THE HINDU

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‘Advocate participatory approach for sustainable farming'

Special Correspondent

For bountiful harvests:Additional Chief Secretary R.Vijayakumar (second left) at a workshop on Soil and Water Conservation in Udhagamandalam on Tuesday. -Photo: M. Sathyamoorthy

The need to combat challenges relating to agriculture in Tamil Nadu in a systematic and scientific manner was stressed by the Additional Chief Secretary, Department of Planning and Special Initiatives R.Vijayakumar here on Tuesday.

He was inaugurating a sensitization workshop cum stakeholders consultation on, ‘Soil and Water Conservation and Watershed Management' organized by the Central Soil and Water Conservation Research and Training Institute (CSWCRTI) at Rees Corner.

Advocating the participatory approach, he said that only through the active participation of the agriculturists at various stages can sustainable farming be ensured.

The environmental changes should be taken into consideration.

Stating that officials can only facilitate, he said that people should take charge of programmes.

He recalled that the Training and Visit System, a farmer-oriented programme implemented earlier had not been successful because it had failed to make the farmer take charge of it.

Different technologies should be adopted for different eco systems. Socio economic conditions should not be lost sight of. Stating that agriculture also was a business, he said that the health of the soil played a vital role.

The Registrar, Tamil Nadu Agricultural University (TNAU), P.Subbian, expressed concern over the rapidly falling ground water level. Though rainfall was abundant it was not well distributed.

High intensity rainfall led to run off which in turn resulted in soil erosion.Stating that high priority should be accorded to soil conservation, he pointed out that it took between 600 to 1,000 years to form one inch of top soil.Soil erosion should be arrested at the macro and micro levels. It should be ensured that the benefits of technology reach the farmers.India is now self sufficient in food production. However its requirement is steadily increasing. Natural resources are dwindling.The Project Director, Hill Area Development Programme (HADP), Sreenivas R.Reddy, said that officials should focus on the holistic development of watershed regions.

In addition to the technical and hydrological components the human and social angles should also be taken care of.The head, CSWCRTI, O.P.S.Khola, emphasised the need to give maximum importance to water management.Available water should be used judiciously. The objective of the workshop to get vital inputs for guiding the research and development programmes of the Institute during the 12th plan.

The Senior Scientist, CSWCRTI, S.Manivannan proposed a vote of thanks.

People urged to take charge of programmes conducted in their region

Published: April 25, 2012 00:00 IST | Updated: April 25, 2012 04:21 IST

Plans afoot to boost sericulture cultivation

insulation:S. Natarajan, Collector, releasing parasitoid to protect mulberry plant at a demonstration plot at Kudavasal recently.

An estimated 500 acres will be brought under mulberry cultivation in Tiruvarur district and the Sericulture Department has planned to launch an intensive campaign among farmers to shift to this new cropping pattern from their conventional crops.Only 22 acres had been brought under cultivation so far, though the district is ideal for developing bivoltine sericulture (venpattu).The Sericulture Department conducted a survey and identified three villages–Vaduvur, Thenpathi, and Melnagai–in Mannargudi block in the district for developing sericulture says S.Natarajan, District Collector.Addressing farmers at a demonstration plot organised jointly by the Sericulture and Agriculture Technology Management Agency at Kudavasal near here recently, the Collector said that the district was ideally suited for bivoltine sericulture.

Pointing out that sericulture was a viable alternative to conventional crops such as paddy or maize , the Collector said that the irrigation facility and the humidity were favourable factors for the crop. He said that the State government has sanctioned subsidy to farmers to encourage mulberry cultivation and appealed to farmers to avail themselves of the same.D.Natarajan, assistant inspector of sericulture, said that the awareness campaign would be launched through the members of women self-help groups and ‘Pudhu Vazhvu' members. The topography of these three villages favoured sericulture cultivation.The coastal belts of Nagapattinam also registered a higher yield in cocoon.Kabilan, joint director of agriculture, and Senthilkumar, scientist from Krishi Vigyan Kendra, clarified farmers' doubts at the session.N. Jeevakani, District Revenue Officer, was present.

Published: April 25, 2012 00:00 IST | Updated: April 25, 2012 04:21 IST

Drip irrigation gaining ground among sugarcane farmers

drop by drop:Collector Darez Ahamed inspecting an equipment for drip irrigation under sustainable sugarcane initiative near Perambalur.

An extent of 300 acres of sugarcane is being covered under drip irrigation under the ‘sustainable sugarcane initiative' (SSI) technique in the district, said Collector Darez Ahmed.

Explaining the achievements of the SSI, he said that drip irrigation was gaining popularity among sugarcane growers, courtesy various farmer-friendly programmes particularly maximum utilisation of irrigation water.

He said that each farmer had been sanctioned a subsidy of Rs.43,816 for setting up minor irrigation equipment.

Work on setting up drip irrigation equipment had been completed on a majority of area.

“In addition, we also sanction seedlings to the farmers and subsidy of Rs. 10, 000 for soluble fertiliser,” he said.

Seeds ready for kuruvai

The district administration has made arrangements for the supply of certified seeds for ‘kuruvai' cultivation and 20 tonnes of ‘ADT-43' and ‘ADT-45' have been stocked.

‘Samba' was raised on 13,872 hectares and harvest was nearing completion. About 6,350 hectares was brought under ‘system of rice intensification' technique which registered an average yield of 12,300 tonnes per hectare.

DINDIGUL, April 25, 2012

“Raise procurement price of milk”

They also ask for subsidy for cattle feed

In protest:Members of Milk producers association staging a demonstration in Dindigul on Tuesday .— PHOTO: G. KARTHIKEYAN

Members of Tamil Nadu Milk Producers Association staged a demonstration near Dindigul Municipality demanding hike in procurement price of milk and offer subsidy for cattle feed here on Tuesday.

Presiding over the demonstration, state president K. Mohammad Ali said that NABARD should offer cattle loan liberally to cattle growers to buy cattle.

The government should supply cattle feed with 50 per cent subsidy. Price of cow milk should be hiked to Rs.25 per litre and buffalo milk at Rs.35 a litre. A subsidy of Rs.3 per litre could be given as subsidy to cattle growers.

They said the present milk procurement price was far low and did not match even production cost, he added.

DINDIGUL, April 25, 2012

Conduct soil test, farmers told

Soil test will be done in farmers' festivals at several villages in the district, said Collector N. Venkatachalam.

He was distributing welfare aid to farmers at a farmers' festival at A. Vellode near here on Tuesday.

Soil test was essential to know the condition of soil and identify suitable crop, water, fertilizer and pesticide use. Technical experts will test soil samples brought by farmers and give them suitable advice. They will issue soil health card to farmers after testing the condition of soil. He appealed to all farmers to test their soil and obtain soil health card to sow suitable crop and get better harvest. It will help them scale down production costs, he advised.

This festival was being celebrated in 359 revenue villages for the past 11 days. It will continue till May 17. Main objective of the festival was to clear doubts of farmers and enlighten them by giving latest technologies to them. Experts will advise them about advanced farming method and good agriculture practices.

NEW DELHI, April 25, 2012

India poised for record foodgrains production

Total output in 2010-11 third estimates was 235.88 million tonnes

India is all set to achieve an all-time high of foodgrains production at 252.56 million tonnes in 2011-12 with a record output of wheat, rice and cotton in the third advance estimates released here in the Capital.

The total output in 2010-11 third estimates was 235.88 million tonnes.

Wheat production is expected to be a record 90.23 million tonnes against 84.27 million tonnes last year, while rice output is all set to be 103.41 million tonnes compared to 94.11 million tonnes in the third advance estimates of 2010-11. The development is good except for some concerns about storage.

“I am extremely happy to see this figure. I would like to congratulate the farming community. We have set a new record in production of foodgrains, rice, wheat and cotton,” said Union Agriculture Minister Sharad Pawar after releasing the estimates. Earlier he inaugurated the Mahalanobis National Crop Forecast Centre.

The output of coarse cereals is expected to be 41.91 million tonnes against 40.21 million tonnes in third estimates last year and pulses at 17.02 million tonnes against 17.29 million tonnes at this time last year.

Oilseeds output is put at 30.06 million tonnes as against 30.25 million tonnes in 2010-11 third estimates. Cotton production at 35.2 million bales (of 170 kg each) is higher than 33.9 million bales.

Sugarcane output is expected to be 351.19 million tonnes compared to 340.5 million tonnes in last year's third advance estimates.

The government will release two more projections this year.

Asked about the forecast by international experts of below normal monsoon this year, Mr. Pawar said he will wait for the reports of the concerned departments. “My feedback is that there is nothing to worry this year.”

- *Record output of wheat, rice and cotton in third advance estimates: Pawar*
- *Total expected output at 252.56 m tonnes against 235.88 m tonnes in 2010-11*

hindustantimes

Wed,25 Apr 2012

weather

Delhi - INDIA

Today's Weather

Sunny

Wednesday, Apr 25

Max	Min
37.6º	21.4º

Rain: 0 mm in 24hrs	**Sunrise:** 7:14
Humidity: 58%	**Sunset:** 17:48
Wind: Normal	**Barometer:** 1008

Tomorrow's Forecast

Sunny

Thursday, Apr 26

Max	Min
38º	23º

Extended Forecast for a week

Friday	Saturday	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday
Apr 27	Apr 28	Apr 29	Apr 30	May 1
37º | 23º	40º | 23º	38º | 24º	38º | 25º	38º | 24º
Partly Cloudy	Rainy	Rainy	Rainy	Partly Cloudy

THE ECONOMIC TIMES

24 APR, 2012, 04.38PM IST, PTI

Pulses remain steady in thin trading

NEW DELHI: Steady conditions prevailed on the wholesale pulses market today with most of pulses after trading in a limited range on scattered deals, settled around previous levels.

Arrivals and offtake too remained at a low ebb and business volume of poor.

Traders said absence of necessary activity by stockists amid tight money market conditions mainly kept most of pulses steady at previous levels.

The following are today's pulses rates per quintal: Urad 3,000-3,600, Urad Chilka (local) 4,000-4,300, best 4,400-4,900, Dhoya 4,950-5,050, Moong 3,500-4,500, Dal Moong Chilka local 4,250-4,650, Moong Dhoya local 4,800-4,900 and best quality 5,500-5,600.

Masoor small 3,150-3,450, bold 3,300-3,550, Dal Masoor local 3,900-4,000, best quality 3,850-4,050, Malka local 3,900-3,950, best 4,100-4,200, Moth 2,800-3,200, Arhar 3,300-3,600, Dal Arhar Dara 4,700-4,900.

Gram 3,500-4,200, Gram Dal (local) 4,200-4,300, best quality 4,350-4,450, Besan (35 kg) Shakti bhog 1,700, Rajdhani 1,700, Rajmah Chitra 6,

24 APR, 2012, 04.36PM IST, PTI

Crude palm oil futures fall on profit-booking

NEW DELHI: Crude palm oil futures prices fell by Rs 3.80 to Rs 617 per 10 kg today, as speculators booked profits at prevailing higher levels due to a weak trend at spot market on sluggish demand.

A weakening trend in overseas markets also put pressure on the prices.

At the Multi Commodity Exchange, crude palm oil for April declined by Rs 3.80, or 0.61 per cent, to Rs 617 per 10 kg in business turnover of 36 lots.

In a similar fashion, the oil for May contract traded lower by Rs 3.40, or 0.54 per cent, to Rs 625 per 10 kg in 132 lots.

Meanwhile, July-delivery prices fell by 0.8 per cent to USD 1,123 a tonne on the Malaysia Derivatives Exchange.

Analysts said besides, profit-booking by speculators at existing higher levels, weak global trend influenced the crude palm oil prices at futures market.

24 APR, 2012, 04.34PM IST, PTI

Potato futures down 1.04% on higher supply

NEW DELHI: Potato futures prices fell by Rs 11.90 to Rs 1,128.60 per quintal today, due to the increased supplies in the physical market following persistent arrivals from producing region against lower demand.

Sentiments weakened further as speculators offloaded their positions driven by subdued demand in the spot market.

At the Multi Commodity Exchange, potato for June delivery fell by Rs 11.90, or 1.04 per cent, to Rs 1,128.60 per quintal with a business volume of 29 lots.
The commodity for delivery in May declined by Rs 9.60, or 0.89 per cent, to Rs 1,066.90 per quintal, with a business volume of 123 lots. Marketmen said increased supplies in the physical market following persistent arrivals from producing region against lower demand in the spot market.

24 APR, 2012, 04.32PM IST, PTI

Cardamom futures up on spot demand

NEW DELHI: Cardamom prices rose by Rs 10.20 to Rs 1,221.90 per kg in futures trade today, largely in tandem with a firming trend in spot markets on on the back of pick-up in demand amid restricted arrivals from producing regions.

On the Multi Commodity Exchange cardamom for June delivery surged Rs 10.20, or 0.84 per cent, to Rs 1,221.90 per kg in a business volume of 218 lots.

The spice for delivery in May month contract gained by Rs 9.80 or 0.87 per cent to Rs 1,133 per kg in a business volume of 973 lots.

Traders said pick-up in demand in the spot market against restricted arrivals from producing regions on expectations of a decline in production in current year, attributed to the rise in cardamom prices in the futures market.

Business Standard

Wednesday, Apr 25, 2012

Basmati traders may gain from exports to China

Komal Amit Gera / Chandigarh April 25, 2012, 0:17 IST

India's basmati rice exporters may now look east, as China has lifted its barriers on the import of basmati rice from India.

Given that Indian exporters were of late confronted with delayed payments from Iran (the largest importer of basmati from India), the opening of a new market would help them consolidate turnover.

Basmati rice is mainly grown in the Indo-Gangetic belt — Punjab, Haryana and some parts of Uttar Pradesh.

According to J K Suri, chairman of Amir Chand Jagdish Kumar Exports Ltd (Aeroplane brand basmati), Chinese consumers are used to having sticky rice and may not quickly accept basmati. But the branding activities would help change the consumer behaviour.

Suri, whose firm exports to 40 countries, says exports to China will give an additional logistic margin to Indian exporters. Adds I S Gumber, director (finance) of Lakshmi

Overseas Ltd: “China is a huge market. We can begin with the Horeca (hotel, restaurant and catering) industry.”

The big hotel chains would be the maiden consumers in China, he notes. “Trade with China may offer the sustainability of exporting in the future, as China has a big population with rising disposable income.”

The changing global propositions have favoured India in the export of basmati, as Pakistan is sending most of its basmati rice to Afghanistan. An Indian exporter has to incur an additional $280 per tonne of logistic cost for exporting to Afghanistan. Exports from Pakistan are largely consumed in Afghanistan; so the competition between the two counties has sapped.

Indian exporters fetch $1,100-$1,350 per tonne (depending on the quality) of basmati rice exports. They export Pusa1121 (a hybrid variety), basmati traditional, Pusa and Jammu rice.

Basmati exports stood at close to 2.2 million tonnes in 2010-11 and 2.5 million tonnes in 2011-12.

According to traders, it is pre-mature to surmise the acreage and output of basmati this year, as sowing has not started. They, however, confirm there has been enough export surplus. The price of basmati in the domestic market is likely to remain between Rs 55,000 to Rs 60,000 per tonne.

Vijay Setia of Rice Exporters Association of India says the Chinese market is under-exploited. The new move, thus, will help the farmers as well as the traders, he adds.

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Demand surges for tender coconut

Early summer and spread of tourism result in spurt in prices of the edible nut

George Joseph / Kochi April 25, 2012, 0:15 IST

An early scorching summer in much of the country has resulted in a steep rise in demand for tender coconuts, especially in the south. The price of a nut has gone up to Rs 30 in major metropolitan cities. The current average price is Rs 25, up from Rs 15-18 just a few months earlier.

Thanks also to a very active domestic tourism season and despite higher output, there is an acute shortage of tender coconuts. A strong shift towards natural drinks like tender coconut water due to health concerns has also helped raise demand sharply. Tamil Nadu supplies the highest number of tender nuts, followed by Karnataka and Kerala. But producers are not in a position to supply automatically in line with market demand.

A major chunk of coconut farms in Karnataka and Tamil Nadu concentrate on producing the tender variety. This is less so in Kerala.

Mathew Joseph, a local vendor here of tender coconuts says: “Supply from Tamil Nadu has come down sharply, as they have to supply to the entire south India.”

He says local supply is low as copra production is active in the summer season. “Our stock ends by the afternoon, when summer heat is at its peak and we cannot sell in the evenings when tourists arrive in large numbers,” he says.

According to Thalath Mohammed, president, Cochin Oil Merchants Association, copra output in Kerala had not been affected, as coconut production is at a peak this year. “Extremely hot climate makes copra producers happy and supply of both copra and coconut oil are at a peak now. There is good demand for coconut oil, as it is the cheapest edible oil in the country for the time being. Most edible oils now attract a price tag of Rs 100-plus per kg in retail selling, but coconut oil costs Rs 70/kg. So, blending of coconut oil with other oils like sunflower oil and groundnut oil is on the rise. Hence, there is good demand for coconut oil from the north Indian market, he says.

“As the supply from Andhra Pradesh, Kerala and Tamil Nadu has increased heavily in this season, the oil price remains on the lower side,” he adds.

The wholesale tag in Kochi is Rs 6,500 per quintal, down from Rs 7,000 per kg some weeks ago.

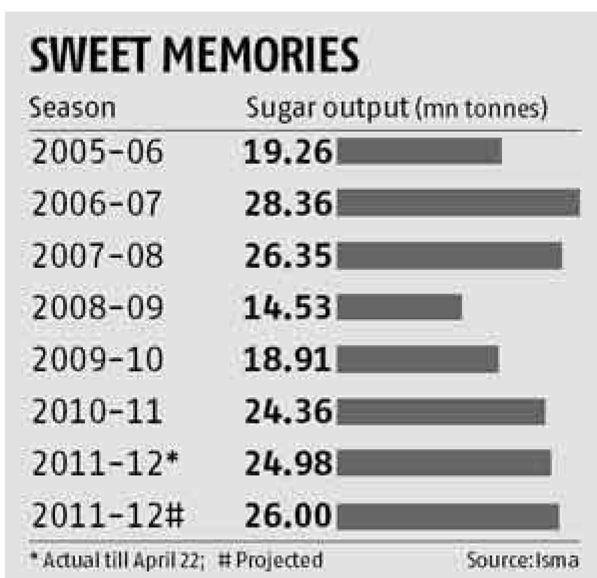
In Kerala, demand for coconut oil is on the rise as palm oil, the alternative cooking medium, is now Rs 75 per kg. Thalath said there was high demand for coconut oil from fast moving consumer goods makers but a strong supply chain has kept prices in check. He expects a steady price for the time being, but a change in climate may bring a shift.

Sugar output nears 25 mt, next year may see marginal drop

Cyclical nature of production and rising cane arrears likely to affect sugar production in 2012-13: ISO

BS Reporter / New Delhi April 25, 2012, 0:12 IST

The country's sugar output has inched close to 25 million tonnes (mt) so far in the current season (October-September) of the crop, showing an increase of 13 per cent over the corresponding period of the preceding year.The Indian Sugar Mills Association (Isma) data says 24.98 mt has been produced till April 22, compared to 22.15 mt in the corresponding period of the 2010-11 season. The production figure, according to Isma, would reach 26 mt in 2011-12. The annual domestic demand is 22 mt.According to Isma, Maharashtra has produced 8.71 mt till April 22, which is 8.5 per cent higher than the year-ago period. Uttar Pradesh produced 6.94 mt, up by 18 per cent compared to last year. The southern states of Karnataka and Tamil Nadu, too, reported higher production of 3.75 mt and 1.52 mt, respectively.The International Sugar Organisation (ISO) sees India's output at 24.5 mt next year.



Domestic production in the next season, beginning this October, could dip by five per cent to 24.5 mt, while being higher than the domestic consumption of 22 mt. “Our understanding is that India’s sugar production may go down slightly from 25.8 mt this year,” said Sergey Gudoshnikoy, senior economist with the London-based ISO.

The cyclical nature of production and piling cane arrears could affect production next year, Gudoshnikoy told reporters on the sidelines of the 41st session of the International Sugar Council here.

“The production would be comfortable to meet the domestic demand,” he added.

ISO had forecast 25.8 mt production for the current season against which production is expected to cross 26 mt. Vinay Kumar, managing director of the National Federation of Cooperative Sugar Factories, says production in 2012-13 would touch 25 mt, based on current sowing.According to Isma director-general Abinash Verma, the country will have a surplus next year. However, it “will be too early” to estimate the exact production, he noted.According to official data, Indian farmers have planted sugarcane on 4.41 million hectares, so far in 2012-13, as compared to 4.32 million hectares in the year-ago period.

THE HINDU Business Line

Sugar rules steady on ample inflow

Our Correspondent

Mumbai, April 24:

Sugar prices ruled firm on Tuesday at the upper naka and tender level, while it remained unchanged in the spot market . In the physical market, the sentiment remained cautious due to the routine local demand and ample supply from mills.

The fine variety sugar was in demand and pushed up prices at the naka level by Rs 20 a quintal for S-grade and Rs 40 for M-grade. Mill tender rates were higher by Rs 10-20, as producers held the price on the expectation of a positive export move at Empowered Group of Ministers meeting to be held soon.Local demand was less than expected due to month-end, but traders are optimistic about improvement in demand from next week, sources said. Stockists have slowly started covering fine variety on expectation of demand rising.In Maharashtra's neighbouring States buying is still lagging as production in main producing States, especially Karnataka, Uttar Pradesh and Maharashtra, is higher this year. Bulk consumers demand is also likely to improve.On Monday about 12-13 mills offered tenders and sold 38,000-40,000 bags in the range of Rs 2,780-2,840 (Rs 2,780-2,830) for S-grade and Rs 2,890-2,960 (Rs 2,870-2,940) for M-grade.

The Bombay Sugar Merchants Association's spot rates (Rs/quintal): S-grade Rs 2,902-2,952 (Rs 2,902-2,952) and M-grade Rs 3,022-3,121 (Rs 3,022-3,121).

Naka delivery rates: S-grade Rs 2,850-2,910 (Rs 2,870-2,900) and M-grade Rs 2,990-3,060 (Rs 2,950-3,040).

Spot rubber improves on covering buys

Kottayam, April 24:

Spot rubber improved on Tuesday. The market gained strength on covering purchases, possibly following a better closing on the National Multi Commodity Exchange (NMCE). Declines in the international futures market and absence of quantity buyers continued to dampen sentiments. The trend was mixed.

Sheet rubber increased to Rs 192.50 (192) a kg, according to traders. The grade weakened to Rs 193 (193.50) a kg both at Kottayam and Kochi, as quoted by the Rubber Board.

The May series recovered marginally to Rs 189.90 (188.12), June to Rs 196.75 (195.11), July to Rs 201.25 (199.53) and August to Rs 200 (198.82) while the October series weakened to Rs 198.10 (200.92) a kg on NMCE.

The Tokyo rubber futures went lower as uncertainty on Europe's debt crisis and improving supplies weighed on the market. But steady oil prices and better demand supported the prices at lower levels.

RSS 3 (spot) closed firm at Rs 199.73 (199.08) a kg at Bangkok. The May futures declined to ¥288.6 (Rs 187.48) from ¥292.6 during the day session but then remained inactive in the night session on the Tokyo Commodity Exchange.

Spot rates were (Rs/kg): RSS-4: 192.50 (192); RSS-5: 191 (190.50); ungraded: 187.50 (188); ISNR 20: 192.50 (192.50) and latex 60 per cent: 123 (123).

50% of turmeric on offer goes unsold

Our Correspondent

Erode, April 24:

Lack of buying continued to pound spot turmeric as its prices dropped on Tuesday. The fall was despite lower arrivals.

“Turmeric arrivals decreased by 1,000 bags to 14,000 bags. There was big interest in purchasing the stocks. Only local traders purchased. One or two exporters purchased ‘particular' varieties of turmeric to build stocks,” said Mr R.K.V. Ravishankar, President, Erode Turmeric Merchants Association.Local traders, after getting orders from masala firms and turmeric powder manufacturers, purchased turmeric quoting Rs 200 a quintal lower than Monday. But they quoted Rs 50 a quintal higher for the hybrid variety due to its better quality. Sales were normal as only 50 per cent of stocks that arrived were sold, he said.

Traders are of the view that the prices are unlikely to rise for another 3-4 days, but possibilities of a decrease are bright.At the Erode Turmeric Merchants' Association sales yard, the finger variety was sold at Rs 2,219-3,595 a quintal and the root variety at Rs 2,219-3,205.

Salem Crop: The finger variety fetched Rs 3,129-4,409 and the root variety Rs 3,129-3,491. Of 3,079 bags that arrived, 1,215 were sold.At the Regulated Marketing Committee, the finger variety was sold at Rs 3,186-3,559 and the root variety at Rs 3,089-3,359. Some 1,050 bags were sold against the arrival of 1,145.At the Erode Cooperative Marketing Society, the finger variety was sold at Rs 3,021-3,889 and the root variety at Rs 2,876-3,420. All the 1,443 bags that arrived for sale were sold.At the Gobichettipalayam Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Society, the finger variety was sold at Rs 3,056-3,609 and the root variety at Rs 2,566 to Rs 3,407. All the 321 bags kept for sale were sold.

Coconut oil rules steady on corporate purchase

V. Sajeev Kumar

Kochi, April 24:

Coconut oil prices remained more or less steady in Kerala markets this week. Prices were Rs 64 a kg against last week's Rs 66.

Mr Prakash B.Rao, Vice-President of the Coconut Oil Merchant Association (COMA), told *Business Line* that corporate buying in coconut oil continues to remain good during this week. This is one of the reasons for the steady market price for coconut oil, he said.

Supplies are increasing from Tamil Nadu and it could put selling pressure on the market. If the corporate buying slows down, prices are likely to decline further. However, he expected prices to sustain at the same levels next two weeks also.

Prices of coconut oil in Tamil Nadu are ruling at Rs 62 a kg this week.Prices of palm oil and palm kernel oil also ruling more or less at Rs 66 and Rs 74 a kg respectively. Arrival of these edible oils in the domestic market is low and this has resulted prices ruling steady compared with last week, he said.Referring to copra, he said prices ruled at Rs 4,400 a quintal in Kerala market and Rs 4,200 in Tamil Nadu.

Mr Thalath Mahamood, President of COMA, said that the relative lower prices for coconut oil is prompting some traders to adulterate it with other costly edible oils particularly in Tamil Nadu. This kind of adulteration is happening for edible oils targeted north Indian markets.

Traders have begun stocking coconut oil in bulk before the onset of monsoon when they expect the supply to decline, he said.

Weak arrivals keep chana firm

Indore, April 24:

Chana ruled firm on weak arrivals on Tuesday, even as buying by millers was subdued.

In the spot market, chana (kanta) ruled at Rs 3,650-3,675 a quintal, while chana (desi) ruled at Rs 3,475-3,500. Chana (mausmi) ruled flat at Rs 3,800-4,100, while chana (Vishal) ruled at Rs 3,600-3,700 a quintal. With the marriage season keeping traders and farmers busy, trading was lacklustre keeping pulses and pulse seeds steady.

Chana dal ruled stable despite slack buying support. Chana dal (average) quoted at Rs 4,400-4,425, chana dal (medium) at Rs 4,500-4,525, while chana dal (bold) ruled at Rs 4,650-4,675 a quintal. Arrivals declined to 3,000-4,000 bags.

Dollar chana or chickpea ruled flat on slack buying support, though arrivals fell to 2,000 bags. In local *mandis*, dollar chana ruled stable at Rs 6,800-7,200 a quintal. In the container, dollar chana ruled stable with 42/44 count being quoted at Rs 8,350 a quintal, 44/46 count at Rs 8,250, 46/48 count ruled at Rs 8,150, while 58/60 count ruled at Rs 7,000 a quintal. However, a weak rupee against the dollar and strong export demand will keep dollar chana bullish, traders said.

Local traders purchase turmeric

PTI
Erode, Apr24:

Only 50 per cent of arrived stocks were sold in the turmeric sales here on Tuesday, trade sources said.

Local traders have purchased the turmeric by quoting decreased price. “The arrival of turmeric has decreased by 1000 bags and only 14000 bags of turmeric arrived for sale,” sources said.

There was no hectic competition in the purchase of the yellow spices. One or two exporters purchased ‘particular’ varieties of turmeric to keep the stock,” said Mr R K.V. Ravishankar, President, Erode Turmeric Merchants Association.

He said the local traders after getting local orders from Masala firms and turmeric powder manufacturers, purchased the turmeric quoting Rs 200 a quintal less than yesterday price.

But they quoted increased price of Rs 50 a quintal for the hybrid variety due to the quality.

Traders are of the opinion that the prices will not appreciate for another three or four days, but there are bright possibilities of decrease in price.

At the Erode Turmeric Merchants Association Sales yard, finger variety was sold at Rs 2219 to Rs 3595 a quintal, root variety Rs 2219 to Rs 3205 a quintal.

Salem Crop: the finger variety fetched Rs 3129 to Rs 4409 a quintal, root variety Rs 3129 to Rs 3491 a quintal.

Out of total arrival of 3079 bags of turmeric, 1215 bags were sold.

At the Regulated Marketing Committee, finger variety was sold at Rs 3186 to Rs 3559 a quintal and root variety Rs 3089 to Rs 3359 per quintal. Some 1050 bags of turmeric were sold as against the arrival of 1145 bags.

At the Erode Cooperative Marketing Society, finger variety was sold at Rs 3021 to Rs 3889 a quintal, root variety Rs 2876 to Rs 3420 a quintal. All the 1443 bags of turmeric were sold.

In the Gobichettipalayam Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Society, finger variety was sold at Rs 3056 to Rs 3609 per quintal, root variety Rs 2566 to Rs 3407 per quintal. All 321 bags of turmeric kept for sales were sold.

Mentha oil futures hit lower circuit on weak demand

PTI
New Delhi, Apr 24:

Mentha oil futures prices on Tuesday tumbled by Rs 77.40, or 4 per cent to hit lower circuit at Rs 1,856.20 a kg in the domestic market after speculators offloaded positions amid a weak spot demand and profit booking.

In addition, increased arrivals in the spot markets from Chandousi in Uttar Pradesh further dampened trading sentiment.

At the Multi Commodity Exchange, mentha oil for delivery in May traded sharply lower by Rs 77.40, or 4 per cent, to Rs 1,856.20 a kg, with a business volume of four lots.

Similarly, Mentha oil prices for April delivery plunged by Rs 76.50, or 4 per cent, to Rs 1,837a kg, with a business turnover of four lots.

Analysts said weak demand from pharmaceutical industries in the spot markets against increased arrivals, mainly put pressure on the mentha oil prices at futures trade here.

Poppy seed import tariff raised to $3,680/tonne

G. K. Nair

Kochi, April 22:

Prices of poppy seeds have soared on a supply squeeze in the international markets. As a result, the Central Board of Excise and Customs (CBEC) has raised its tariff to $3,680 a tonne from $2,850 last week. A notification was issued to this effect on Aprtl 16.

Consequently, the domestic price for the imported material is expected to be above Rs 275 a kg, upcountry trade sources told *Business Line*. The import duty will be up by Rs15 a kg, they said.

According to them, given the tight availability in the producing countries due to crop failure, prices might surge to Rs 300-350 a kg.

Quoting suppliers, traders claimed that the poppy seeds crop this year in Turkey, one of the world's major producing countries, is "only 12,000 tonnes, with carry-forward stocks of 5,000 tonnes".

In India also, the crop has failed while the Chinese output is reportedly low. Given this scenario, India, a major consumer, may have to buy from Turkey. In local markets, poppy seeds are being sold at Rs 220-240 a kg and sortex at Rs 250 a kg, with the potential for a rise in the coming days, they said.

They said the country needs 45,000 tonnes of poppy seeds; against this, the crop is estimated at around 4,000-5,000 tonnes this year and hence, much of the requirement is met by imports.

According to latest trade estimates, the Turkey crop will be at "around 12,000 tonnes only against its normal output of 30,000 tonnes". Thus, there will be a huge supply and demand gap, pushing up the market. Turkish exporters and farmers, they claimed, are very rich and hence could hold back stocks to push up prices. Consequently, markets are likely to move up this month.

The validity of existing import permits expired on March 31 and their renewal would take at least three months, importers said.

According to latest information, India's crop will be 4,000-5,000 tonnes this year, following the reduction in growing area by 50 per cent by the Narcotic Control Board.

India may remain net sugar exporter in 2012-13

Vishwanath Kulkarni

BALANCE SHEET

(in million tonnes)

	2011-12 (E)	2010-11
Opening stock as on October 1	5.8	4.98
Production	26	24.2
Domestic consumption	22	20.76
Exports	3	2.6
Closing Stock as on Sept 30	6.8	5.8

New Delhi, April 24:

India may start the sugar year 2012-13 starting October with a carryover stock of over 5 million tonnes.

This is even if the Government decides to allow an additional export of one million tonnes as demanded by the industry.

The Empowered Group of Ministers (E-GoM) led by the Finance Minister, Mr Pranab Mukherjee, is likely to consider additional sugar export of one million tonnes on Wednesday.

The EGoM will also decide on the modalities of shipment for the additional exports approved on March 26.

A section of exporters, mainly from the West and South, have been demanding the abolition of the present quota system for exports.

They want exports to be allowed on a first-cum-first-served basis. In the present system, the export quota for each mill is decided on the basis of production in the past three years.

The Government has allowed exports of 3 million tonnes in tranches in the current season.

Surplus year

The sugar sector believes that 2012-13 will be yet another surplus year for as production may exceed domestic consumption.

As a result, the country could remain a net exporter of sugar next year too.

The International Sugar Organisation (ISO) estimates 2012-13 output at 24.5 million tonne, about 5 per cent lower than this season.

Senior economist at ISO, Mr Sergey Gudoshinkoy, said that sugar production in 2012-13 could get affected due to the cyclical nature and build up of cane arrears.

However, the output would be comfortable to meet domestic demand and India could have an export surplus of 1.5-2 million tonnes, Mr Gudoshinkoy said.

Planting data

The National Federation of Co-operative Sugar Factories (NFCSF) estimates 2012-13 output at 25 million tonnes. “Based on the current sowing pattern, we expect the output would touch 25 million tonnes,” Mr Vinay Kumar, Managing Director, NFCSF, said.

According to latest data, sugarcane has been planted on 4.41 million hectares for the 2012-13 season as against 4.32 million ha in the corresponding period last year.

The Agriculture Ministry expects the cane area to be around 5.2 million ha next year.

However, the Indian Sugar Mills Association feels it is too early to estimate output for 2012-13.

Output factors

“Though we have the sowing trend for 80 per cent of the area, the output would depend on various factors such as total cane area, rainfall, recovery and diversion of cane to gur and khandsari among others,” said Mr Abinash Verma, Director-General, ISMA.

The sugar industry body will come out with its projection for next year in few weeks.

Mr Verma said the sugar output for 2012-13 will be more the domestic consumption level of 22 million tonnes.

Kisan Credit Cards to carry both savings, credit accounts

Our Bureau

Hyderabad, April 24:

Kisan Credit Cards (KCC) will make the lives of farmers easier. Getting access to their credit and savings accounts will be quicker now. National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (Nabard) has broad-based KCC by adding more value.

“KCCs will carry both credit and savings bank accounts. They need not have two separate accounts. This combined account would fetch interest at saving bank rate,” Mr P. Mohanaiah, Chief General Manager (CGM, Andhra Pradesh) of Nabard, said.

Relating the salient features of the broad-based KCC, he said the crop loan component would be assessed based on the scale of finance for the crop, insurance premium, extent of area cultivated and maintenance expenses of farm assets.

A Working Group, set up by the Union Government to review the KCC scheme, suggested that there should be a Flexi KCC with simple assessment prescribed for marginal farmers. “It suggested that cards should be valid for five years against the present three years," Mr Mohanaiah said. The Government has accepted the group's recommendations.

Under the new system, no separate margin would be insisted upon for crop loans as the margin is in-built in the scale of finance. "No processing fee up to Rs 3 lakhs, and they need to do just one-time documentation at the time of first disbursal," he said.

Nabard has sent necessary instructions to State-level Bankers Committee and all banks in the State about the changes made to KCC.

Use tech for better sugar quality, says Pranab

Our Bureau

Business Line Expressing concern: Mr Pranab Mukerjee, Union Finance Minister, along with Commander Josaia Voreqe Bainimarama, Prime Minister of Fiji and Vice-Chairman of International Sugar Organisation, during the 41st session of International Sugar Council in New Delhi on Tuesday. — Kamal Narang

New Delhi, April 24:

The sugar industry must adopt technology to improve quality, conserve energy and address environmental concerns, the Finance Minister, Mr Pranab Mukherjee, said. He also asked the industry to improve recovery of sugar from cane and reduce the crop's water intensity.

Addressing the 41st session of International Sugar Council (ISC), Mr Mukherjee said there was need to develop by-products like bio fuels to improve the financial health of the sugar sector. The industry should also tap the benefits of market-based mechanisms under the Kyoto Protocol such as clean development mechanism.

Mr Mukherjee said the Government has been seeking to stabilise domestic sugar prices by moderating volatility during scarce and surplus domestic sugar seasons. Urging the ISC to take further steps for development and stabilisation of the sector, he called upon the global industry to initiate steps to curb price volatility.

“Much more needs to be done to improve the world sugar economy as the world sugar market continues to experience considerable price volatility,” he said.

The Food Minister, Mr K.V.Thomas, said the Government had been trying to break the cyclicality of the sugar industry through multi-pronged policy interventions. “We try to strike a balance by ensuring that while fair and reasonable returns reach the farmer and the industry, the price of sugar is also kept under check,” he said.

Terming the highly-regulated sugar policy as an “Indian enigma wrapped in mystery,” Mr Peter Baron, Executive Director of ISC, said “It remains to be seen whether India uses the present window of opportunity for further exports, which could facilitate the payment of outstanding arrears of mills to growers”.

Sugar output up 13% so far this season

Our Bureau

New Delhi, Apr 24:

Sugar production in the country was up 13 per cent at 249.80 lakh tonnes (221.52 lakh tonnes) up to April 22 in the current sugar year (October-September).

Some 181 mills were functioning against 214 mills in the same period last year, according to the Indian Sugar Mills Association (ISMA).

Maharashtra produced 87.11 lakh tonnes of sugar, up 8.5 per cent compared with last year. The cane recovery rate is 11.61 per cent.

Sugar production in Uttar Pradesh was up 18 per cent at 69.40 lakh tonnes. Cane recovery rate was at 9.07 per cent. Seven mills were operational in the State.

Karnataka and Tamil Nadu have also reported higher production of 37.50 and 15.25 lakh tonnes, respectively.

Tamil Nadu is expected to produce another 7 lakh tonnes in this sugar season. There were 30 mills operational in Karnataka and 44 mills in Tamil Nadu.

Andhra Pradesh has reported 12 per cent higher production at 11.10 lakh tonnes.

ISMA maintains its sugar production estimate at 260 lakh tonnes in the current season.

Pulses imports at 2.66 million tonnes in Apr—Jan of FY’12

PTI
New Delhi, Apr 24:

The country imported 2.66 million tonnes of pulses during April—January period of last fiscal to meet domestic demand, Parliament was informed on Tuesday. The comparative figures for 2010—11 were not available.

India, the world’s largest pulses producer and consumer, had imported 2.69 million tonnes in the entire 2010—11 fiscal, according to the data tabled in the Lok Sabha by Food Minister, Mr K V Thomas.The domestic demand of pulses was pegged at 18.84 million tonnes for last fiscal.

As per the third advance estimates released yesterday by the Agriculture Ministry, the pulses production has declined to 17.02 million tonnes in the 2011—12 crop year (July—June) against a record 18.24 million tonnes in the previous year.Replying to a query on prices of pulses, Mr Thomas said the wholesale prices of pulses, except gram, were lower in 2011—12 fiscal compared to previous year.On steps taken by the government to check high prices, he informed that the import duty has been removed and exports of pulses, except kabuli chana and organic pulses, are banned.Among other steps, the government has imposed stock limits on pulses and has also suspended futures trading in urad and tur.