

COIMBATORE, August 31, 2012

## TNAU's Centres of Excellence to groom quality teachers

*The Centre in Coimbatore will focus on molecular breeding*



The first Centre of Excellence in Innovation will come up in Madurai. A common network for research for all the constituent colleges will also be set up.

With an aim to groom doctoral students into quality teachers to teach agriculture students of Tamil Nadu Agricultural University (TNAU), 11 Centres of Excellence will be set up, one on the university premises, and the rest in its constituent colleges. K. Ramasamy, the new Vice-Chancellor of the university, said here on Thursday.

Addressing the media after assuming office of the Vice-Chancellor on August 27, Mr. Ramasamy said each centre would be dedicated to a particular speciality where the scholars would spend two years working on developing a product, patent, or publishing papers in reviewed national and international journals.

Later, speaking to *The Hindu*, the Vice-Chancellor said: “They will use the monthly research grant of Rs. 25,000 to Rs. 30,000 the Central Government provides for this purpose.

At the end of the two years, they will be preferred for an Assistant Professorship in the university or any of the constituent colleges. This is to equip young teachers because there is no training for college / university teachers before they start their teaching profession.”

The first Centre of Excellence in Innovation would come up in Madurai in three months. It would have a maximum intake of 25 candidates. Each centre would have a senior faculty of the university as its Director.

The centre in Coimbatore would focus on molecular breeding, while it would be soil health in Tiruchi, and precision farming in Periakulum. Each centre would come up in a span of three months, he said.

In addition, a common network for research for all the constituent colleges would be set up.

As regards attracting more students towards agriculture education, Mr. Ramasamy said it would begin by improving the delivery pattern of knowledge to include domain skills and communication / interpersonal skills.

### **Hands-on edge**

“To give a hands-on edge to students, laboratories accredited by the National Accredited Board for Testing and Calibration Laboratories (NABL) will be set up in all the constituent colleges. Also, three-tier laboratories will be set up to allow access at the relevant levels to UG and PG students, and research scholars,” the Vice-Chancellor said.

Extension work would focus on bridging the gap between the farmer and the technologies put forth by the scientists.

The university would look at alternative systems in collaboration with the line departments, he added.

COIMBATORE, August 31, 2012

## TNAU to provide technical support to greening project

*Department of Forestry has begun pilot work, says V-C*

Tamil Nadu Agricultural University (TNAU), along with other stakeholders, will help in executing the State government's East Coast Development Project, TNAU vice-chancellor K. Ramasamy said here on Thursday.

Addressing mediapersons after assuming charge on August 27, the Vice-Chancellor said the five-year project would focus on increasing the green cover on the east coast of the State – a stretch of 1,006 km – from Kanyakumari to Chennai. Speaking to *The Hindu* later, he said the project involved a multi-pronged approach and included tank modernisation at a cost of Rs. 1,596 crore and increasing green cover at a cost of Rs. 672 crore.

The other stakeholders are: the Department of Forestry, Department of Fisheries, Tamil Nadu Veterinary and Animal Sciences University, Public Works Department, Water Resources Department, Public Distribution System, and the Department of Agriculture.

“With funding by the State Government, Asian Development Bank and some Japanese aid, the Department of Forestry has begun the pilot work. TNAU will provide the technology support. The green cover, as stipulated by the Government, is 33 per cent. From 19 per cent Tamil Nadu has reached 22 per cent of green cover now. The project focuses on improving that to 27 per cent,” Mr. Ramasamy said.

It also aimed at weaning people from marine dependence.

Instead of merely considering the sea as an option for means of livelihood, they could broaden their scope to include value-addition, export of value-added products, and entrepreneurship, Mr. Ramasamy added.

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- *Project includes tank modernisation at a cost of Rs. 1,596 crore*
  - *Also aims at weaning people from marine dependence*
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COIMBATORE, August 31, 2012

## TNAU's field day to promote Co 6 variety of green gram



For their benefit: Seed growers, farmers, scientists and research scholars at a field day at Tamil Nadu Agricultural University.

Seed growers, farmers, scientists and research scholars attended a field day at Tamil Nadu Agricultural University on foundation seed production of Co 6 green gram variety.

It was held as part of the National Agricultural Development Project (NADP). The variety was released in 1999 for the benefit of pulse growers.

Despite its multiple advantages, the variety is not very popular. Therefore, the field day was held to promote the variety, according to Registrar P. Subbian.

TNAU is implementing the seed production programme with the involvement of farmers on a contract basis, to produce foundation seeds in seed supply chain and distribute certified seeds to farmers. The contractual farmers are provided with inputs worth Rs. 7,500 for breeder seeds, chemical fertilizers, biofertilizers, micronutrients, herbicides and fungicides, and Rs. 2,500 to meet other cultivation expenses.

In addition, technology support is also provided for the seed growers from seed to harvest.

The participants were told of the benefits of using the Co 6 variety and the yield advantage.

For details on the variety, those interested can contact The Special Officer (Seeds), Seed Centre, TNAU, Coimbatore – 641003; or call 0422-6611232; or e-mail [toseedunit@tnau.ac.in](mailto:toseedunit@tnau.ac.in).

SALEM, August 31, 2012

## New technology brings cheer to farmers

S.P. SARAVANAN



For Govindasamy (66) of Rama Goundanur, earning livelihood from traditional farming systems is challenging as he decided to forgo agriculture and look for alternative source of income.

The reason, inadequate water availability, shortage of labour, lower productivity and non-availability of technology.

But after adopting plastic mulch technology in conjunction with drip irrigation in his one acre green chilli field, he was happy and was engaged in educating other farmers about the technology and asking them to implement the same.

Crops grow through slits on the plastic mulching sheets, silver coloured on top and black at the bottom that avoids weed growth, reduce pest infestation, maintain optimum micro climate in root zone and increase productivity.

Govindasamy said that available water can be used to the fullest as unlike conventional flood irrigation method where it takes days to water one acre.

**Fruit bearing**

Fruit bearing is 15 days in advance when compared to the normal system and adoption of technology have show significant increase in quality, he added.

The technology was first adopted by a farmer in Valapadi block last year followed by Govindasamy. Under the National Horticulture Mission (NHM), the horticulture department has provided 100 per cent subsidy to farmers for drip irrigation to 65 farmers covering 50 hectares in Valapadi, Pethanaickenpalayam and Panamarathupatti.

The horticulture department is yet to receive funds from the government to provide a subsidy of Rs. 10,000 a hectare for implementing the mulching technology in the district.

### **Selection**

The selection of mulches also depends on the ecological situations and cropping patterns as the department provides adequate training for them.

Deputy Director of Horticulture Inbaraj said that aeration allows oxygen and nutrients to enter the roots and micro organisms help growth of crops and improve productivity.

The system overcomes shortage of labour and effective utilization of available water.

Farmers should come forward and use the technology and increase the yield as it can be adapted for all vegetable crops.

TIRUNELVELI, August 31, 2012

### **Water level**

: Water level in the Papanasam dam on Thursday stood at 40.30 feet (maximum level is 143 feet). The dam had an inflow of 467.11 cusecs and 399.75 cusecs of water was discharged from the dam. The level of Manimuthar dam stood at 46 feet (118 feet) with an inflow of 2 cusecs and 2 cusecs of water is discharged from the dam.

ARIYALUR, August 31, 2012

### **Over 850 insure their crops**

Over 850 farmers insured their crops at a special camp organised at the office of the Assistant Director of Agriculture, Sendurai panchayat union, on Monday. According to Anu George, Collector, weather-based insurance for the kharif season is being implemented in five districts in the State. They are Salem, Virudhunagar, Ariyalur, Perambalur and Dhamapuri.

This scheme is meant to help compensate the crop loss of the farmers in a specific area during a particular season in accordance with the climatic change. The names of the panchayat unions selected for the implementation of the scheme are announced ahead of the beginning of the season. All the insured farmers of the particular location announced would be eligible for the compensation. The farmers, who have not obtained any loans, would be eligible for compensation depending upon the area cultivated.

During 2011-12, as many as 2,121 farmers in the district insured 5,787 acres of rain-fed cotton, kuruvai paddy and rain-fed groundnut remitting a premium of Rs.11.57 lakh. These farmers have received a compensation of Rs.17.07 lakh.

At the current camp, 881 farmers insured crops like rain-fed maize, rain-fed cotton, rain-fed groundnut, and gingelly remitting a premium of Rs.1.38 lakh for covering 1,390 acres.

Hence, she urged the farmers to get their crops insured at the earliest.

COIMBATORE, August 31, 2012

### **Water level continues to rise in Siruvani reservoir**

*There are indications of rain continuing for two more days*

With rain continuing in the catchment areas of various reservoirs across the district, the Siruvani storage has improved despite withdrawal for drinking water needs.

The catchment areas of Siruvani witnessed rainfall of 47 mm on Wednesday, while it was 34 mm the previous day.

Rainfall was on the rise and there are indications of rain continuing for the next couple of days, TWAD Board sources said.

On Thursday, the water level in the dam stood at a little over 21 ft as against the Full Reservoir Level (FRL) of 50 ft.

In the event of rainfall continuing and even intensifying, there could be further improvement in storage despite daily withdrawal. Within the next 50 to 60 days, the North East monsoon was expected to set in bringing further rainfall.

Many areas of the city witnessed moderate showers at night and it continued into the day as well.

Meanwhile, Coimbatore district recorded total rainfall of 152 mm and average rainfall stood at 12.67. Pollachi recorded 20, Chincona 34, Chinna Kallar 51, Valparai PAP 23, Valparai Taluk office 24. Rainfall in Upper Nirar was 51, Lower Nirar 52, Thoonakadavu 18 and Peruvuripallam 23.

Storage in reservoirs (in feet): Sholayar had 124.92 (as against the FRL of 160) and the rainfall was 36 mm. Parambikulam 41.77 (72) and rainfall was 41, Aliyar had 73.60 (120), Thirumurthy 23.20 (60) and rainfall was 5, Amaravathy 31.17 (90).

CUDDALORE, August 31, 2012

### **Farmers seek waiver of loans**

The farmers under the banner of the Kollidam—Keelanai Paasana Vivasayigal Sangam took out a rally and staged a demonstration at Kattumannarkoil near here in support of their demands on Thursday.

P. Vinayaga Moorthy, president of the Association, said that failure of south-west monsoon and power deficit had made it impossible for the farmers in the region to raise the kuruvai crops.

The tail-end delta farmers were therefore in a deep predicament. They were yet to recover from the crop losses inflicted by Cyclone Thane. Another crop failure in quick succession had virtually wiped out the means of their livelihood. Therefore, the Association appealed to the State government to waive the farm loans obtained from the cooperative banks.



ERODE, August 31, 2012

## Erode emu farm promoter, others arrested on cheating charge

*Complaints received from more than 300 investors*



Vehicles that were seized from a private emu and poultry farm in Erode on Thursday.—

PHOTO: M.GOVARTHAN

The Economic Offences Wing on Thursday arrested ten persons of a private firm that was involved in the contract farming of emu and poultry birds.

The wing received complaints from more than 300 persons who invested in the Erode-based Nithya Emu and Poultry Farm.

### **Rs. 5 crore collected**

It was said the firm collected about Rs.5 crore from the people, promising staggering returns. But it had failed to pay the monthly payments to the investors for the past few months.

The investors found the firm's offices closed.

As they could not contact the promoters of the firm, they registered complaints with the wing.

A team from the wing arrested the firm's promoter Murugavel (40), his wife Latha (35), son Guna (17), manager Ganesan (25) and the employees of the firm Raju (45), Suresh (25), Manivannan (25), Balaji (29), Prabhakaran (26) and Ramesh (23). Police also seized Rs.1 lakh and 11 vehicles, including cars, vans and motorcycles used by the firm.

The arrested were produced before the Tamil Nadu Protection of Interests of Depositors (TNPID) court and lodged in the Central prison in Coimbatore.

KARUR, August 31, 2012

**Rs.167 crore crop loan disbursed in Karur district so far: Collector**



listing out agenda:Collector V. Shobana chairing the grievances day meet in Karur on Thursday. District Revenue Officer T. Christhuraj is the picture.

Farmers need to make use of the abundant crop loan, adequate stock of fertilizers, and the prevailing conducive climate to further their agricultural prospects in tune with State government's vision to usher in second green revolution, Collector V. Shobana said here on Thursday.

At the farmers grievances day meet, Ms. Shobana pointed out that the banks in the district have been mandated to grant Rs.928 crore as crop loan for the current year and already Rs.167 crore has been disbursed through the nationalised banks and primary agricultural cooperative societies.

Around 620 tonne urea, 329 tonne DAP, 929 tonne potash and 2,570 tonne of complex fertilizers were at hand to be sold to farmers. That apart 160 tonne paddy seed, 84 tonne groundnut seed, 24 tonne pulses seed and four tonne maize seed have been stocked to meet the demand from farmers.

Subsidies for establishing micro irrigation systems, provision of subsidised hybrid seeds, purchasing tractors and other agricultural implements, extension of bank credit besides short

terms and medium term crop loans for pursuing farm operations have benefitted farmers, Ms. Shobana noted.

Noting that the only area of concern was rainfall, Ms. Shobana observed that the average annual rainfall level 652.20 mm but during the past few months the monsoon had played truant . But during the current month the average rainfall touched 41.08 mm but the prospects of rains breaking over the district appear bright at present than ever before. A farmer C.P. Arumugham of Taragampatti wanted a copra procurement centre in the area to which officials said that TANFED would conduct the procurement. Another villager V.K. Thangavel wanted the State government to fix paddy procurement price in consonance with prevailing market conditions.

D. Rajamanikkam of Anjur wanted district administration to take immediate efforts to disburse compensation awarded to agricultural fields affected by pollution.

ATMA farmers group of Melavadhiyam wanted the encroachments clogging Maruthandan Vaikkal removed to which the officials assured to look in to the issue expeditiously. K. Pettai farmers wanted the Thimmachipuram Mallarappan temple Vaikkal desilted to which the PWD officials assured to take up the work during the next year.

The Noyyal River Aycudars Protection Association, Sivagiri, wanted the officials to repair damaged sluices and shutters of Noyyal branch channels off the Aathupalayam reservoir.

President of the Tamilaga Farmers Protection Sangham president Kulithalai pressed for extending the MGNREGS to town panchayat limits in Karur district such as Marudur and Nangavaram that had hundreds of acres of agricultural fields.

Officials turned down the plea saying there was no provision at present to extend the scheme beyond the village panchayats.

District Revenue Officer T. Christhuraraj, Joint Director of Agriculture, M. Deivendran, Joint Registrar of Cooperative Societies M. Santhanam, Personal Assistant to Collector (Agriculture) Vijayakumar, Deputy Director of Horticulture Sadasvam, Deputy Director of Agriculture Soundaram, working president of Cauvery Delta Farmers Welfare Association Mahadanapuram V. Rajaram participated.

*Farmers demand removal of silt at Thimmachipuram Mallarappan temple Vaikkal*

KRISHNAGIRI, August 31, 2012

**Farmers demand release of water for irrigation**

*A section of farmers stage walkout from grievances meeting*

Farmers demanded immediate release of water from Krishnagiri Reservoir Project and Barur Lake for irrigation at the grievances meeting held here on Thursday.

The demand was also put forth by various farmers' associations.

Since water level in the KRP Dam is low, water from Kelevarapalli Dam should be released to KRP Dam, the farmers said.

K.M. Ramagoundar, State General Secretary, Tamizhaga Vivasayigal Sangam, sought a detailed investigations into the alleged malpractices taking place in the Dharmapuri District Milk Marketing Cooperative Federation.

A committee should be formed to investigate the reasons for the backlog of five-week payment to the Primary Milk Cooperative Societies by the Federation, he said.

Though the association welcomed the government decision to sanction a Veterinary Research and Training Centre, they demanded a dispensary for cattle every 5 km in the district.

The government should relax conditions for allowing the MNREGS workers to work in lands of marginal, small, SC, and ST farmers.

Economic criteria should be the basis for allowing MNREGS workers for the farm sector, he added.

Mr. Ramagoundar opposed the State Bank of India and some nationalised banks for charging 0.5 per cent as processing fees for extending jewel loan for agriculture purpose.

D. Krishnadoss, Manager, Lead District Bank, was directed to look into the issue by the Collector at the meeting.

Meanwhile, a section of the farmers led by Logabiram walked out of the grievances meeting accusing the district administration of not changing patta transfer for many years, though the farmers paid the premium for the crop insurance.

PERAMBALUR, August 31, 2012

### **'Opt for weather-based crop insurance'**

The district authorities have urged farmers to go in for weather-based crop insurance immediately.

In a release, N. Panneerselvam, Joint Director of Agriculture (in charge), has said that maize was raised in the district in 44,000 hectares last year. This year too, the same coverage is expected.

Agriculture Insurance Company of India Ltd and United India Insurance Company are implementing the weather-based insurance scheme in the district.

### **Compensation**

Under the scheme, farmers who get poor yield due to various factors, including moisture, wind velocity, and excess or inadequate rains will be extended compensation.

Hence, the farmers who have already sown or planning to sow can remit a premium of Rs.150 per acre of maize for the insured amount of Rs.6,000 through the bank in which they have account or directly at the office of Agriculture Insurance Company of India by August 31.

TIRUPUR, August 31, 2012

### **Medicinal plant growers in Tirupur district to get financial assistance**

*Farmers will be given assistance at the rate of Rs. 68,750 per hectare*

There is some good news for medicinal plant growers in the district as Department of Horticulture is going to extend assistance to the tune of Rs 82.5 lakh to farmers for bringing an additional 120 hectare under cultivation during the current season.

At present, about 600 ha are under medicinal plant cultivation in the district.

Under the scheme, the farmers will be given financial assistance at the rate of Rs. 68,750 per hectare to offset expenses incurred for land preparation, erection of fence, setting up of micro irrigation systems and de-weeding activities.

The outlay has been earmarked from the corpus created under National Medicinal Plants Mission.

The medicinal plants are predominantly grown in Dharapuram-Mulanur belt in the district with Glorisa Superba (popularly known in Tamil as 'kanvali kilangu') being the main variety raised with just few hectares coming under Coleus species.

“The alkaloid extracted from the seeds of Glorisa Superba is used for the preparation of herbal extractions to fight many diseases, including cancer, and in great demand abroad, while Coleus species is used for treatment of spasmodic pain, heart diseases and painful urination, among few other diseases,” S. Krishnakumar, Assistant Director of Horticulture, told *The Hindu* .

Increase in area coverage of medicinal plants, according to horticulture department officials, is essential to meet the raw material needs of AYUSH (Ayurveda, Yoga and Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha and Homeopathy) system of medicine which is gaining popularity in the country.

The farmers who will be bringing new area under medicinal plants would be given technical support by horticulture department.

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• *The outlay has been earmarked from the corpus created under National Medicinal Plants Mission*

• *The medicinal plants are predominantly grown in Dharapuram-Mulanur belt in the district*

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KARWAR, August 31, 2012

## **Rain brings cheers to farmers of Uttara Kannada**

Heavy rain for the last four days in Uttara Kannada district, and in the Upper Ghat areas in particular, has brought smiles to farmers. On August 30, Bhatkal received 51 mm rainfall, the most in the region, followed by Karwar (47.7 mm).

In the other taluks, Haliyal received 2.4 mm of rain; Honnavar, 38.7 mm; Kumta, 25.4 mm; Mundgod, 5.1 mm; Siddapur, 19.6 mm; Sirsi, 21.5 mm; Joida, 6.4 mm; and Yellapur received 12 mm of rain.

In August, the district received 250.6 mm of rain, at an average of 22.8 mm.

The Government has declared Mundgod, Haliyal, Sirsi and Yellapur taluk drought-affected areas in the district. But the areas received copious rain in the last four days. After several decades, the Malnad area of Uttara Kannada was facing drought-like situation. The rain would lead to increase in the groundwater level, or else some part of the district would have to face water scarcity in December-January, said Ganesh Naik, a farmer.

The maximum and present water level in different dams of Uttara Kannada was as bellow.

### **Water in dams**

Kadra, 34.5 metres and 31.2 m; Kodasalli, 75.5 m and 67.55m; Supa, 564 m and 544 m; Tattihalla, 568.38 m and 456.3 m; Bommanahalli, 438.38 m and 433.19 m; Geruspoppa, 55 m and 51.71 m; and Linganamakki 1,819 ft and 1801.40 ft. If the rainfall increases in the Upper Ghat areas of the district, the water level may go up in these dams and would avoid a major power crisis in state in next summer, the Karnataka Power Corporation officials said.

Though the rainfall is sufficient for the agriculture activities, it is not enough to fill the dams in the district, the KPC officials said. The inflow of water into various dams was still low compared to last year, and more rain in the catchments areas of Kali and Sharavati rivers was required to fill up the dams, they said.

GUNTUR, August 31, 2012

### **Scientists moot contingency plan for paddy cultivation**

Scientists at the Regional Agricultural Research Station, Lam Farm, have prepared a contingency crop plan for paddy growing areas in Krishna Zone, which includes Guntur, Krishna and Prakasam districts in view of the present water situation where water releases into canals were expected only in the months of September-October.

Associate Director of Research K. Sankara Reddy suggested that paddy farmers should switch over to medium duration crops such as- MTU 1010, 1001, NLR 145, 34449, JGL 1798, 384. During rain-fed conditions, farmers could raise jowar, maize and pulses like green gram, black gram soya bean and red gram.

JAIPUR, August 31, 2012

### **'Make arrangements for seeds, fertilizers'**

Rajasthan Cooperative Minister Parsadilal Meena has asked all cooperative institutions to make proper arrangements for seeds and fertilizers for rabi crops and affirmed that all budgetary announcements for the cooperative sector would be executed on schedule.

Mr. Meena said at a review meeting here that the demand for di-ammonium phosphate and urea would be more in this rabi season following good rain in the State: "The expected demand would be enumerated and the corresponding arrangements made in an effective manner."

Against the announcement for disbursement of crop loans worth Rs.8,000 crore this year, loans amounting to Rs.6,000 crore have already been sanctioned.

Mr. Meena said the disbursement of loans would continue in the rabi season in accordance with the credit limits of farmers.

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## Harvesting health



*The Hindu* (from left) S.Gunasekhar, N.G.Prabhuram, R. Shanmugam and J.R. Vinayan, Members of the Indian Natural Farmers Organisation Coimbatore. Photo: S. Siva Saravanan



*The Hindu*S. Gunasekhar's farm PHOTO S. SIVA SARAVANAN.



*The Hindu* N.G.Prabhuram with his native cows PHOTO S.SIVA SARAVANAN.



*The Hindu* R.Shanmugham at his farm PHOTO: S. SIVA SARAVANAN.



*The Hindu* Anthuriums at S. Gunasekhar's farm PHOTO: S. SIVA SARAVANAN.

*Members of the Indian Natural Farmers Organisation tell Subha Rao how native cows and natural farming techniques help them run sustainable farms*

Native Kangayam cows, the grassy smell of fresh dung, a tangle of trees, creepers and shrubs, yellow and white butterflies that flit about the grass, the shrill cry of peacocks... that's R. Shanmugham's seven-acre farm for you. He is a farmer who has gone back to Nature.

Shanmugham is a member of Indian Natural Farmers Organisation (INFO), a Coimbatore-based group that follows the Subhash Palekar method of farming, which calls for zero external inputs. The nourishment for the vegetation comes from *jeevamritham*, a mix of dung from Indian cows, old cow urine, non-hydrose native jaggery, cow pea flour, a handful of earth and water.

Three years ago, Shanmugham spent as much as Rs. 50,000 a year on fertilisers and growth boosters. His Ramasamy Gounder Thottam in Samedu was labour-intensive but looked neat and weed-free. "I did not realise then that a farm does not have to be neat; only the house must," he laughs.

N.G. Prabhuram, among the first few farmers who spearheaded this movement in Coimbatore, points to the butterflies and says they have almost disappeared from regular farms. "Butterflies, dragonflies, earthworms and red-and-black bugs are proof that a farm's eco-system is thriving," says the farmer, who is on a mission to popularise native cattle breeds.

It is the same story at the five-acre farm of S. Gunasekhar in Chithiraichavadi. This is a model farm for sustainable cultivation. No space has been wasted. Husks are arranged on the ground around coconut trees to protect the soil from harsh sunrays.

Elsewhere, a thick layer of mulch covers the ground. In the midst of the coconut grove are other trees, yam, ladies finger and thattai payir. Anthuriums grow amid the husks and lend a dash of colour. It all started in 2007 when local farmers attended a seminar by Subhash Palekar in Dindigul. "Till then, we were caught in the vicious cycle of fertilisers, pesticides, growing costs and low returns. We'd all forgotten what farming really meant," confesses Prabhuram.

Says Shanmugham: "A farmer is not supposed to poison the land that feeds him and many others. But, that's what we were doing by applying pesticides. Now, I see such a difference in my farm. The birds are back and I am able to make a living out of just farming."

All of them use *jeevamritham* in different ways. Shanmugham and Prabhuram let it into the water channels that surround the farm, while Gunasekhar mixes it with the well water. All of them believe that the cow is central to a farm. “One cow produces enough manure to take care of a 30-acre farm,” says Prabhuram, who has two cows — Geetha and her calf Mighty Raju (girs) and Lakshmi (Kangayam). These farmers learnt other things along the way. They found out that marigold, when planted along with tomato plants keeps root-boring worms away. They learnt that one beehive placed for every half-acre of coconut grove increases chances of pollination and gives a better yield.

Natural farming understands the importance of earthworms in the farm. “Experts say that earthworms have burrowed 20 feet below the earth. We have to bring them up by keeping away pesticides. Nothing else can nourish the earth the way they do,” says farmer J.R. Vinayan. “I see the difference in the quality of produce. I once left a tomato out six whole months. It only shrivelled like old people do; it never rotted,” says Nirmala, Prabhuram’s wife.

This farming method promotes inter- and multi-cropping. “You can plant as many as 40 varieties in one acre. It follows a terrace pattern. Trees with big leaves/fronds get maximum exposure to the sun, followed by smaller trees, shrubs and creepers,” says Nachimuthu N., Secretary, INFO.

The farmers realise that to get more people to accept their system, they must taste its fruits. They have decided to retail their farm produce. They sell turmeric powder, cold-pressed coconut oil, puttu maavu, cane sugar and hand-pounded rice. “Now, we’ve decided to come up with a Year Crop Planner for members of our organisation, to avoid duplication of products and offer variety to customers,” says Prabhuram, who runs the Mani Naidu Natural Farm.

This, they hope, will also give farmers the upper hand when it comes to fixing rates. “When a farmer knows his price is assured, he will be a happy man. And he will not exploit his land, they say. “And why should we exploit land?” asks Prabhuram. “Where else can you sow one kg of seeds and get back a thousand kilos?”

Get in touch with INFO at 93645-15839 or 90251-63636.

### **Certification**

Getting a natural and organic farming certification is not expensive, says Prabhuram. At the Coimbatore-based Tamil Nadu Organic Certification Department (TNOCD), charges start around Rs. 2,000.

## MODEL FARM

At S. Gunasekhar's Muthu Guna Organic Farm, amidst a thriving coconut grove are guava and papaya trees, pepper vines, agathi keerai, red sandal, rosewood and more. "The first two years were difficult because, though I followed the methods of Subhash Palekar and Nammazhvar, I made some mistakes," says Gunasekhar, 46, who now has a sustainable farm. In the space among every four coconut trees, he raises 17 different trees. He also grows ginger, maainji and turmeric. Because of the mulching, jeevamritham and earthworms, he has not ploughed his land for three years. His Kangayam cow Deivanai provides the dung for the nourishing mixture.

A small outlet outside stocks produce from his farm as well as from his friends' certified organic farms.

The proliferation of trees has changed the farm's micro-climate. "It is at least three to four degrees cooler than the surrounding area," says Gunasekhar. "There are more birds, we have more helpful insects and ants that attack pests. They have dealt with 75 per cent of the problems farmers face. All I do is sow and harvest."

Contact Gunasekhar at 94880-44335.

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**hindustantimes**

■ Fri, 31 Aug 2012

weather

Chennai - INDIA

### Today's Weather



Partly Cloudy

Friday, Aug 31

Max Min

33.3° | 27.4°

Rain: 10

Humidity: 66

Wind: normal

Sunrise: 05:57

Sunset: 06:20

Barometer: 1005

### Tomorrow's Forecast



Rainy



Saturday, Sep 1

Max Min

32° | 26°

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### Extended Forecast for a week

Sunday Sep 2	Monday Sep 3	Tuesday Sep 4	Wednesday Sep 5	Thursday Sep 6
				
30°   26°	31°   26°	32°   26°	32°   27°	32°   26°
Rainy	Rainy	Rainy	Rainy	Rainy

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## TNAU to train scientists to meet India's food demand

The Tamil Nadu Agricultural University (TNAU) will focus on empowering researchers with the latest technology and facilities available across the world to ensure that the country meets its growing demand for food, said Dr K. Ramasamy after taking charge as the vice-chancellor of the varsity on Thursday. Ramasamy said that several additional disciplines of research would be soon launched and several young scientists would be recruited and trained over the coming years. "We will also open 11 centers of excellence where young scientists would train under accomplished seniors for taking classes or doing research. These would turn into breeding centres for future lecturers," the VC said. Ramasamy was responsible for establishing several new academic programmes in fields such as bio-energy, environmental science and environmental biotechnology. He has developed need-based solutions for waste recycling and disposal and worked with several corporates to solve their environmental difficulties.

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**Source URL:** <http://www.deccanchronicle.com/channels/cities/regions/coimbatore/tnau-train-scientists-meet-india%E2%80%99s-food-demand-497>

## TNAU to make greener Eastern Ghats



While the Western Ghats have always been known as the green corridor of South India, the state government has taken up an ambitious initiative to increase green cover in the eastern part of the state as part of a 10-year-plan. Senior research scientist, Dr K. Ramasamy, who has taken charge as vice-chancellor of Tamil Nadu Agricultural University (TNAU), unveiled the plan on Thursday and said the university would play an active role in the project. “It is an accepted norm for all countries and states to have 33 percentage of land covered by forests for sustainable growth. We presently have only 22 per cent of green cover and by planting more trees and plants we can increase our green cover to at least 27 per cent,” said Dr Ramasamy. The eastern part of the state has always been vulnerable to unforeseen weather conditions such as cyclones and related flooding. According to scientists at TNAU, the green cover that would be established by planting perennials and native species would protect inland flora and fauna besides villagers from natural disasters to a reasonable extent. “Our natural vegetation in Tamil Nadu is a canopy of forests, hence, the green cover that we generate will also be canopy-



oriented which will not hamper the local ecology,” he said. Besides increasing the forest land, the green cover project is also expected to provide secondary income to farmers. “We would first be de-silting all tanks along the east coast to ensure better storage and flood management. Once that is achieved, inland fisheries would increase as would the forests surrounding them, besides providing wood and other natural produce, it would also shelter the inland fishing activities, thereby increasing revenue for farmers as part of our social forestry initiative,” Dr Ramasamy said. These forests would be developed only on barren lands, classified as uncultivated fallow, with cooperation from the corporate sector and forest department. Besides trees, the department would also plant various types of grass to help prevent soil erosion and provide fodder for cattle. “Secondary agricultural revenue is the only means for increasing the revenue of farmers and the agricultural university would work in that direction,” the vice-chancellor told Deccan Chronicle. **Rrandom planting may disturb ecology** While the government’s ambitious plan to develop social forests in the eastern part of the state, to increase revenue for farmers besides improving the forest cover, has been generally welcomed by environmentalists, they also fear that if the project is not meticulously planned, it might damage local eco-systems. “Agro forestry and developing forests in private and government land have been mooted by the government and is a welcome move. But, it has to be done judiciously and should not interfere with the native ecology of a region,” said Dr D. Narasimhan, professor of plant biology at Madras Christian College (MCC), and a biodiversity expert. “While it is a good initiative to increase revenue for farmers and adding more green cover is always good, we have to plan it a little carefully and ensure that the greenery is permanent and not harvested for commercial gain,” he cautioned. “Such efforts would cause carbon sequencing imbalance,” said the MCC professor. Another senior plant biologist has said that not all landscapes were suitable for creating forests. “Several parts of eastern Tamil Nadu have always been shrub forest with sparse presence of trees. Historically, this area has always been less vegetated,” said the senior researcher based in Chennai. “Creating forests in such landscapes could introduce new changes in the lifecycle of local plants and animals as well as the residents of these regions. Such factors should also be thoroughly studied before planting trees indiscriminately,” he said.

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**Source URL:** <http://www.deccanchronicle.com/channels/cities/regions/coimbatore/tnau-make-greener-eastern-ghats-496>

Global water meet: Indian Farmers hailed

**Agencies** Posted online: Thu Aug 30 2012, 14:57 hrs



**London** : Citing examples from West Bengal and Madhya Pradesh, a Stockholm-based water management institute has said that small-scale irrigation schemes could protect millions of farmers from food insecurity and climate risks.

The report by the International Water Management Institute (IWMI), titled 'Water for wealth and food security: Supporting farmer-driven investments in agricultural water management'; was released at the ongoing World Water Week in Stockholm.

According to the report, expanding the use of on-farm water management techniques could increase yields up to 300 per cent in some cases, and add tens of billions of US dollars to household revenues across sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia.

Researchers looked at these trends in six countries, including in India's West Bengal and Madhya Pradesh, a press release from IWMI said.

Tushaar Shah of IWMI said: "When farmers and those who depend on agriculture for their livelihoods are at the mercy of global food prices, water scarcity can have tragic impacts. But Indian farmers are increasingly tapping local, small-scale

solutions for their water needs to great success." The three-year AgWater Solutions Research Initiative unearthed for the first time the scale at which enterprising

small-holder farmers themselves are driving this revolution by using their own resources innovatively rather than waiting for water to be delivered, the release said.

"What surprises us is not just the pace of change but how widespread it has been," Ravinder Malik, who coordinated the initiative in Madhya Pradesh, said.

"Farmers themselves are taking up this challenge finding their own solutions to high start-up costs and poorly developed supply chains because their crops cannot grow

without efficient irrigation technology," he said.

In Madhya Pradesh's Dewas District, for instance, more than 7,000 water harvesting structures have been built by farmers on their own land and with their own financial

resources within a period of less than 4 years.

The district administration however provided logistical support and facilitated construction of these structures, the release said.

The research, a collaborative effort involving several international partners and funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, provides the best evidence to-date on the scale and potential economic benefits of small-holder water management in sub-Saharan Africa and South Asia.

The report cites the example of innovative farmer Raghunath Singh from Harnavada in Dewas District in Madhya Pradesh.

A steep decline in local water tables had led to a spate of tube-well failures.

His farm was badly affected, but he took the initiative and was the first person in the district to construct a private rain water harvesting pond on his farm, the release said.

Singh's success catalyzed the development of more private rainwater harvesting structures in the district as other farmers enthusiastically adopted the new approach.

Singh was so pleased with his new reservoir, and so determined to encourage others, that he organised a big "funeral" procession for his tubewell.

Malik said: "The solutions for effective water management are already with us. Cheap pumps and new ways of powering them are changing how Indians farm and how much revenue their crops generate. Even drilling wells more quickly and capturing rainwater more effectively can make a difference during the dry season."

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## THE ECONOMIC TIMES

30 AUG, 2012, 02.15PM IST, PTI

### Chilli futures down 1.53 pc on higher output hopes

NEW DELHI: Chilli prices fell by 1.53 per cent to Rs 5,544 per quintal as speculators trimmed positions amid expectations of higher output.

At the National Commodity and Derivatives Exchange, chilli for delivery in October moved down by Rs 86, or 1.53 per cent, to Rs 5,544 per quintal, with an open interest of 5,065 lots.

Similarly, the spice for delivery in September traded lower by Rs 60, or 1.19 per cent, to Rs 4,970 per quintal, with an open interest of 10,205 lots.

Marketmen said off-loading of positions by speculators following higher output expectations, mainly weighed on the spice prices at futures trade here.

30 AUG, 2012, 01.56PM IST, PTI

### Cardamom futures fall 1 pc on profit-booking

NEW DELHI: Cardamom prices fell by one per cent to Rs 1,098 per kg in futures trading today as speculators booked profits at prevailing higher levels amid sluggish spot market demand.

Adequate stocks position in the physical market following increased arrivals from producing regions also put pressure on cardamom futures, traders said.

At the Multi Commodity Exchange, cardamom for delivery in November fell by 11.10, or 1 per cent, to Rs 1,098 per kg, with a business turnover of 60 lots.

Likewise, the spice for delivery in October lost Rs 7.40, or 0.69 per cent, to Rs 1,070 per kg, with a business turnover of 268 lots.

30 AUG, 2012, 02.09PM IST, PTI

### **Crude palm oil futures down on subdued spot demand**

NEW DELHI: Crude palm oil prices traded lower by 0.11 per cent to Rs 554.30 per 10 kg in futures trade today owing to subdued demand in the spot market against adequate stocks position.

At the Multi Commodity Exchange, crude palm oil for delivery in August traded marginally down by 60 paise, or 0.11 per cent, to Rs 554.30 per 10 kg, with a business turnover of 66 lots.

Similarly, the oil for delivery in September shed 10 paise, or 0.02 per cent, to Rs 558.90 per 10 kg, with a business turnover of 347 lots.

Marketmen said subdued spot market demand against adequate stocks position mainly influenced crude palm oil prices at futures trade.

30 AUG, 2012, 02.07PM IST, PTI

### **Wheat gains 0.78 per cent in futures trade**

NEW DELHI: Wheat prices recovered by 0.78 per cent to Rs 1,551 per quintal today after yesterday's losses as speculators created fresh positions.

At the National Commodity and Derivatives Exchange, wheat for delivery in October moved up by Rs 12, or 0.78 per cent, to Rs 1,551 per quintal, with an open interest of 19,730 lots.

Similarly, the wheat for delivery in September gained Rs 11, or 0.70 per cent, to Rs 1,577 per quintal, with an open interest of 16,720 lots.

Marketmen said the rise in wheat futures prices was due to fresh positions created by speculators on hopes of a pick-up in demand ahead of festivals season.

30 AUG, 2012, 02.12PM IST, PTI

### **Mentha oil up in futures trade on industrial demand**

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inShare

NEW DELHI: Mentha oil prices traded higher by 0.10 per cent to Rs 1,341.10 per kg in futures trade today as speculators enlarged positions, tracking a firm spot market trend following pick up in industrial demand.

Restricted arrivals from Chandousi in Uttar Pradesh further fuelled the uptrend, traders said.

At the Multi Commodity Exchange, mentha oil for delivery in September gained Rs 1.30, or 0.10 per cent, to Rs 1,341.10 per kg, with a business turnover of 357 lots.

Similarly, the oil for delivery in August edged up by 80 paise, or 0.06 per cent, to Rs 1,319.80 per kg, with a business turnover of 170 lots.

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### **Tough time for farmers as shrimp demand falls abroad**

WEDNESDAY, 29 AUGUST 2012 23:45

AKSHAY ROUT | JAJPUR

The shrimp exporters and farmers are passing through a hard time in the State due to dwindling demand for shrimp in the Western countries triggered by the world economic crisis.

Exporters of shrimp fear further fall in demand in the West as people in the USA and Europe are cutting down on their consumption in the face of continued slide in their economies for the last few years.

Marine Products Export Development Authority (MPEDA), Bhubaneswar, Assistant Director SK Patra said, "India exported frozen food, mostly shrimp, worth Rs 13,000 crore during the last fiscal year and the seafood exporters of Odisha exported shrimps worth of Rs 692 crore last year. More than 80 per cent of the total export went to the USA and the EU, the top two destinations of country's shrimp export."

Two years back, the price of one kg of shrimp in USA and other EU countries was \$13. But this year the price of a kg of shrimp is only \$9. As a result, a large number of shrimp exporters and shrimp farmers are in deep trouble, added Patra.

“The falling economic growth in the West triggered a continuous decline in the cost of living there.

As a result, the people of the developed countries are cutting down on their kitchen market menu and are looking for cheaper variety (Vennfmi) of white shrimp from Thailand, Bangladesh, and Mexico instead of the king size black tiger variety, locally known as 'Bagda Chingudi' from Odisha.

"The future of shrimp farmer is bleak. It will be tough to survive if the present economic situation continues in the West.

But we cannot sell the items at lower prices as the cost of production of shrimp is higher in Odisha," said Odisha Shrimp Farmers Association president Sanjaya Kumar Mohanty.

Seafood exporters illegally reduced the price of shrimp up to 30 to 40 per cent. As a result, the shrimp farmers decided not to sell shrimps to the seafood exporters. T

he fate of at least two Lakh shrimp farmers of the State hangs in balance due to the price fall of the shrimp.

“We spend Rs 200 to produce a kg shrimp. But the seafood exporters told us to sell shrimp at Rs 150 per kg.

The Government should decide the support price of shrimp to mitigate the plight of shrimp farmers in the State,” Mohanty demanded.

State unit of the Seafood Exporters Association of India (SEAI) president Gorachanda Mohanty said, “The buyers in the US and Europe are pressing the Indian exporters to reduce the price of the item in the wake of a deepening financial crisis for which we reduced the price of shrimp.”

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# Business Standard

Friday, Aug 31, 2012

## Edible oil price to be under pressure

Dilip Kumar Jha / Mumbai August 31, 2012, 0:09 IST

Massive stockpiles, coupled with Indonesian government's decision to slash export duty on crude palm oil, are likely to keep edible oil price under check in Indian markets.

With the revision in tariff rate by the Indian government about a month ago to make it market-linked (currently at \$1,022 a tonne) against the fixed tariff rate of \$484 a tonne earlier, the incidence of import duty doubled. The increase in the cost of import, however, would be nullified by a cut in export duty by Indonesia of which India is a big importer of crude palm oil and a decline in global oil prices.

The Indonesian government, however, decided to levy 100 per cent more on crude palm oil (CPO) than refined, bleached and di-iodized (RBD or refined oil), in order to protect domestic refineries there which made import of CPO costlier. But, in a major relief for Indian importers, the government of Indonesia has cut exports duty on crude palm oil to 13.5 per cent for September as compared to 14 per cent in the previous month and 18 per cent around same time last year.

Also, CPO for delivery in November the Bursa Malaysia Derivatives Exchange recorded around four per cent decline in the last one month to trade at 3004 ringgit (Rs 53,460 ) a tonne on Thursday as against 3,122 ringgit on August 1. Despite lower acreage under kharif oilseed, the overall edible oil price to remain range-bound this year.

"For the next couple of months, edible oil price may go up marginally due to the lean crushing season in the domestic market. But, once soybean harvesting begins in late September-early October season, the price would move downwards," said Satyanarayan Agarwal, president, Central Organisation for Oil Industry and Trade (COOIT).

Meanwhile, edible oil prices remained firm so far this month amid reports of crop damage in the US due to drought and lower availability from domestic sources. In August, most edible oil price



jumped between three-five per cent. Both RBD palmolein and refined soya oil were quoted range-bound in Vashi APMC market on Thursday at Rs 624 per 10 kg and Rs 765 per 10 kg. Sunflower oil also traded unchanged at Rs 775 per 10 kg.

“Market will move fairly in range-bound as the rationalisation in export duty by Indonesia would have hardly any impact on Indian market,” said Atul Chaturvedi, chief executive officer (edible oil), Adani Wilmer Ltd, the company that produces Fortune brand edible oils.

Investors are looking to the speech for any hint on further US stimulus scheduled for Friday that could boost sentiment and support demand for risky assets such as palm oil, which has lost ground so far this year. The edible oil has posted two straight weeks of gains as the worst drought in over half a century damaged soybean crops in the US Midwest, hurting soybean oil supply and shifting more vegetable oil demand to the cheaper palm oil.

Indonesia, the world’s largest palm oil producer, reviews the rates and base export prices every month to make it closer with the movement in its price in the spot market. The duty is based on average rates in Kuala Lumpur, Rotterdam and Jakarta. Palm oil on the Malaysia Derivatives Exchange, the global benchmark, has fallen 5.4 per cent so far this year on a drastic decline in demand due to the sovereign debt crisis in Europe and a slowdown in China.

### **Food Min to seek panel nod to sell surplus wheat**

If approved, the total quantity of wheat to be sold in the open market would reach six million tonne in this fiscal

**Press Trust of India / New Delhi August 30, 2012, 14:24 IST**



The Food Ministry is looking to sell additional three million tonne wheat in the open market to bulk consumers such as flour millers, a move aimed at containing price rise and offloading surplus stocks.

"We are taking a proposal before the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) for releasing another three million tonne of wheat to bulk consumers under the open market sale scheme (OMSS)," Food Minister K V Thomas told PTI.

In June, the government had allocated sale of three million tonne of wheat from its godowns under the OMSS to ease storage pressure during monsoon season.

If this proposal is approved by the CCEA, the total quantity of wheat to be sold in the open market would reach six million tonne in this fiscal.

Asked about status of 3 million tonne of wheat sale approved in June, Thomas said, "We have already released 1.3 million tonne of wheat under OMSS. Another one million tonne of wheat will be sold next month and the remaining quantity will be released thereafter."

The ministry has decided to release a total of six million tonne of wheat under the OMSS, though the Commission for Agriculture Costs and Prices (CACP) had suggested 10 million tonne of the grain, he said.

As per latest data, the entire quantity allocated in the first tranche has been sold to bulk users by the Food Corporation of India (FCI).

Under the OMSS, FCI has sold wheat initially at a floor price of Rs 1,170 per quintal through the tender process.

The base price was hiked to Rs 1,285 from early this month.

Meanwhile, wholesale prices of wheat have been rising due to short supply of the grain in the open market and fears that wheat crop in the rabi season may be down due to poor rains.

Wholesale prices in the national capital have risen by 22% to Rs 1,625 per quintal in the last one month. As on August 1, the government has total stock of 76 million tonne of foodgrains, out of which wheat is 47.52 million tonne. The storage capacity is 71.41 million tonne. The government's stocks have risen sharply due to record production and procurement in the last few years.

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# THE HINDU Business Line

## Soyabean futures fall on better crop prospects

**MUMBAI, AUG 31:**

Soyabean futures on NCDEX closed lower by 0.17 per cent at Rs 4,026 a quintal due to higher area under soyabean coverage and good rains in major growing areas. In the Chicago Board of Trade, soyabean settled higher due to increase in export demand from China. Production in Brazil, the second largest producer of soyabean, is expected at 81.3 million tonnes in 2012-13. Planting in Brazil will start mid-September. In the domestic markets, oilseeds have been sown on 164.29 lakh hectares against 169.94 lakh hectares in the same period last year. Soyabean area is higher at 106.4 lakh hectares against 102.9 lakh hectares in the same period last year. Soyabean futures on NCDEX may trade lower due to better rains in growing regions and higher acreage.

## Stockists' buying sweetens sugar



**Mumbai, Aug. 30:**

Sugar prices on the Vashi wholesale spot market extended gains by Rs 5-20 a quintal on Thursday. Naka rates increased by Rs 30 for M-grade, tracking firm sentiment at mill level. Mill tender rates were up by Rs 10-20 on continued buying from local stockists and eastern buyers. This week about 7-8 rail rakes (each of 27,000 bags) were bought by West Bengal, Orissa buyers that kept the overall sentiment positive. Jagdish Rawal of B. Bhogilal and Co., said: "Continued buying from eastern traders and firm domestic futures markets keep sentiment

bullish in physical market despite routine local demand and month-end higher selling pressure. Higher demand is expected for *Ganeshotsav* festival next month. Till now neighbouring States buying was missing but this week since last three days fresh buying by eastern States has pushed up sentiment upper mill level in Maharashtra.”

Sources said firm trend will continue next month as sugar prices have dropped by more than Rs 300 in last two-three weeks. Stockists may start building inventory for the festival season from next month. Important Hindu festivals will be celebrated during September to November months and consumer demand will be definitely higher. In Vashi market, arrivals were higher at 54-55 truck loads (each of 100 bags of quintal each) and local dispatches were 50-52 loads. On Wednesday about 15-16 mills sold more than 1.25 lakh bags including two rail rakes (52,000-54,000 bags) to eastern buyers in the range of Rs 3,408-3,458 and sold about 70,000-75,000 bags (each of 100 kgs) to local traders in the range of Rs 3,360-3,420 (Rs 3,340-3,420) for S-grade and Rs 3,420-3,520 (Rs 3,400-3,510) for M-grade.

**Bombay Sugar Merchants Association's spot rates:** S-grade Rs 3,485-3,552 (Rs 3,482 - 3,552) and M-grade Rs 3,561- 3,711 (Rs 3,546- 3,711). **Naka delivery rates:** S-grade Rs 3,440 -3,480 (Rs 3,440-3,480) and M-grade Rs 3,530-3,630 (Rs 3,500-3,600).

#### Jeera gains on export enquiries, short supply



Rajkot, Aug. 30:

Jeera futures gained by 2.55 per cent on Thursday due to short supply and export demand mainly for Europe. However, spot price remained unchanged.

On the National Commodity and Derivatives Exchange (NCDEX), jeera September contract increased by Rs 372.50 to Rs 14,980 a quintal with an open interest of 12,939 lots. October delivery gained Rs 360 to Rs 15,400 with an open interest of 18,450 lots.

New jeera medium quoted at Rs 2,400-2,500 for 20 kg, NCDEX quality raw quoted at Rs 2,725-2,875 at Unjha market of Gujarat. Traders mentioned that poor supplies of around 4,000-4,500 bags were reported daily at the Unjha mandi against the total demand of around 7,000-8,000 bags.

An Unjha-based broker said, "Some fresh overseas enquiries came today, though overall demand has come down slightly on hopes of a correction in prices. Upside would be limited because of continues rains in Gujarat."

According to Kedia Commodity report, jeera gained due to restricted supplies by traders at lower levels along with weak stock position in local mandis. Some fresh overseas enquiries came today, though overall demand has come down slightly on hopes of a correction in prices.

Improved rainfall activities in Gujarat and Rajasthan could pressurised market sentiments to some extent as that remains critical this month for better sowing prospects of the new crop in coming months.

#### **Food prices soar 10% in July: World Bank**



From June to July, the prices of both corn and wheat jumped by 25 per cent while soyabeans were up 17 per cent.

**WASHINGTON, AUG 31:**

Global food prices soared 10 per cent in July, increasing the threat to millions of the world's poor especially in Africa and West Asia, the World Bank said.

Drought and soaring temperatures in the United States and Eastern Europe have savaged some of the key grain crops that feed much of the world, with the prices for corn (maize) and soyabean hitting records.

The Bank had warned yesterday that a repeat of the price surges of mid-2008 and early 2011 endangered the health of millions in food-importing countries, with sub-Saharan Africa most at risk.

"Food prices rose again sharply threatening the health and well-being of millions of people," World Bank President Jim Yong Kim said in a statement.

"Africa and the Middle East are particularly vulnerable, but so are people in other countries where the prices of grains have gone up abruptly," he said.

From June to July, the prices of both corn and wheat jumped by 25 per cent while soyabeans were up 17 per cent.

Corn and soyabean prices topped their previous record highs in the food price crisis of June 2008, and soyabean struck another new record yesterday in Chicago trade on worries the Brazil crop would also face poor weather conditions.

Strong rice crops in Thailand and elsewhere have pushed the rice prices down by four per cent in the same period.

Even so, the World Bank's food price index was six per cent higher than a year earlier and one per cent higher than the February 2011 peak — when food prices added to the economic pressures that set off the Arab Spring revolutions in northern Africa.

The West Asia and North and Sub-Saharan Africa remain the "most vulnerable to this global shock," the World Bank said.

“They have large food import bills, their food consumption is a large share of average household spending, and they have limited fiscal space and comparatively weaker protective mechanisms,” the Bank said in its Food Price Watch report.

### Low buying pulls down rice



Karnal, Aug. 30:

Lack of buying interest at all levels pulled aromatic and non-basmati rice prices down by Rs 25-400 a quintal on Thursday.

Mr Amit Kumar, proprietor of Ginni Rice, told *Business Line* that weak export demand and tepid domestic demand pulled rice down. Traders have adequate stocks and they do not want to take fresh position as prices are decreasing continuously, he added. Traders want to evacuate their stocks as the new crop will arrive in the market in September, said Mr Amit. The market is likely to rule range-bound for the next few days, he added. In the physical market, Pusa-1121 (steam) eased marginally by Rs 25 at Rs 6,200-6,275 and Pusa-1121 (sela) sold at Rs 5,200-5,300.

Pure basmati (raw) went down by Rs 50 at Rs 6,650 while pure basmati (sela) sold at Rs 5,300 a quintal.

Prices of duplicate basmati decreased Rs 150 at Rs 4,700 a quintal.

Brokens of Pusa-1121, Tibar went down by Rs 400 and sold at Rs 3,200; Dubar down by Rs 100 at Rs 2,700a quintal.

Sharbati (steam) remained unchanged at Rs 3,850 while Sharbati (sela) eased by Rs 100 at Rs 3,700.

Prices of PR-11 (sela) went down by Rs 250 and sold for Rs 2,650 while PR-11 (Raw) Rs 2,550. Permal (raw) sold at Rs 2,200-2,250 while Permal (sela) went for Rs 2,300.

### **Paddy Arrivals**

Around 7,000 bags of Sathi variety arrived at the Karnal Grain Market Terminal and sold at Rs 1,150-1,240 a quintal.

### **Advancing monsoon dampens chilli**

August 30, 2012:

For a commodity that was really hot at the beginning of this month, chilli has turned cold with advancing monsoon. Profit-booking in the futures market has also added to the price crash by over 10 per cent.

From around Rs 4,200 a quintal in the spot market, prices are down to Rs 3,900. On Thursday, prices surged again but that has been attributed to lower arrivals. Will farmers hold back their produce to get higher prices? It is something that has to be watched out for.

Rain in growing areas of Andhra Pradesh leading to increase in the water storage level of reservoirs has been the dampener. Earlier, the market had moved up only on poor storage levels.

On the National Commodity and Derivatives Exchange, chilli for October delivery dropped by Rs 118 to Rs 5,512. Similarly, the spice for delivery in November traded lower by Rs 156 at Rs 5,742 a quintal.

Chilli arrivals in Guntur are estimated at 50,000 bags (1 bag - 45 kg) on Thursday, unchanged from Wednesday's level.



## Mixed trend in edible oils

Mumbai, Aug. 30:

Weak tendency remained in edible oils market on Thursday due to month-end eased demand. In ready market, the absence of fresh demand pulled down rapeseed oil by Rs 5 and cotton refined oil by Rs 3 for 10kg, while other edible oils such as groundnut oil, sunflower oil, palmolein and soya oil ruled steady with cautious mood. Stockists have covered 1,800-2,000 tonnes of palmolein for September-October delivery. Liberty was quoting palmolein at Rs 615-616 for September-October. Super palmolein was Rs 658, soya oil Rs 775 and sunflower refined oil Rs 785. Ruchi quoted palmolein at Rs 612-613, soya refined oil at Rs 775 and sunflower refined oil was Rs 781. On the National Board of Trade in Indore, soya refined oil September futures closed at Rs 797 (Rs 798.30) and October closed at Rs 804.50 (Rs 803.40).

**Malaysia's crude palm oil** September contracts settled higher at MYR 2,925 (MYR 2,915), October closed at MYR 2,969 (MYR 2,968) and November at MYR 3,019 (MYR 3,000) a tonne.

**The Bombay Commodity Exchange spot rates were (Rs/10 kg):** groundnut oil 1,250 (1,250), soya refined oil 765 (765), sunflower exp. ref. 730 (725), sunflower ref. 775 (775), rapeseed ref. oil 890 (895), rapeseed expeller ref. 860 (865) cotton ref. oil 767 (770) and palmolein 612 (612).

## Spot rubber stays static

Kottayam, Aug. 30:

Physical rubber prices were unchanged on Thursday. The market continued to remain in a holiday mood even after Onam. Sheet rubber closed steady at Rs 171 a kg at Kottayam and Kochi, according to traders and the Rubber Board. Transactions were extremely low.

In futures, the September contracts closed at Rs 172.55 (171.91), October at Rs 169.50 (169.90), November at Rs 169.50 (170.06) and December at Rs 171.44 (170.62) a kg for RSS 4 on the National Multi Commodity Exchange.

RSS 3 (spot) weakened to Rs 153.02 (154.80) a kg at Bangkok. The September futures dropped to ₹217 (Rs 153.56) from ₹218 during the day session on the Tokyo Commodity Exchange.

**Spot rates were (Rs/kg):** RSS-4: 171 (171); RSS-5: 161 (161); ungraded: 155 (155); ISNR 20: 150 (150) and latex 60 per cent: 112.50 (112.50).

## Turmeric up a tad on low arrivals



Erode, Aug. 30:

Prices rose a little on Thursday as only 1,894 bags arrived. Hopes that prices will rise in a week has brought down arrivals. Only 450 bags were sold, of which stockists bought the most.

“ For the first time, so few bags have arrived. Traders have purchased negligible number of bags,” said R.K.V. Ravishankar, President, Erode Turmeric Merchants Association.

Due to low demand from North India, exporters and traders quoted below Rs 7,000 a quintal. Ravishankar said due to inclement weather in the North, the orders for Erode were delayed.

Some farmers sold at Rs 6,600 a quintal as they needed cash urgently.

Traders expect prices to increase further by about Rs 200 a quintal during the next week.

At the Erode Turmeric Merchants Association Sales yard, the finger variety fetched Rs 4,860 to Rs 6,649 a quintal, the root variety Rs 3,719 to Rs 6,079 a quintal.

Salem hybrid crop: The finger variety was sold at Rs 5,864 to Rs 7,200 a quintal, the root variety at Rs 5,516 to Rs 6,316 a quintal. Of the 531 bags that arrived, 134 were sold.

At the Regulated Marketing Committee, the finger variety was sold at Rs 6,010 to Rs 6,666 a quintal, the root variety at Rs 5,888 to Rs 6,338 a quintal. Of the 359 bags that arrived, 138 were sold.

At the Erode Cooperative Marketing Society, the finger variety was sold at Rs 5,839 to Rs 6,800 a quintal, the root variety at Rs 5,569 to Rs 6,309 a quintal. Of the 150 bags that arrived, 138 were sold.

At the Gobichettipalayam Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Society, the finger variety was sold at Rs 5,599 to Rs 6,269 a quintal, the root variety at Rs 5,296 to Rs 6,069 a quintal. All the 35 bags kept for sale were sold.

### Mustard oil slips on poor spot demand



Indore, Aug. 30:

Weak global cues and slack buying in the physical market pulled down mustard oil in *mandis* here by Rs 4 to Rs 828 for 10 kg on Thursday.

In Neemuch and Morena, the oil declined by Rs 5 to Rs 820 and Rs 830 for 10 kg. In Rajasthan, while the oil ruled stable in Sri Ganga Nagar at Rs 830, it was down Rs 5 each in Kota and Jaipur at Rs 825 and Rs 840. In Gujarat, it declined by Rs 5 to Rs 820. Few weeks ago, the oil had shot up to Rs 855 for 10 kg on strong demand.

Compared with last week, the oil is down Rs 4 here, Rs 10 in Neemuch and Rs 12 in Morena.

In Rajasthan, it has fallen by Rs 15 each compared with last week in Kota and Jaipur, and by Rs 10 in Ganga Nagar. It has dropped by Rs 10 for 10 kg in Gujarat.

However, demand during upcoming festivals is likely to lift mustard oil, said Neemuch-based trader Kamlesh Nahta.

Mustard seeds ruled stable. While in mandis here, it ruled at Rs 4,500-4,600 a quintal despite subdued buying, it was quoted at Rs 4,000-4,200 a quintal at Neemuch. Arrival rose to 60,000 bags across the country on Thursday.

Falling domestic stocks are likely to turn mustard bullish. Plant deliveries of mustard seeds for Jaipur and Alwar ruled marginally higher at Rs 4,585 and Rs 4,590 a quintal on improved demand from crushers. Mustard seeds futures traded higher on improved buying with September and October contracts on the National Commodity and Derivatives Exchange closing at Rs 4,455 a quintal (up Rs 18) and at Rs 4,522 a quintal (up Rs 16).

### Chilli prices cool as crop prospects improve



Chennai, Aug. 30:

Chilli prices fell by 0.4 per cent to Rs 5,010 a quintal as speculators trimmed their positions amid expectations of higher output.

Recent rains in major producer, Andhra Pradesh, and slack export demand have dampened prospects of the spice.

On the National Commodity and Derivatives Exchange, chilli for October delivery dropped by Rs 100 to Rs 5,530. Similarly, the spice for delivery in November traded lower by Rs 156 at Rs 5,742 a quintal.

Traders said offloading of positions by speculators following higher output expectations, mainly weighed on the spice prices at futures trade here.

Chilli arrivals in Guntur are estimated at 50,000 bags (1 bag - 45 kg) on Thursday, unchanged from Wednesday.

Spot prices at Guntur were ruling at Rs 5,717 a quintal. Prices were steady despite lower offtake as farmers were unwilling to sell their produce at lower rates.

### **Chana futures gain 1% to Rs 4,948/quintal**

Suresh P. Iyengar



December contract opened higher at Rs 4,948 against the previous close of Rs 4,890.

Mumbai, Aug 30:

Chana for December delivery on the National Commodity and Derivatives Exchange Ltd (NCDEX) gained one per cent to Rs 4,948 a quintal on Thursday on expectations of higher demand during the ensuing festival season.

December contract opened higher at Rs 4,948 against the previous close of Rs 4,890. The recent fall in prices also aided fresh purchases.

Chana prices have fallen by Rs 200 a quintal from a high of Rs 5,000 in the last one week. Chana crop prospects during the rabi season look bright due to revival of monsoon in the northern and central parts of India.

Spot prices of chana in Indore were quoted at Rs 4,794 a quintal.

## S. Africa seeks investments in agro-processing



Beckoning industries: Elizabeth Thabethe, Deputy Minister of Department of Trade and Industry, South Africa. — Shashi Ashiwal

Mumbai, Aug. 30:

South Africa has sought Indian investment for its flourishing food processing sector.

Speaking at a conference on “Challenges and Opportunities in agro sector in South Africa”, Deputy Minister of Department of Trade and Industry Elizabeth Thabethe said that the agro-processing sector offers opportunity for investment with the backing of the South African government through policy and various incentives. Undoubtedly, agro-food processing in South Africa is a sector that is not only open for new investments and the region, but one that is in fact viable, she said.

South Africa climatic condition is conducive for growing diversity of crops, livestock and fish. There were other sub sectors with investment potential too.

The establishment of preferential trade agreements such as the African Growth and Opportunity Act for the US market and a Free Trade Agreement (FTA) with the European Union, confer generous benefits for potential investors.

### **BILATERAL TRADE**

Bilateral trade between India and South Africa has increased from \$45 million in 1993 to \$7 billion last year. Further, India ranks among the top 10 investing countries in South Africa, with

investments estimated at over \$6 billion to date. The challenge now lies in increasing the pace of growth and consolidating the gains being made, she said.

In a bid to strengthen the trade ties between India and South Africa various agreements including the General Trade Agreement, Cooperation on defense issues, SME development and Capacity building through the India Technical Cooperation Programme.

*suresh.iyengar@thehindu.co.in*

### **StarAgri, SBI in pact for warehouse receipt lending**

Mumbai, Aug. 30:

Star Agri warehousing and Collateral Management (StarAgri) has entered into a strategic tie-up with State Bank of India for warehousing receipt financing and collateral management services. The partnership will deliver post-harvest credit facility to farmersempowering them to access affordable finance, scientific storage facilities and fair price discovery of their produce. StarAgri will also get to extend its services through SBI's 9,426 rural and semi rural branches. As part of the tie-up, SBI will provide post-harvest credit facilities while StarAgri will offer warehousing and other value-added services to farmers. The produce stored in StarAgri's warehouses will act as collateral for the finance extended by SBI.

### **India heading for increased tea offtake**

P.S. Sundar

Coonoor, Aug. 30:

India, the world's largest consumer of black tea, is heading for increased absorption of its home production, reveals an analysis of the data available with the Tea Board and traders' organisations.

According to Tea Board data, domestic consumption was a record 856 million kg (mkg) in 2011 against 837 mkg in 2010. This increase of 19 mkg marked a growth of 2.27 per cent.

In 2010, the consumption had risen by 18 mkg over the previous year to post a growth of 2.20 per cent.

The domestic consumption had been increasing consistently at this rate over the years. Collectively, in the last decade, domestic consumption had increased from 673 mkg to 856 mkg – a growth of 27.19 per cent.

Market indications are that this trend continues in the current calendar year as well. This should take the domestic consumption to about 875 mkg in 2012. Tea Board has estimated the domestic consumption at 880 mkg for the current fiscal. This would require the country to import at least 10 mkg to meet an export target of 180 mkg as production is estimated at 1,050 mkg.

### **Output dips**

India's production has fallen by 20.24 mkg in the first half of current calendar over the same period of 2011. Adverse weather has continued till August. If the production falls drastically in the second half as well, India will have to import higher volume to meet the export and domestic demand.

Similarly, if the per capita consumption increases, more imports would be necessary unless exports take a matching beating. The per capita consumption rose to 718 gms in 2011 from 711 gms in 2010. It was 654 gms 10 years ago. It has been growing annually. India imported 18.6 mkg of tea in 2011 against 20 mkg in 2010.

### **July rain washes off Assam tea output**



Kolkata, Aug. 30:

The Indian Tea Association (ITA) has projected some 18 per cent production decline in Assam in July following heavy rainfall and recurrent pest attacks.



## Dooars, terai

However, production in other northern centres — Terai, Dooars and Darjeeling — is estimated to decline by 4 per cent in July.

According to C.S. Bedi, Chairman of the Association, the crop in Assam is down by about 6.5 million kg compared with the same period a year ago.

## Dual impact

“Tea produced by ITA members accounts for more than 50 per cent of the total tea produced in Assam valley,” he said.

“The decline in production is higher in Assam as compared with other north Indian centres like due to the dual impact of heavy rainfall and pest attack,” he added.

According to data available with the Tea Board, the country’s production is down 28 million kg or 11.5 per cent at 215.82 million kg during January-May this year.

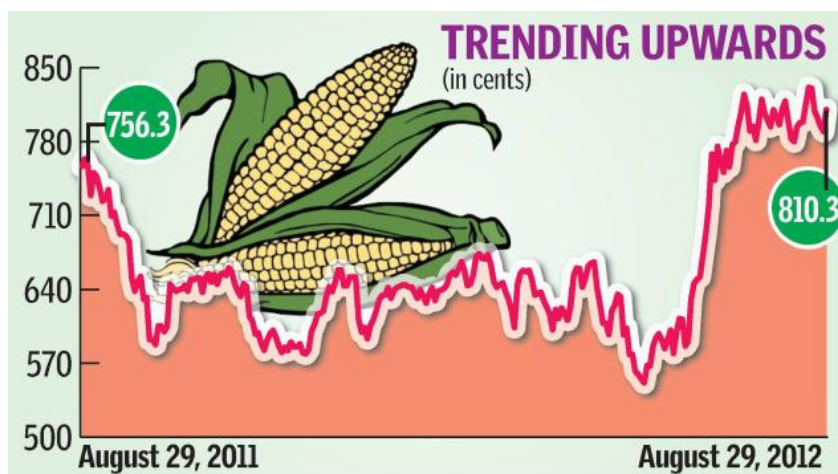
## Break up

While the crop in the North was down by 18 million kg to 128.81 million kg, that of the South dipped by about 10 million kg to 87.01 million kg during the period.

The Association had earlier estimated an 8 per cent decline in production in June.

## Medium term trend bullish for corn

BL Research Bureau



August 30, 2012:

Corn has been in the limelight for the last three months as commodities registered new peaks for the year. Corn contracts traded on the Chicago Mercantile Exchange (CME) is considered the benchmark for tracking this commodity. A brief technical analysis view on this commodity as follows.

Long-term trend has been up for corn since taking support at 300 cents in September 2009. It is hovering well above its 50- and 200-day moving averages. As long as it trades above 500 cents, its long-term trend remains up and it has potential to reach psychological resistance at 900 cents in the forthcoming months. Corn has significant long-term support at 500 cents. Medium as well as short-term trends are up for corn. Since mid-July, the commodity has been moving sideways in the range between 774 and 834 cents. However, it registered a record high at 843 cents on August 10. Acquiring bullish momentum, the commodity advanced 2.6 per cent breaching its 21-day moving average on August 29 and closed at 810.2 cents. Strong jump above the upper boundary, of the aforesaid sideways range will accelerate corn to 850 cents in the ensuing weeks.

But, failure to move higher and a slump below 774 cents can pull the commodity down to 750 cents. Next support is positioned at 720 cents. Medium-term uptrend will be negated if corn declines below the 660 and 670 cents range, as in that even it can then decline to 620 cents.

### **Corporate communication sees churn as media outlets mushroom**

New Delhi/Chennai, Aug 30:

With the explosion of media outlets, the field of corporate communications is undergoing a sea change – in strategy, budgets and approach.

It has become an integral part of a company's management decision, says Deeptie Sethi, Head of Communications, Ford India.

For an auto company like Ford, engagement with media outlets and begins at the pre-launch phase and continues long after a vehicle has been introduced, she adds.

### **Hike**

Of late, companies have had to hike their public relations (PR) and communications budgets. This can be a reflection of sales growth or geographical expansion. However, none is willing to share their communications costs.

Robert Holdheim, Managing Director, Edelman India, a PR agency, says, "It is important to distinguish between PR costs and PR investments. While compensation for PR services still has a long way to go, overall investment on PR could be growing, and not because of the spate of media houses alone." He says PR is a strategic requirement for articulating a company's business and realise its goals.

But, PR professionals say more investments are needed to cover the entire country as companies expand.

Says Jaideep Shergill, CEO, Hanmer MSL, "Spends have increased as the industry is evolving, but it is not like PR budget and spends have doubled or tripled. It depends on a company's strategy. Besides, these spends are shared by advertising, digital and PR."

Nalin Kapoor, Group Head, Marketing, Hyundai Motor India, said "The proportion of our spends in marketing has gone up because of new launches, as well as new sources of communication, such as internet and social media. However, companies have done some kind of optimisation, that is reducing costs on other media channels."

Others believe that communication spends have gone up due to the explosion of media houses. Rajeev Karwal, Founder, Milagrow Business and Knowledge Solutions, says "In the past six months, our communication spend has overshoot by 25-30 per cent. There is a proliferation of media houses and if one doesn't streamline media strategy one can end up overshooting budgets."

From a time when nearly 90 per cent of work was done by in-house teams, some companies now prefer to hire a PR agency in spite of in-house teams.

Depending on their size, companies hire corporate communications officials and PR agencies for respective verticals. For example, each ITC vertical is handled by a different PR agency. However, the company has one corporate communications department based in Kolkata, handling all verticals, a senior PR official, who did not wish to be named, said.

## **Pressures**

The pressures are many. "Never before have we seen multi-faceted demands on corporate communications," says Satinder S. Juneja, Vice President – Marketing & Sales, NIIT Technologies. The need for clear and precise messaging is on the rise, thanks to increased competition. Add to that the expectation of a fragmented audience and internal stakeholders.

He feels brands need to invest in specialist services, such as tracking and monitoring.

“Emerging channels like social media are increasing the scope and expectations,” he adds.

Another upcoming trend is blogging. There is strong resonance and recognition for not just auto bloggers, but tech and lifestyle bloggers, too.

D. Vijayalakshmi, General Manager, Corporate Communications, Murugappa Group, however, says their corporate communications budget has been stable over the last three years. But, allocation has shifted a bit.

Traditional media (TV, print) accounts for almost 60 per cent, internal communications 15 per cent, and the balance is spread among new media (digital), outdoor and events.

*(Inputs from Heena Khan, Meenakshi Verma Ambwani, Ronendra S. Singh and Roudra Bhattacharya in Delhi; and Swetha Kannan in Chennai.)*