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Inter-crop farming planned for Kumbalanghi

Staff Reporter

Kumbalanghi, the first model-tourism village in India, is set to become greener, with the Coconut Development Board encouraging people to cultivate high-yielding varieties of coconut, with ginger and turmeric as inter-crop.

The scheme was inaugurated on Saturday by Union Minister for Food and Civil Supplies K.V. Thomas. The emphasis on dwarf varieties is aimed at tiding over woes like the unavailability of workers to climb the trees.

Coconut cultivation

Kumbalanghi is also a fisheries village. "The project's aim is to begin integrated and sustainable farming in Kumbalanghi, Chellanam and Kumbalam villages.

Under this, goats, cows and vegetable seeds are distributed. Help is also given for waste management," Mr Thomas said.

Aimed at encouraging coconut cultivation and promoting intercrop, 40 farmers, each having at least 10 coconut trees can form a society. They are given seeds and manure by the Board and State Agriculture Department, he said.

The board is also providing handsome subsidies to entrepreneurs to procure, process and market value-added produce from coconut.

As part of this, seven production units have begun operating in the area, under a federation.

The intention is to collectively harvest the nuts and process them.

"Apart from subsidies, the Board gives seeds for high-yielding dwarf varieties of coconut. It also trains leaders of different units.

Coaching is given to coconut climbers (Friends of Coconut Trees) and also a machine worth Rs 5,000 that would help them climb the trees.

This is apart from Rs 1 lakh insurance cover for the workers,” said the federation's convenor M.P. Sivadattan.

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Plan to increase crop area in Vizianagaram by 25 per cent

Correspondent

The two-day Zonal Research and Extension Advisory Council meeting, being organised jointly by ANGRAU and Agriculture Department, got under way at Z.P. Conference Hall here on Monday.

The meeting reviewed seasonal conditions and its effect on productivity during kharif-2011 in Srikakulam, Vizianagaram, and Visakhapatnam district.

Inaugurating the meeting, Collector M. Veerabrahmaiah appealed to scientists and agriculture officials to find ways to improve productivity in the next two years and prepare plan accordingly.

He regretted that despite having more rainfall and suitable climate for plant growth, all the three districts, particularly Vizianagaram, were lagging behind Anantapur, which has lesser rainfall.

Quoting government statistics, he said the growth registered in Vizianagaram, Srikakulam, and Nizamabad districts was “very low.”

As part of efforts to improve the district domestic product of Vizianagaram in the next two years it was decided to increase the crop area by 25 per cent and productivity by 30 per cent, he said.

To achieve the target, he asked scientists and agriculture officials to suggest ways to achieve the target.

He said there had been considerable decrease in productivity per hectare in the last four years and reasoned it to lack of awareness on groundwater exploitation and modern farm techniques among farmers, delay in extending loans to farmers, and coordination between government officials and bankers.

He emphasised on proactive approach to encourage farmers to adopt modern farm methods.

R. Ankaiah, Associate Director of Research, Regional Agricultural Research Station, Anakapalle, observed that deficit rainfall during kharif-2011 damaged crops in the three districts and subsequent fall in productivity per hectare.

D.S.S. Susheela, Additional Director of Agriculture, asked scientists and officials to prepare action plan anticipating deficit rainfall for kharif-2012 with thrust on short duration varieties. Principal Scientists D. Loknatha Reddy (groundnut), Y. Koteswara Rao (pulses), A.S. Rao (weed), and M. Subba Rao (millets) suggested short and tolerant varieties for high yield.

M. Mallikarjuna Reddy, Associate Director of Research, ANGRAU, presided. J. Ravi Kumar, JD (Agriculture), and N.D.R. K. Sarma, Senior Scientist and head of the Agriculture Research Station, here welcomed the delegates.

Collector urges scientists and agriculture officials to find ways to increase productivity

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Agricultural implements for 48 PACCS

Staff Reporter

Fortyeight Primary Agricultural Cooperative Credit Societies (PACCS) in Tiruvannamalai district received agricultural implements worth Rs.2.45 crore from government with 50 per cent subsidy.

The societies will rent out these implements to farmers in their respective villages.

Information Technology Minister Mukkur N. Subramanian handed these machines over to the representatives of the societies at an event held at the Collectorate here on Saturday.

At the event, he also distributed free sewing machines each worth Rs.3,323 to 50 women and free iron boxes each worth Rs.3,706 to 120 washermen under backward classes welfare department programme.

Speaking at the event, Mr. Subramanian said that Chief Minister Jayalalithaa had devised the plan to give agricultural implements to PACCS with a vision of offsetting the migration of farm labourers to towns, with a motive of giving fillip to food production and helping farmers.

District Collector Anshul Mishra presided over the programme.

KOZHIKODE, April 3, 2012

IARI honour for fish farmer

K.K. Manoj, a fish farmer supported by the Peruvannamuzhi Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK) of the Indian Institute of Spices Research (ISSR), has won the Innovative Farmer Award of the Indian Agricultural Research Institute (IARI), New Delhi, for 2012.

Manoj, 46, hailing from Atholi in Kozhikode, was chosen for the award for an innovative approach to fish farming in a two hectare brackish water pond near his home.

Low-cost culture unit

He developed a low-cost fish cage culture unit using plastic bottles as floats. He also designed a trap using PVC net for catching fish from the prawn filtration field and for collecting pearl spot (Karimeen) fingerlings.

With technical support from the KVK, he had successfully reared scampi, a giant freshwater prawn locally known as “aatu konchu” in his hatchery.

Manoj is the only farmer from Kerala to receive the award this year.

Sompal Shastri, former Minister for Agriculture and Member of the Planning Commission, presented the award on March 3 at the Pusa Krishi Vigyan Mela in New Delhi.

Manoj was nominated by the KVK for his innovations. Manoj is given technical support by B. Pradeep, fisheries expert at the KVK.

HENNAI, April 3, 2012

Norms relaxed for free power to farm sector

It is not just agriculture but also allied activities – horticulture and fish/prawn culture – that will be eligible for free power supply.

Apart from the cultivation of food crops, vegetables, seeds, trees and other plants, the tariff revision order, issued by the Tamil Nadu Electricity Regulatory Commission (TNERC) on Friday last, states that sericulture, floriculture, horticulture, mushroom cultivation, cattle farming, poultry/other bird farming and fish/prawn culture carried out as allied activities of agriculture will be construed as agricultural activities.

Unlike the previous tariff order issued in July 2010, the latest order mentions specifically that agriculture and allied activities have been brought under the tariff meant for the farm sector.

There is no rate payable by consumer, as the entire energy charges of Rs. 1,750 per horse power per annum will be absorbed by the State government. This means that the government will provide Rs. 1,950 crore during 2012-2013 to the Tamil Nadu Generation and Distribution Corporation towards the implementation of free power supply scheme for farm connections. Out of 41,541 million units to be sold to low-tension consumers during the year, the category of agriculture accounts for 10,601 MU, representing 25.5 per cent.

Though agriculturists are, under the agriculture tariff system, permitted to use water pumped from wells and stored in overhead tanks for bona fide domestic purposes in farm houses, the latest order is silent on the distance of the location of the farm houses from the wells, except stating in general that the farm houses should be in close proximity from the wells. However, the Commission's previous order had prescribed that the distance should not exceed 50 metres.

Explaining how the figure of energy to be sold to agriculturists during the year had been arrived at, the TNERC's new order, quoting the TANGEDCO's correspondence, states that the agricultural consumption is calculated every month based on the sample meter reading furnished by field officials.

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hindustantimes

■ Tue, 03 Apr 2012

weather

Chennai - INDIA

Today's Weather



Partly Cloudy

Tuesday, Apr 3

Max Min

34.3° | 25.1°

Rain: 00 mm in 24hrs

Sunrise: 6:35

Humidity: 66%

Sunset: 18:03

Tomorrow's Forecast



Partly Cloudy

Wednesday, Apr 4






Max Min

33° | 23°

Wind: Normal

Barometer: 1015

Extended Forecast for a week

Thursday Apr 5	Friday Apr 6	Saturday Apr 7	Sunday Apr 8	Monday Apr 9
				
34° 23°	34° 24°	34° 23°	34° 23°	34° 23°
Partly Cloudy	Partly Cloudy	Sunny	Partly Cloudy	Partly Cloudy

THE ECONOMIC TIMES

Commodities

3 APR, 2012, 09.05AM IST, NAMRATA SINGH & SUROJIT GUPTA,TNN

Fat's in the fire as edible oil prices rise 10%

MUMBAI/NEW DELHI: Edible oil prices soared almost 10%-Rs 6 to 8 per kg-in the last one month, piling up pressure on the already vulnerable food inflation. Palm oil, which accounts for nearly half of India's refined oil consumption, went up Rs 10 per kg following a sharp rally in international markets.

India imported about eight million tonne, or half of its domestic vegetable oil requirement, last year. A weakening rupee has been another trigger for the rising edible oil prices.

"There has been the worst expected soya crop in Argentina following drought conditions, and demand from China remains good. On the domestic front there are rumours about private cartels rigging the prices in the futures market by taking advantage of the global scenario," said Angshu Mallick, CEO, Adani Wilmar, which is the market leader in the domestic packaged refined oil market.

Palm oil price has soared to Rs 645 per 10kg, rising almost Rs 100, while soyabean oil has

gone up Rs 70 per 10kg in the last 30 days. "Supplies of edible oil are reducing and therefore global prices are going up. Rupee has also weakened in the past few weeks. These are factors affecting domestic prices," said Siraj Chowdhry, chairman of Cargill India.

The latest price rise has experts and officials calling for urgent reforms to expand acreage and productivity of oilseed crops in the country.

2 APR, 2012, 04.29PM IST, PTI

Gur futures down on weak spot markets cue

NEW DELHI: Gur prices declined by Rs 19 to Rs 1,182 per 40 kg in futures trading today as traders preferred to off-load positions tracking lower spot markets sentiment.

Higher sugar-cane production this year makes raw materials easily available, therefore prices remained under pressure here in future trading, traders said.

Sluggish demand and heavy stocks position in physical markets too put pressure on gur prices, they added.

At the National Commodity and Derivatives Exchange, gur prices for July delivery declined by Rs 19, or 1.58 per cent, to Rs 1,182 per 40 kg, with an open interest of 12,690 lots.

For delivery in September, the prices slipped by Rs 15.50, or 1.26 per cent, to Rs 1,215.50 per 40 kg, with an open interest of 2,990 lots.

2 APR, 2012, 04.00PM IST, REUTERS

Turmeric hits contract low; pepper, jeera up

MUMBAI: Turmeric futures in India fell to a fresh contract low on Monday, hurt by higher supplies in spot markets amid expectations of a bumper crop, analysts said.

At 2:30 p.m., the April turmeric contract on the National Commodity and Derivatives Exchange (NCDEX) was down 2.70 percent at 4,036 rupees per 100 kg, after touching a fresh contract low of 4,010 rupees.

"Supply pressure is very high. Buyers are staying away because they are expecting a further fall in prices," said Faiyaz Hudani, a senior analyst at Kotak Commodities.

Analysts expect the April contract to fall to 3,800 rupees in the next two-three days.

In Nizamabad, a trading hub in the southern state of Andhra Pradesh, supplies rose to around 20,000 bags of 70 kg each from about 15,000 bags in the second week of March, traders said.

Output in Andhra Pradesh, the country top producer of the spice, is likely to rise 36 percent on year to 83,000 tonnes in 2012 due to an expansion in acreage.

PEPPER

Pepper futures in India were up as thin supplies in spot and depleting stocks triggered buying.

The most-active pepper for April delivery was up 0.75 percent at 39,550 rupees per 100 kg.

The NCDEX has imposed a 10 percent special margin on pepper contracts from April 3 to control excessive price volatility.

"Prices are unlikely to sustain at higher prices because exports have slowed down at these prices. Selling in the April contract could be seen around 40,000-40,500 rupees," said Hudani from Kotak Commodities.

Industry officials estimate 43,000-45,000 tonnes of local pepper output in 2012, compared with 49,000 tonnes last year.

JEERA

Jeera, or cumin seed, futures were up on some bargain buying after falling more than 16 percent in March, although rising supplies from the new crop restricted gains.

"Bargain buying is supporting prices but sentiment is still down because of higher supplies," said Chowda Reddy, a senior analyst at JRG Wealth Management.

Average daily arrivals in Unjha, a key market in the western state of Gujarat, are around 30,000-32,000 bags of 60 kg each, traders said.

The most-traded jeera for April delivery on NCDEX was up 0.50 percent at 12,040 rupees per 100 kg.

India is the world's top producer and exporter of jeera, which is cultivated from October to December and harvested from February.

Exports are expected to have jumped 29 percent in the financial year 2011/12 that ended in March, and climb a further 19 percent this year, according trade and industry forecasts.

Business Standard

Tuesday, Apr 03, 2012

South African red tea with health benefits to hit India soon

Dilip Kumar Jha / Mumbai April 03, 2012, 0:13 IST

Caffeine-free red tea, with a number of health benefits, would soon be available for Indian consumers as South Africa-based Blue Africa Trading (BAT) plans to enter into a trading pact with a number of Indian companies.

BAT's Managing Director Charl Rudman told Business Standard, "We will sign an MOU with a Mumbai-based House of Bhaishankars, an export/import company, to supply red tea to speciality tea shops. We would be supplying it with Rooibos tea."

Rooibos tea (*Aspalathus linearis*) is a type of herbal tea. It is similar to green tea but offers more benefits. It is not obtained from camellia trees but is made from the indigenous herb of South

Africa called Rooibos (Roy-Boss), full of polyphenols and flavonoids that help protect the body from free radicals. The free radicals can otherwise weaken natural defences and eventually lead to aging and the onset of diseases. Also, red tea offers is completely caffeine-free.

“We have received three orders for loose tea. We are also exploring a possibility for a tie-up with Tata and we might enter into negotiations with Tata Tetley soon. There is still a window of opportunity for other businesses interested to import Rooibos tea,” said Rudman.

South Africa is currently the only producer of this tea in the world. Production for Rooibos tea has tripled over the last 10 years from 5,000 tonnes in 1997. Over the past decade, average annual production was 10,500 tonnes, but it is cyclical and influenced by the weather. The best crop till now was in 2009, at 20,000 tonnes. This year’s crop is expected to be 9,000 tonnes. About half of tonnage produced is expected to be consumed in South Africa and the remainder exported.

India is one of the leading tea exporters of the world. But, Rooibos tea is relatively unknown to the India market. Hence, we thought to bring this tea to India, Rudman added.

Dairy industry seeks export ban removal

Ajay Modi / New Delhi April 03, 2012, 0:09 IST

Hit by increasing surplus and crashing prices, the dairy industry is demanding removal of the year-long export ban on milk products. Companies, including Amul, have written to the agriculture ministry for removal of the ban.

The improved supply, driven by higher production, has caused a crash in domestic prices of dairy products like skimmed milk powder (SMP) and butter oil (ghee). “We have written to agriculture minister Sharad Pawar requesting immediate removal of the ban. The ban, followed by a surplus, has affected domestic sentiments,” said R S Sodhi, managing director, Gujarat Cooperative Milk Marketing Federation, which sells milk and milk products under the Amul brand.

Compared to milk production of 123 million tonnes (mt) last year, the dairy industry is expecting production of 130-132 million tonnes. Improved supply on an extended winter season has

exerted pressure on prices of SMP and butter oil. There has been a 20-25 per cent drop in prices of both SMP and butter oil since Diwali.

In February 2011, the government had banned export of milk powder (including skimmed milk powder, whole milk powder, dairy whitener and infant milk foods), casein and casein products to cool food inflation that had crossed 11 per cent. Food inflation for February this year stood at 6.07 per cent.

“The country has surplus milk availability. The export ban on milk powders and casein should be removed, else the industry and the farmers will be affected. Farmers have been paid high prices and that is why we are seeing this surplus. A crash in prices will affect production,” said Kuldeep Saluja, managing director of Sterling Agro, one of the country’s biggest milk powder exporters.

Saluja agreed international prices, too, are under pressure but said export will provide an additional outlet for products. The price in New Zealand, the biggest dairy exporter, is ruling down by 20 per cent compared to last year’s prices. R G Chandramogan, chairman and managing director of Chennai-based Hatsun Agro, said the export ban had left the industry with around 100,000 tonnes of milk solid-not-fats and dairy cooperatives had imported around 50,000 tonnes of SMP, adding to the improved domestic availability. “We need to sell our excess stock outside the country to keep prices stable. If farmers don’t get good prices, cattle slaughter will increase and next year we will be back to shortage,” he said.

Global natural rubber output to be low this year

George Joseph / Kochi April 03, 2012, 0:17 IST

The Association of Natural Rubber Producing Countries (ANRPC) has lowered its natural rubber (NR) supply estimates for 2012. According to it, total supply would be 10.42 million tonnes (mt) from 10.52 mt expected a month ago. With the revised figures, supply is expected to rise only 1.1 per cent from the supply in 2011. Earlier, the increase expected was 2.6 per cent.

The total production of NR in January from ANRPC members fell 12.8 per cent from a year earlier. Despite a sharp rise in prices since the middle of the month, the production fell to 291,000 tonnes in Thailand (from 385,000 tonnes in January 2011), 239,000 tonnes in Indonesia (from 247,000 tonnes) and 85,000 tonnes in Malaysia (from 108,700 tonnes) largely

due to lacklustre demand from China. However, India and Vietnam managed a marginal increase during the month.

In Malaysia, unseasonal rain for almost a month from February 14 disrupted harvesting of trees. The Hainan region, which is China's major rubber-producing belt, saw more rainy days during March with an unusually cloudy atmosphere, indicating trees may have been affected by the powdery mildew disease. It is now anticipated that the first quarter (January-March) would end with a 5.1 per cent fall in supply from the same quarter of the previous year. Total supply will be 2.23 mt, as against 2.35 mt in the same period last year.

Production is expected to fall 12.6 per cent in Thailand and 14.4 per cent in Malaysia during January-March. Indonesia's performance is estimated to be static while China, India and Vietnam are expected to perform better. In China, production is estimated to be 23,000 tonnes (up 44.7 per cent), Vietnam is expected to produce 141,000 tonnes (an increase of 25.9 per cent) and in India, production is likely to be 219,000 tonnes (up 3.7 per cent). This latest trend in major producing countries indicates further strengthening of prices in April and May as tapping is affected due to summer. Production might be lower in these months, according to experts.

Meanwhile, the latest ANRPC data indicates total supply grew 8.6 per cent to 10.31 mt during 2011 as against 9.49 mt in 2010. Thailand tops the table with 3.57 mt, followed by Indonesia with 3 mt. Malaysia produced 996,000 tonnes, India 893,000 tonnes, Vietnam 812,000 tonnes and China 707,000 tonnes. All the major producing countries, except Indonesia and Malaysia, recorded growth in production in 2011, with China (6.1 per cent) and Vietnam (six per cent) topping the chart, when compared with production in 2010.

FMC to cut position limits in some agri futures

Reuters / April 03, 2012, 0:10 IST

India's commodity market regulator plans to cut the number of contracts any member can hold in agricultural commodities in line with production estimates, to curb excessive speculation, its head said on Monday, a week after banning guar futures trading. "We have reports that production of some agricultural commodities have gone down or may go down this year. We

are going to rationalise position limits (the number of contracts individual members can hold) accordingly,” said Ramesh Abhishek, chairman, Forward Markets Commission.

On March 28, the regulator halted trading in guar seed and gum contracts — a day after the food minister called for a probe into volatile prices — in a move seen as denting confidence for the country’s nascent futures trade. Industry bodies have asked the consumer affairs ministry for a probe into large scale manipulation in chana and oilseeds futures as well. NCDEX has already imposed a 10 per cent special margins on all sell, or long position, contracts for chana, rapeseed and mustard seed from March 31.

THE HINDU Business Line

Export demand for cardamom may rise after Easter

G.K. Nair



Kochi, April 2:

Cardamom was steady to firm last week on limited trade as the the financial year ended. Arrivals fell sharply at auctions in Kerala and Tamil Nadu as the harvest came to a close. High prices have discouraged exporters from buying, trade sources said. According to sources in

Bodinayakannur, export buying is likely to pick up after Easter holidays as some enquiries are pending.

This week, auctions will be held from Monday to Wednesday only because of the holidays. All the growing areas in Idukki, except two major cardamom belts in Kumily and Vandanmettu, received good rains last week.

The next crop is expected to arrive by late July, said Mr P.C. Punnoose, General Manager, Cardamom Processing & Marketing Co-Operative. He said on Sunday 63 tonnes were auctioned as against 80.6 tonnes the previous Sunday at The Kerala Cardamom Processing and Marketing Company Ltd sale. The maximum and minimum prices were Rs 1,336.50 and Rs 581 a kg respectively. The auction average was Rs 885 as against Rs 884.32 a kg at the previous auction, he said.

The individual auction average price vacillated between Rs 880 and Rs 935 a kg last week, he said.

Arrivals during August 1 last year and April 1 were 15,623 tonnes (8,374 tonnes in the year-ago period) and sales 15,156 tonnes (8,161 tonnes).

Weighted average price as on April 1 was around Rs 605 a kg as against Rs 1,102 a kg on the same date last year, according to official sources.

Prices of graded varieties were unchanged. Prices of graded varieties in Kumily in Rs a kg: AGEB 1,190-1,200; AGB 950-960; AGS 940-950 and AGS-1: 920-930.

Open market prices of graded varieties in Bodinayakannur in Rs a kg: AGEB 1,050-1,100; AGB 900-925; AGS 880-890; and AGS-1 800-850, trade sources said. Negligible quantity of 8 mm bold was available and it was fetching Rs 1,250-Rs 1,350 a kg while good bulk was being sold at Rs 850-900 a kg, they added.

Oil prices down on profit-taking, euro zone data

PTI

Singapore, April 3:

Oil retreated in Asian trade today as investors took profits from overnight gains, while weak euro zone manufacturing data also pressured prices, analysts said.

New York's main contract, West Texas Intermediate crude for delivery in May, shed 28 cents to \$104.95 per barrel while Brent North Sea crude for May settlement was down 36 cents at \$125.07 in morning trade.

Prices had surged in late trade yesterday, supported by stronger-than-expected industrial data in the United States, the world's biggest oil user. "There has been some profit-taking... from the price surge brought on by US manufacturing data," said Mr Victor Shum, senior principal at Purvin and Gertz international energy consultants in Singapore. "The manufacturing data that came out from Europe were quite weak, and that has offset the US data and is weighing on prices," he said.

A purchasing managers index (PMI) compiled by Markit research firm showed that the euro zone manufacturing activity slumped to a three-month low in March, with major economies Germany and France hit by the slowdown. The index, a survey of 3,000 euro zone manufacturers, fell to 47.7 points in March down from 49 points in February. A score below 50 indicates contraction. A decline in new orders and rise in oil prices, which weighed on production costs, contributed to the decline in euro zone manufacturing activity, the research firm said.

Soyabean, oil high on meal demand

Our Correspondent



Indore, April 2:

Soyabean and soya oil continued to rule high on buying support for soya de-oiled cake or soyameal in the export market. Besides, weak sowing projection of soya seeds in the tri-monthly agriculture report of the US also added to the bullish sentiment.

As most mandis in Madhya Pradesh were closed on Monday on account of bank holiday, soyabean in private trading ruled at Rs 2,880-2,950 a quintal.

On Monday, arrival was recorded at 20,000 bags, including 1,000-1,200 bags in Indore. Plant deliveries of soyabean also ruled higher at Rs 3,025-3,050 a quintal, while some plants quoted soyabean at Rs 3,000 a quintal. On account of weak buying support, soyabean's April and May contracts on the National Commodity and Derivatives Exchange closed at Rs 3,094.50 a quintal (down Rs 4.50) and at Rs 3,136.50 a quintal (down Rs 3.50). On the back of buying support in the export market, soyameal in the past two-three days has gone up by Rs 300-400 a quintal. On Monday, soyameal in Kandla port ruled at Rs 24,800 a quintal against Rs 23,700 in the domestic market. On the other hand, soya oil ruled higher on strong foreign support and improved demand for soyameal.

Soya refined in spot and delivery ruled at Rs 708-715 for 10 kg (Rs 705-710), while soya solvent ruled at Rs 675-683 for 10 kg (Rs 673-678). Soya oil futures traded lower on weak buying support. On the National Board of Trade, soya refined April contract closed lower at Rs 753.60 for 10 kg (down Rs 4.40). Similarly on the NCDEX, soya oil futures April and May contracts closed at Rs 753.50 (down 50 paise) and Rs 760.75 for 10 kg (down Rs 3.55).

Active volumes sweeten sugar

Our Correspondent



Mumbai, April 2:

Sugar prices increased by Rs 5-10 in the physical market on Monday in the expectation of improvement in local demand in the month's beginning.

Naka rates improved by Rs10 as lesser millers offered tenders on Saturday evening expecting higher rates. Mill tender rates up by Rs 8-10. Active volumes were witnessed as stockists and retailers started fresh covering, said traders. Production is also expected higher this year. Some traders are optimistic about a firm trend due to summer days ahead while some believe that market trend will depend upon improvement in demand.

Last year for April-June quarter, the Government declared total 50.86 lakh tonnes non levy free sale quota (including for April, 17 lakh tones, for May, 17.50 lakh tonnes and for June, 16.36 lakh tonnes) hence for this year same period quantity is lower by 5.86 lakh tonnes and this will support improvement in sentiment. In world market, May futures closed higher by \$9.50 to \$643.6 (\$634.10) and August futures closed up by \$8.50 to \$631.50 (\$623) on Friday. Arrivals to Vashi market was about 54-55 truck loads and dispatches were 52-53 loads.

On Saturday merely 34-35 mills offered tenders and sold very thin quantity about 4,000- 5,000 bags in the range of Rs 2,710-2,790 (Rs 2,700-2,770) for S-grade and Rs 2,790-2,890 (Rs 2,790-2,890) for M-grade.

Bombay Sugar Merchants Association's spot rates: S-grade Rs 2,862-2,916 (Rs 2,860-2,911) and M-grade Rs 2,961-3,051 (Rs 2,981-3,041).

Naka delivery rates: S-grade Rs 2,810 -2,850 (Rs 2,800-2,850) and M-grade Rs 2,900-2,990 (Rs 2,900-3,000).

Edible oil prices shoot up

Our Correspondent



Mumbai, April 2:

Edible oil prices shot up on Monday taking cues from firm foreign markets. Lean season period and expected lower rabi oilseeds production are already pushing prices high and now tight supply position of soyabean fuelling sentiment further. In Mumbai market, barring groundnut oil, all edible oils increased sharply in the range of Rs 10-15 for 10 kg despite need based demand keeping volume thin, said sources.

Supported by bullish world markets, imported palmolein rose Rs 13; while soya refined increased by Rs19; rapeseed oil up Rs15; sunflower oil improved Rs10 and cotton refined oil firm up Rs 9. Local refineries have increased their rates for palmolein and soya oil on par with new higher parity.

Wide price gap of more than Rs 12 between resellers and refiners kept volumes thin, need based and in ready for palmolein.

In local market, about 200–250 tonnes of palmolein were resale traded at Rs 633–634. Stockists kept away from fresh buying. Towards the day's close, resellers quoted palmolein at Rs 633-634. Liberty quoted at Rs 645-646.

Ruchi quoted Rs 637-638, soya refined oil at Rs 716 and sunflower refined oil at Rs 716. Allana's rate for palmolein was Rs 645. Arrivals of soyabean, mustard seeds, cotton and groundnut at national level cooled down as seasons comes to end soon pushing overall sentiment firm.

In Saurashtra – Rajkot groundnut oil ruled steady at Rs 1,915 (Rs 1,915) for Telia tin and Rs 1,250 (Rs 1250) for loose - 10kg. On National Board of Trade in Indore, soya refined oil April futures closed at Rs 757 (Rs 752.50) while May was Rs 766 (Rs757.20).

Malaysia's crude palm oil May contracts settled at MYR 3,541 (MYR 3,449), June at MYR 3,533 (MYR 3,433) and July at MYR 3,501 (MYR 3,411) a tonne.

The Bombay Commodity Exchange spot rates (Rs/10 kg): Groundnut oil 1,225 (1,225), soya refined oil 719 (700), sunflower exp. ref. 655 (645), sunflower ref. 725 (710), rapeseed ref. oil 840 (825), rapeseed expeller ref. 810 (795) cotton ref. oil 699 (690) and palmolein 636 (623).

Fresh demand keeps rice on the boil

Our Correspondent



Karnal, April 2:

The rice market continued to be on the uptrend on Monday, with the prices of few aromatic and non-basmati varieties rising by Rs 70-400 a quintal.

The uptrend was anticipated as traders have been getting fresh orders for both aromatic and non-basmati varieties, market sources said. The market is expected to remain at current levels for the next few days.

In the physical market, Pusa-1121 (steam) rose by Rs 100 to Rs 5,000 a quintal, while Pusa-1121 (sela) sold at Rs 4,300-4,400, up Rs 150 from the previous level.

Pure basmati (raw) increased by Rs 300 to Rs 5,000 a quintal, while pure basmati (sela) sold at Rs 4,600, up Rs 400 from the previous level.

Duplicate basmati ruled firm at Rs 3,800-4,000.

For the broken of Pusa-1121, Tibar rose by Rs 100 to Rs 3,500, Dubar by Rs 70 to Rs 2,650-2,870, and Mongra by Rs 100 to Rs 1,900-2,300 a quintal.

Permal (raw) sold at Rs 1,800-2,050, Permal (sela) at Rs 1,800-2,050, PR-11 (sela) at Rs 2,200-2,400 and PR-11 (raw) at Rs 2,150-2,300.

Sharbati (steam) rose by Rs 100 to Rs 3,000-3,100, while Sharbati (sela) improved by Rs 200 to Rs 2,950-3,100.

Sugandha (steam) remained at Rs 3,550-3,700 a quintal, while PR-14 (steam) sold at Rs 2,300-2,450.

Pepper inches up in volatile market

G K Nair



Kochi, Apr 2:

The pepper market showed high volatility as both bull and bear operators were trying to push up and pull down the market and ultimately the active contracts moved up marginally at the close on Monday.

It opened on a positive note and prices touched the highest levels and then dropped to recover during the afternoon session.

Before closing session it fell sharply to touch the lowest price of the day. They said exporters who got commitments and operators who were short were spreading bearish reports.

Arrivals from the primary markets were almost nil while trading on the spot was negligible.

Apr contract on the NCDEX moved up by Rs 35 to the last traded price (LTP) of Rs 39,290 a quintal. May increased by Rs 205 to the LTP of Rs 40,000 while July dropped by Rs 160 to the LTP of Rs 40,150 a quintal.

Turnover gains

Total turn over increased by 696 tonnes to 6,247 tonnes. Total open interest went up by 182 tonnes to 7,713 tonnes.

Spot prices remained unchanged on limited activities at Rs 37,000 (ungarbled) and Rs 38,500 (MG 1) a quintal.

Tea growers seek subsidy to survive hailstorm damage

P.S. Sundar



Coonoor, April 2:

The Nilgiri Small Tea Growers' Association has appealed to the Tamil Nadu Government and the Tea Board to disburse a survival subsidy to farmers who have lost tea due to hailstorm.

“Right now, about 5,000 kg of green leaf a hectare ready for harvest till May-end has been totally lost. At prevailing prices, this works out to a loss of Rs 60,000/ha in two months.

Against this, we have represented to State Government and Tea Board for a lumpsum survival subsidy of Rs 10,000/ha. If the crop loss continues beyond two months, the ‘rush season’ would be lost and the Government and Board must continue to help farmers during that period,” the Association President, Mr H. Thiagarajan, said.

“The hailstorm struck on Saturday afternoon but we could pick up heavy hailstones even today,” Mr Thiagarajan, said.

“The damage has been extensive to tea fields in Thothanadu belt spread over Kenthorai, Thummanatty, Thuneri, Morigal, Kappachi, T Maniatty, Kambatty and Kattabettu. Tea bushes

remain covered with hailstones on both hill tops and valleys. During our survey, we could not see even a single bush in this area which has escaped the hailstorm,” he said.

Extent of damage

“We estimate that tea bushes in about 4,000 hectares have been affected by the hailstorm. It will take up to six months for these bushes to come for full harvest again. Nearly 10,000 growers will lose their income from tea during this period.”, he disclosed.

UK store to source grapes from Maharashtra

Our Bureau

New Delhi, April 2:

ASDA (Walmart UK) stores is collaborating with Bharti Walmart Direct Farm Program to source international quality grapes from Maharashtra.

ASDA stores imported over 80 containers of table grapes during 2011 and the export figure is expected to almost double to over 150 containers in 2012.

Under Bharti Walmart's Direct Farm initiative, the company helps train farmers, supply chain partners and others involved in export of Indian grapes to ensure global GAP Certification of each farm under the direct export program.

The program also includes management of post-harvest supply chain including harvesting, pre-cooling, packaging and shipments and traceability and food safety of each lot with capability to track each farm.

Bharti Walmart said it would replicate this model to source other farm produce from India. The programme covers over 4,000 farmers across Delhi, Haryana, Karnataka and Maharashtra.

IISR-backed farmer wins IARI award

Our Bureau

Kozhikode, April 2:

A fish farmer, supported by the Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK) of the Indian Institute of Spices Research (IISR), has won the Innovative Farmer award of Indian Agricultural Research Institute for 2012.

K.K. Manoj, hailing from Atholi in Kozhikode, has adopted a novel fish farming approach in a two-hectare brackish water pond near his home. He has developed a low-cost fish culture cage with used plastic bottles as floats.

He has also designed a fish trap using PVC net for prawn filtration field and also for collecting 'pearl spot' fingerlings. In another initiative, he has successfully bred and reared 'scampi', the giant freshwater prawn locally known as 'Aatu konchu', in his backyard hatchery with technical support from the scientists of KVK.

Mr Manoj, trained in agriculture since childhood, has been practising fish culture for the last 12 years. He was also honoured for his innovative ideas in fish culture during the technology week celebrations of IISR last year.

According to a statement from IISR, Mr Manoj is being provided with constant technical support and motivation by Dr B. Pradeep, Subject Matter Specialist (Fisheries) of KVK, for adopting recent technologies in aquaculture and for conducting on-farm trials.

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