli. Therefore, Erode traders quoted lower price, he said. Stockists purchased over 7,500 bags But no exporter purchased as they did not have any bulk orders on hand.

Traders purchased negligible quantity since they expect prices to decline further. Even the Salem hybrid turmeric price decreased by Rs 250 a quintal.

At the Erode Turmeric Merchants Association sales yard, the finger variety fetched Rs 2,322-3,430 a quintal, the root variety Rs 2,439-3,290.

Salem crop: The finger variety was sold at Rs 3,290-4,089, the root variety Rs 3,091-3,635. Out of a total arrival of 4,329 bags, 2,467 were sold.

At the Regulated Marketing Committee, the finger variety was sold at Rs 3,069-3,472, the root variety Rs 2,827-3,346. 01,917 bags that arrived, 1,813 were sold.

At the Gobichettipalayam Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Society, the finger variety was sold at Rs 3,089-3,766, the root variety Rs 2,569-3,560. All the 362 bags of turmeric kept for sales were sold.

At the Erode Cooperative Marketing Society, the finger variety was sold at Rs 2,969-3,653, the root variety at Rs 2,811-3,489. Some 1,386 bags of turmeric were sold against the arrival of 1,547 bags.

Pepper slips on bearish reports from abroad

G. K. Nair



Kochi, April 11:

The pepper market on Wednesday slipped on bearish overseas reports despite limited activities. All the active contracts dropped from the previous closing.

There was liquidation in April by those who don't prefer to take delivery while there was some switching over. Those who were holding short positions on the exchange platform and those having export commitments in April, May and June were making concerted efforts to push the market down, market sources told *Business Line*.

Market opened on a firm note and then moved down to go up sharply in the afternoon. Before closing, however, it fell and closed below the previous day's closing. There was no selling pressure on the spot and the arrivals from the primary market continued to remain very thin.

Whatever material arrived at the primary markets was being picked up by interstate dealers from Tamil Nadu from the doorsteps of the dealers there at terminal market prices on cash and carry basis. Therefore, no physical pepper is available in the market, the sources said.

April contract on the NCDEX dropped by Rs 560 to the last traded price (LTP) of Rs 38,540 a quintal. May and June were down by Rs 620 and Rs 380 respectively to the LTP of Rs 39,350 and Rs 39,965 a quintal.

Turnover

Total turnover declined by 169 tonnes to 4,842 tonnes. Total open interest fell by 174 tonnes to 6,618 tonnes.

April open interest dropped by 225 tonnes to 2,692 tonnes while that of May and June moved up by 38 tonnes and 14 tonnes respectively to 3,513 tonnes and 297 tonnes.

Spot prices were down by Rs 400 a quintal in tandem with the futures market trend to close at Rs 37,100 (ungarbled) and Rs 38,600 (MG 1) a quintal.

Indian parity in the international market was down to \$7,725 a tonne (c&f) for Europe are \$8,025 a tonne (c&f) for the US and remained much above other origins. It would have been higher but for the weakening of the rupee against the dollar, they added.

Overseas trend

An overseas report today said the Indian market influences Vietnam. Even though it has corrected itself the Indian produce was much more expensive when compared with Vietnam.

Brazil has little quantities left to export and prices are also ruling much higher than from Vietnam. "So for pepper buyers Vietnam is going to be the best game in town for at least the foreseeable future. However, Vietnamese farmers and exporters are also aware of this", the report said.

Tur seen bearish on arrivals, stocks



Indore, April 11:

Even as *mandis* in Madhya Pradesh remaining closed today for the third consecutive day tur (Maharashtra) was quoted Rs 100 higher at Rs 3,850 a quintal in private trading on Wednesday, while tur (Nimari) ruled at Rs 3,000-3,500 a quintal. Prices have gone up almost Rs 200 a quintal as compared with last week. They may fall once arrival picks up in local *mandis* after they open. Traders have ruled out a long rally in tur because of the arrival of *gulabi* tur in the coming days and a large stock of imported tur. Among other pulse seeds, there was scattered demand in kanta chana in private trading and it quoted Rs 25 down at Rs 3,600 a quintal, while desi chana ruled at Rs 3,450. Chana is likely to be bearish because of the imposition of position limits in the futures market from April 10, aimed at reining in artificial speculation. Amid negligible arrival, masoor continued to rule higher in private trading, with bold masoor going as high as Rs 3,275-3,300 a quintal. In absence of any trading, urad and moong prices remained unchanged.

Arrivals may cap gains in castor



Rajkot, April 11:

Demand at lower prices lifted castor on Wednesday even as arrivals have reached over a lakh bags daily in Gujarat. Higher crop size this year will cap further gains in prices, said a trader here.

Castorseed's June contract was up Rs 9 to Rs 3,576 a quintal on the Rajkot Commodity Exchange. On the National Commodity and Derivatives Exchange, the April contract increased by Rs 11 to Rs 3,520 a quintal with an open interest of 13,230 lots, while May gained Rs 2 to Rs 3,574 with an open interest of 8,230 lots.

About 1.1 lakh bags of castorseed arrived in Gujarat and sold at Rs 665-675 for 20 kg, including around 13,000-14,000 bags in Saurashtra that quoted at Rs 640-675.

According to market sources, prices increased on Wednesday as in the past few days castor had declined on higher arrival and profit booking. But after that, demand has risen at the lower level.

Rice prices hold firm

Our Correspondent



Karnal, April 11:

The rice market was steady on Wednesday after a rally in the last 20 days, with prices of aromatic and non-basmati rice ruling firm at previous levels.

The market has seen some buying and prices of Pusa- 1121 have increased by Rs 2,000 a quintal over the last few weeks. Traders expect aromatic varieties to see some correction in near future while major changes are unlikely in non basmati varieties.

In the physical market, Pusa-1121 (steam) quoted at Rs 6,000 a quintal while Pusa-1121 (sela) sold at Rs 4,900-5,000 a quintal.

Duplicate basmati sold at Rs 4,600 a quintal. Pure basmati (raw) was at Rs 5,250 a quintal while pure basmati (sela) sold at Rs 4,780 a quintal.

For the brokens of Pusa-1121, Tibar sold at Rs 3,400-3,550, Dubar at Rs 2,700-2,920 while Mongra was trading at Rs 1,900-2,350 a quintal.

Sharbati (steam) sold at Rs 3,400-3,600 a quintal while Sharbati (sela) was at Rs 3,500 a quintal.

Sugandha (steam) went for Rs 3,650-3,750 a quintal while PR-14 (steam) sold at Rs 2,300-2,450 a quintal.

PR varieties continued to rule flat, Permal (raw) sold at Rs 1,900-2,020 a quintal. Permal (sela) at Rs 1,800-2,050, PR-11 (sela) at Rs 2,220-2,370 and PR-11 (raw) at Rs 2,140-2,300 a quintal.

Rice stocks

As on April 1, rice stock in central pool was around 333.50 lakh tonnes, which is 191.50 lakh tonnes higher than required availability. The normal requirement of the stock is 142 lakh tonnes under buffer norm including reserve stock in April.

Volume rises at Coonoor tea auction

P.S. Sundar



Coonoor, April 11:

A volume of 9.86 lakh kg will be offered for Sale No: 15 of the auctions of Coonoor Tea Trade Association to be held on Thursday and Friday, reveals an analysis of listing by brokers.

It is about 24,000 kg less than last week's offer and about 5.25 lakh kg less than the offer this time last year.

Of the 9.86 lakh kg on offer, 7.11 lakh kg belongs to the leaf grades and 2.75 lakh kg belongs to the dust grades.

As much as 9.20 lakh kg belongs to CTC variety and only 0.66 lakh kg, orthodox variety.

Last week, in the leaf market, HUL operated on good medium grades and Tata Global Beverages lent useful support. Godfrey Philips India was selective. Duncans Tea Ltd did not operate.

In the dust market, HUL and Tata Global Beverages showed interest on better medium sorts. Godfrey Philips was selective.

Rubber Board plans quality campaign for growers

Our Correspondent



Kottayam, April 11:

The Rubber Board is organising an awareness campaign for the small and marginal rubber growers to improve the quality of sheet rubber. The programme, , in co-operation with Automotive Tyre Manufacturers' Association (ATMA), All India Rubber Industries Association (AIRIA) and Indian Rubber Dealers' Federation (IRDF), will be launched at Mammen Mappilai Hall, Kottayam, on April 18. The campaign is scheduled to be conducted in the traditional rubber growing belt of Kerala, Tamil Nadu and Karnataka from May 8 to July 8.

The tyre industry consumes major portion of natural rubber produced in the country. The sector is switching to radial tyres, which have relatively superior quality and better life than the cross ply tyres. Sheet rubber of RSS 4 and above grades is essential for the manufacture of radial tyres. The growers should, therefore, be prepared to improve the quality of their sheet rubber,

so as to keep the demand intact. It is in this backdrop that the Board is conducting the mass contact programme.

In addition to the main theme of quality improvement of sheet rubber, topics such as use of root trainer plants, soil moisture conservation, low frequency of tapping, etc. will be discussed in the campaign meetings.

Nilgiri planters to boost speciality tea output

Vishwanath Kulkarni



New Delhi, April 11:

Planters in Nilgiri Hills are planning to step up the production of the speciality teas, buoyed by the response at the recent auction.

Orthodox varieties were in good demand at the Nilgiris Winter Speciality Tea Auctions, organised by the Nilgiris Planters Association in Coonoor early last month. The speciality teas produced in the region include the high value black tea, certified organic tea, golden tips, silver tips, white teas, green teas, Oolongs and winter teas.

“About 1,500 kg of speciality teas were sold in the March auctions,” said Mr Suresh Jacob, Chairman of the Nilgiris Planters Association (NPA).

The maximum price fetched was Rs 9,000 a kg, while the minimum was Rs 450 a kg, he said. The average price for the normal orthodox teas is about Rs 100 a kg.

“Speciality teas produced during winter through special plucking and manufacturing process has inherent quality characteristics, which have not been tapped. There is a big potential. We have made a start and expect to increase the production in the years to come,” Mr Jacob said.

Planters also plan to start production of the speciality teas in the dry period during monsoon, said Mr Jacob. The organised tea sector in Nilgiris consists of about 35 companies that produce some 3 million kg of orthodox teas during the winter season.

“We want the speciality teas to be around 10 per cent of the winter tea output, depending on the demand,” Mr Jacob said.

Most of the demand comes from the US and Europe. Of the annual tea output of 100 million kg in the Nilgiris region, about 20 million kg is orthodox variety and the rest is CTC.

The NPA also proposes to conduct special auctions during September this year. “We plan to hold the auctions twice a year in March and September,” Mr Jacob said.

Further, the NPA plans to leverage the Geographical Indication (GI) status granted to the Nilgiris tea and brand them accordingly in the overseas market. The Tea Board of India has got the GI tag registered for the Nilgiris teas about a year ago. “We have made an application to the Tea Board to allow us to use the GI logo on our products,” Mr Jacob said.

Buyer resistance saps spot rubber



Kottayam, April 11:

Domestic rubber prices declined on Wednesday. In spot, the market slipped on buyer resistance following moderate losses on the National Multi Commodity Exchange (NMCE). International indices were also bearish and the markets seemed to be expecting further slip in prices.

Sheet rubber weakened to Rs 198 from Rs 198.50 a kg, according to traders and the Rubber Board.

Among other reports, the key TOCOM rubber futures moved down to a two-month low as investors reduced their exposure due to the uncertainty over global growth prospects ahead of the Chinese economic data to be announced on Friday.

In futures, the April series dropped to Rs 194.50 (195.41), May to Rs 200.49 (202.91), June to Rs 205.98 (208.09), July to Rs 207.50 (210.90) and August to Rs 203.52 (203.65) a kg for RSS 4 on the NMCE.

RSS 3 (spot) slipped to Rs 200.28 (201.45) a kg at Bangkok. The April futures for the grade declined from ¥307.4 a kg to ¥299.9 (Rs 191.23) in the night session on the Tokyo Commodity Exchange.

Spot rates were (Rs/kg): RSS-4: 198 (198.50); RSS-5: 196 (196.50); ungraded: 190 (192); ISNR 20: 196 (196.50) and latex 60 per cent: 128.50 (129).

Onion rises on quality arrivals

M R Subramani



Chennai, April 11:

Onion prices have improved in the last few days on quality arrivals of the rabi crop and export demand.

“Prices are now ruling above Rs 400 a quintal since the quality of rabi onion is good. Farmers, too, are restricting the release of the produce in the market,” said Mr Rupesh Jaju, Director of Nashik-based United Pacific Agro Pvt Ltd. Mr Jaju's firm exports onions.

Rabi onion generally commands a higher price than the ones produced in kharif due to its longer shelf life. Onion produced in the rabi season can be stored for 5-6 months.

According to Mr Jaju, arrivals totalled 25,700 tonnes in Maharashtra since Monday. About 45 per cent of the arrivals were recorded in Nashik district, while 20 per cent of the arrivals were in Ahmednagar district.

On an average, quality onions were quoted at Rs 518 a quintal, while fair average quality ones ruled at Rs 405. The average price of inferior quality onions was Rs 208.

At the Nashik Agricultural Produce Marketing Committee, the modal price or the rate at which most trades took place on Wednesday was Rs 425. Around the same time last week, modal prices had hit Rs 490.

Export demand is good for countries in the Gulf and Far-East.

“Indonesia has begun buying Indian onions, while the Philippines will begin importing Indian onions in a month's time,” said Mr Jaju.

Prices are likely to rule around this level for the next two weeks. “Thereafter, they could rise marginally by Rs 15-20 a quintal,” said Mr Jaju.

Cotton output estimate likely to be revised upwards at 35.2 m bales

PTI



New Delhi, April 11:

The Agriculture Ministry is likely to revise upwards the country's cotton production estimate by 3.5 per cent to a record 35.2 million bales for the current marketing year, a Government official said.

The Ministry releases four advance estimates at different stages of crop growth. In its second advance estimate, cotton production was pegged at 34 million bales for the ongoing 2011-12 marketing year ending September.

“Cotton production has slightly improved and is expected to touch an all-time record of 35.2 million bales this year,” a senior Agriculture Ministry official told PTI.

The change in output figures will reflect in the third estimate, which will be released later this month, the official said.

Last year, cotton production was at 33 million bales. One bale contains 170 kg of cotton.

Cotton, a predominantly monsoon (kharif) season crop, is planted from the end of April through September and harvested from October.

Two-thirds of the country’s cotton is produced in Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat and Orissa where much of the crop is rain fed.

Bt cotton now accounts for 92 per cent of the total cotton area and over 95 per cent of India’s cotton production. There are an estimated 5.5 million cotton farmers, with the average farm size at 1.5 hectares.