

New onion variety for higher yield

The National Horticultural Research and Development Foundation, Nashik, has developed a new onion variety named NHRDF-RED-2 ideal for growing in different parts of North India.

The variety is accepted by farmers because of its higher yield, better adaptability and storage performance.

The crop matures in 100-120 days after transplanting and keeping quality is good.

Average yield is 30-40 tonnes per hectare and presently about some tonnes of seed material are available at the foundation.

Climatic conditions

It grows well in mild climate. The seed is generally sown in raised nursery beds.

The surface of beds should be smooth and well levelled. October-November is the best time for seed sowing. About 7-8 kg of seed is sufficient for a hectare.

Application of 20-25 tonnes of FYM/ha in soil is considered adequate.

FYM should be applied one month before transplanting or sowing and mixed well in the soil.

Whole quantity of phosphorus, potash and half of nitrogen should be mixed in the soil before transplanting. Rest half doses of nitrogen should be given as top dressing in two equal split doses, first dose should be applied at 30 days after transplanting whereas second dose at 45 days after transplanting.

Ideal planting time

The best time of transplanting in Northern India is end of December to first week of January. Planting the crop at 15x10 cm spacing is considered to be the best.

Disease and infestations can be controlled by spraying fungicides such as mancozeb at 0.25 per cent or chlorothalonil at 0.2 per cent or Iprodion at 0.25 per cent at fortnightly interval.

For insect pest like thrips spraying metasystox at 0.1 per cent and cypermethrin at 0.01 per cent along with triton or sandovit is found effective.

The variety is ideal for growing in Delhi, Uttar Pradesh, Haryana, Bihar and Punjab, Rajasthan, Gujarat, Maharashtra, Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh.

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Transplanting redgram, new technique for Karnataka ryots



Pigeonpea, commonly known as redgram, arhar or tur, is an important commercial crop for dryland farmers of Bidar district in Karnataka. The district is considered as the pulse bowl of Karnataka as different pulses are grown there, and redgram is one of the varieties ideal for drylands.

“The crop owes its popularity to the fact that being a leguminous plant, it is capable of fixing atmospheric nitrogen and thereby restores nitrogen content in the soil. Its deep rooting system helps in extracting nutrients and moisture from deeper soil layers thus making it suitable for

rained condition,” says Dr. Ravi C. Deshmukh, Programme Coordinator, Krishi Vigyan Kendra, Bidar

Biological plough

Deeper rooting system of the crop also helps in breaking the tough dry soil and it is also called as ‘biological plough’.

But though the crop has been cultivated for many years in the region, the yield somehow was not up to desired levels.

According to Dr. Deshmukh, there are many reasons for this like use of low yielding varieties, poor level of management practices, particularly plant protection measures, high plant population, not adopting proper agronomic practices, damage due to drought or heavy rains in rained areas, spread of diseases, imbalanced use of fertilizers, lack of awareness on integrated nutrient management and maintenance of soil fertility.

“These posed a big challenge for us when we were working on a suitable strategy to help increase yield,” he says.

The Bidar wing of the Krishi Vigyan Kendra organized a farmers-scientists interface meet, wherein progressive farmers discussed various aspects to boost the yield.

The usual practice among Karnataka farmers is to broadcast the seeds on the field like paddy. This results in uneven plant population that ultimately gives low yield.

Alternate practice

“We decided to transplant the seedlings grown in polythene bags to the main field. It is an alternate agronomic practice to overcome late sowing and related lower yields,” explains Dr. Deshmukh

The process involves raising the seedlings in polythene bags in the nursery for one month and transplanting them in the field during onset of monsoon.

It is one of the best examples for transfer of technology in recent years after Bt cotton in northern district of Karnataka, according to Dr. Deshmukh. Today not only Bidar but adjoining districts also have started to grow redgram in poly bags.

Processing units

Several redgram processing units are being established in the district, simultaneously creating employment opportunities. Recently redgram farmers in the district have started forming associations to export their product.

“Interaction with farmers revealed that the main challenge in redgram was the time of sowing. Farmers sow during late June or early July. Any delay in sowing affected yields badly. Sowing was completely dependent on monsoon.

“To overcome this natural problem today several hundred farmers grow this crop in polybags first and then transplant them in the main field thus getting a better yield,” he says. He lists out some major advantages for the farmers such as: Sowing can be done in the second week of May every year even if it does not rain at the right time; due to early sowing, pod borer insect damage can be avoided; drought resistance develops due to deep rooting; it is easy to spray insecticides as plants are at definite intervals; wider spacing allows enough sunlight to reach the leaves of each pigeonpea plant thus reducing competition for water, space and nutrients.

Seed saving

Seed saving is considerable as only 2 kg of seeds is required per hectare against 10-12 kg per hectare in normal practice.

To know more about this technology readers can contact Dr. Ravi C. Deshmukh, Programme Coordinator, Krishi Vigyan Kendra, Bidar -585 401, Phone: 08482-244007, 244155, Mob: 09480696318, e-mail : kvkbidar@rediffmail.com, e-mail : rcdeshmukh_1957@rediffmail.com

We use Indian potatoes for our French fries, claims McDonald's



The Indian arm of U.S. fast food giant McDonald's on Wednesday sought to dispel the notion that the potatoes for its popular French fries were being imported from abroad, saying it has stood by its commitment to source all ingredients locally.

"Before setting up its business in India, McDonald's made a commitment to the government on local sourcing of its entire raw material requirement," Vikram Bakshi, the managing director of McDonald's India (North and East), said in a statement.

"We confidently and proudly state that ingredients used in our products are sourced locally, that includes the French fries," Bakshi said, a day after it was alleged in parliament that the fast food giant was importing its potatoes.

"Ask McDonald's about their fries. They never buy potatoes from Indian farmers, saying their potatoes are too small," Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha Sushma Swaraj Tuesday said in a debate, seeking a ban on foreign equity in multi—brand retail trade.

But McDonald's refuted her claim.

"Being committed to quality, we have stringent standards for the kind of potatoes we use for French Fries — they have to be of a certain length, have high solids content and low moisture content," said the fast food giant.

"When we began developing our business in India, there were no process—grade potato varieties available in India. Only table grade variety of potato was grown. We, along with our supplier, McCain, have worked closely with farmers in Gujarat to produce process—grade potato varieties," it said.

“These are mainly contract farmers in Deesa (North Gujarat) and Kheda (Central Gujarat). We continue to contribute in the growth of these farmers. McDonald’s remains steadfast to its commitment of working with local suppliers and farmers to source all its requirements in India.”
IANS

Din in U.P. Assembly over sugarcane price



Rule book: Speaker Mata Prasad handing over a book on parliamentary procedures to Chief Minister Akhilesh Yadav at the Vidhan Sabha in Lucknow on Wednesday.- Photo: Subir Roy

With eyebrows being raised at the unprecedented delay in announcing the State Advised Price (SAP) of sugarcane for 2012-13 crushing season, the Opposition slammed the Samajwadi Party Government over the issue in the Uttar Pradesh Assembly on Wednesday.

As ruckus prevailed with the Opposition members storming the Well of the House, demanding the announcement of SAP, Speaker Mata Prasad Pandey completed the agenda for the day in a jiffy and adjourned the Assembly sine die. The short winter session of the Vidhan Sabha had commenced on November 23.

It is for the first time in several years that the announcement of the SAP had been delayed to this extent. As the cane crushing season normally commences in October-November, the SAP is announced by the Government latest by November for the benefit of the growers, or else they are forced to sell their produce to the crushers at a much lower price.

As the House assembled for transacting the day’s business, the Leader of Opposition Swamy Prasad Maurya took on the Government for delaying the announcement of SAP, and wanted to

know the reasons for the delay. Mr. Maurya alleged that owing to the delay in this year's SAP, the farmers have been forced to burn their crops. Even as the Leader of Opposition was taking the Government to task, BJP, RLD and Congress members entered the Well of the House demanding announcement of SAP. The RLD MLAs waved placards at the Chair.

In the midst of the din the Parliamentary Affairs Minister Mohammad Azam Khan ridiculed the BSP for demanding the SAP. Mr. Khan said in the five years of BSP rule the sugar mills were sold to the land mafia at a throwaway price, and added that the party has no right to demand justice for the farmers.

When the Speaker's pleas to the protesting MLAs to return to their seats for taking up the Question Hour went unheard, he rushed through the remaining House agenda, including the passage of Uttar Pradesh State University (Amendment) Bill, 2012, and adjourned the House sine die. The proceedings were over in about 30 minutes.

Talking to newsmen after the Assembly was adjourned sine die, the Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Akhilesh Yadav reiterated that the cane price would be declared soon. Mr. Yadav said the interest of the cane farmers will be protected. The Parliamentary Affairs Minister accused the opposition parties for disrupting the proceedings and said had the pandemonium not taken place the SAP would have been announced. Mr. Khan also said that the cane price would be announced soon. The president of the State unit of BJP Laxmikant Bajpai alleged that since the Government has not struck a deal with the sugar mill owners, the cane price had been delayed. He demanded a price of Rs. 400 per quintal.

The RLD has also demanded a SAP of Rs. 400. The party has threatened to stage a road jam in western Uttar Pradesh over the issue.

Rajasthan can become India's export hub for certified organic food: Report



ASSOCHAM national secretary-general D. S. Rawat (left), Rajasthan Council chairperson Diya Kumari and former ASSOCHAM president Anil K. Agarwal releasing a study, "Organic Rajasthan: Untapped potential for growth", in Jaipur on Wednesday.- Photo: Rohit Jain Paras

Organic farming has the potential to generate over 80 lakh jobs in Rajasthan during the next five years in addition to about 15 lakh jobs in the related areas of storing, processing, value addition, packaging and marketing. Promotion of organic farming in the State can also lead to wealth accumulation of about Rs.47,000 crore and generate exports worth Rs.600 crore.

The Associated Chambers of Commerce & Industry of India (ASSOCHAM) has made these observations in a study titled "Organic Rajasthan: Untapped potential for growth", which was released here on Wednesday. Organic farms provide 30 per cent more jobs per hectare in comparison with the non-organic farms, according to the study.

ASSOCHAM national secretary-general D. S. Rawat, past president Anil K. Agarwal and Rajasthan Council chairperson Diya Kumari released the study's findings at a press conference here.

Mr. Rawat said the adoption of organic farming could increase net per capita income of a farmer in the State by a whopping 250 per cent to over Rs.15,000 in the next five years from a meagre Rs.6,000 at present. This will also stop migration of people from Rajasthan to other States in search of jobs.

Switching over to organic farming would result in bringing down the input costs and fetch premium pricing of up to 50 per cent higher than the normal price and about 100 per cent in the retail market, stated the representatives of the premier industry body.

Rajasthan has a crucial role in taking India's share in global organic exports from about 0.2 per cent to about 2.5 per cent by 2017, said the study, adding that the State has the potential of becoming the country's export hub for certified organic food. Organic farming is a default practice in many districts of the State due to low usage of fertilisers and pesticides by farmers because of favourable agro-climatic conditions and availability of rich natural resources.

Cotton, turmeric, ginger and some variety of pulses are certain organic crops produced in Rajasthan and efforts are being made to produce other varieties of pulses such as arhar and moong, along with the commodities like honey, garlic, chilli, paddy and medicinal plants.

Outlining a roadmap to convert Rajasthan into an “organic State”, the ASSOCHAM stressed that farmers should focus on potential crops and areas in a phased and compact manner. The State Government should launch a “mission organic Rajasthan” on the sidelines of region-specific plans.

The study suggested that five districts should be identified initially for complete conversion to organic hub with thorough market development and access initiatives, pricing support and forward and backward linkages throughout the value chain by facilitating the buyback arrangements.

The industry body also suggested that organic agriculture be recognised and integrated in the main policies of the Union Government in the sectors such as agriculture, food, health and environment. This will ensure that all needs of organic sector are properly addressed and considered in Government programmes and budgetary allocations.

Besides, mapping the status of organic farming and certification along with agro-climatic zones must be carried out to tap the potential of organic crops and understand micro level production potential. Interventions must be carried out to raise production levels, said the study.

The ASSOCHAM suggested that the State Government adopt a cluster-based approach with each cluster linked to dried ports in different parts of Rajasthan. Besides, dedicated food parks with complete linkage of value chain with national and international market should also be set up to boost the exports from the State.

The area under crops may be increased through cluster approach to generate marketable surplus and provide economy of scale in marketing the production. The State Government should also promote a concept to set up an organic village in each district to encourage usage of organic fertilisers in order to protect the land from residual effect of chemical fertilisers, according to the study.

The ASSOCHAM has proposed formation of an institute for training, certification, production, packaging, processing and marketing organic products through the public-private partnership model and formation of a value chain in consultations with the Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA).

The State Government must provide information on new technologies and rural credit to farmers through cooperatives, commercial institutions and regional rural banks, said the study.

The Chamber representatives said they would work with farmers to promote organic farming at different levels by adopting potential clusters and convert them into organic farms. Development programmes can be organised to nurture entrepreneurial skills of farmers and help in linking them with certification agencies and markets, both domestic and international.

Mr. Rawat said the ASSOCHAM also plans to organise product fairs and buyer-seller meetings to enable farmers to get remunerative prices for their produce.

Happy augury for paddy farmers

Arrivals to pick up as the month progresses and will peak in January next year



Good tidings: The harvested paddy being stacked in a field near Koutala mandal headquarters.— PHOTO: S. HARPAL

Nearly 2 lakh tonnes of paddy is expected to be produced during the current season by paddy farmers in Adilabad district which comes as a happy augury for the farming community here. As the arrivals are rather tardy at present, not all the paddy purchase centres havev started functioning at this juncture.

“The arrivals will pick up as the month progresses and will peak in January next year, according to officials. The arrivals are expected to be in the range of over 70,000 tonnes this month and over 1 lakh tonnes the following month,” says Adilabad Joint Director of Agriculture, S. Rose Leela. Paddy transplantation, done in about 40,000 hectares, was delayed this season owing to late arrival of monsoon and delayed filling up of projects. While some traditional paddy area was left uncultivated a few farmers shifted to other crops like soyabean owing to the erratic rainfall early in the season.

In some interior areas, transplantation continued even up to the end of October which has resulted in delay in harvesting of the crop. Paddy farmers however, do not have to worry as the produce is being sold at the minimum support price of Rs. 1,280 per quintal of A grade variety and Rs. 1,250 for the common variety, according to Ms. Rose Leela.

Water insufficient to save samba crop: Jayalalithaa

Chief Minister Jayalalithaa on Wednesday said the Supreme Court’s interim direction to Karnataka to release 10,000 cubic feet per second (cusecs) provided some consolation to Tamil Nadu.

However, she added that this would not be sufficient to save the standing samba crop.

In a statement, she quoted the order, according to which Karnataka should release 10,000 cusecs till the Cauvery Monitoring Committee met; it should decide further releases and report to the court, which would hear the case again on Monday.

[An official source said the committee, headed by Union Water Resources Secretary, would meet in New Delhi on Friday afternoon]

Meanwhile, the order evoked mostly a negative response from farmers of the Cauvery basin.

Even though a section of agriculturists of Thanjavur and Tiruvarur districts was appreciative of the Supreme Court’s order, their counterparts of Nagapattinam district, which is at the tailend of the system, and Tiruchi district have expressed disappointment.

Notwithstanding their different responses, farmers were unanimous in saying that the quantum would be inadequate to save the Samba crop.

S. Ranganathan, secretary, Cauvery Delta Farmers Welfare Association, said the quantum, as ordered by the Court, was pittance. The State government demanded 30 thousand million cubic feet (tmcft of) water over 15 days at the rate of two tmc ft per day. But, now, what had been ordered was the release of only three tmcft at the rate of 0.75 tmcft a day.

When the Monitoring Committee meets, it should impress upon the Prime Minister the need for providing more power to Tamil Nadu to save the samba crop on three lakh acres that were dependent on agriculture pump sets. If possible, Tamil Nadu should be provided with the entire quantum of power generated by thermal plants in Neyveli.

Reacting positively to the order, P.R. Pandiyan, State council member, Tamil Nadu Vivasayigal Sangam, said that at a time when farmers were worried about getting Cauvery water, the Supreme Court order had come as a relief.

V. Jeevakumar, a farmer from Budalur, said 10,000 cusecs would not be sufficient to save the samba crop, as paddy fields had developed cracks.

In Nagapattinam, it was disappointment writ large for the farmers with the interim relief seen as arriving too little too late for tail end agriculture.

The water ordered to be released would get sucked in by the river and would not flow, says Kaveri Danapalan, Cauvery Farmers Protection Association.

Package for farmers

Continued from page 1

Besides, under the State Disaster Relief Fund, compensation for paddy would go up from Rs. 4,000 per acre to Rs. 5,000. Totally, the farmers would get Rs. 13,692 per acre.

Power supply

Since November 29, three-phase power supply to delta farmers was in vogue for six hours each during day and night. This would continue till February 2013, she said.

A subsidy of Rs. 600 per acre would be given to meet the cost of diesel in respect of 32,000 pump sets. A sum of Rs. 15 crore would be set apart for the purpose.

A cent per cent subsidy would be granted for procuring 180-metre-long high-density polyethylene (HDPE) pipes that would prevent loss of water conveyed from main canals to agricultural lands.

The subsidy would cover 6,000 units at a unit cost of Rs. 20,000. A total of Rs. 12 crore would be sanctioned.

Likewise, 100 per cent subsidy would be given to 6,000 units of low-density polythelene pipes at a cost of Rs. 2,800 per unit. This would mean an allocation of Rs. 1.68 crore. Three hundred multi-purpose boom sprayers would be given through the Tamil Nadu Agricultural University and Agriculture Research Station for crops on the verge of withering.

A sum of Rs. 1.20 crore would be earmarked. Besides, Rs. three crore would be provided for administration of the scheme. Muriate of Potash (MOP) fertilizer and pink pigmented facultative methylotrop, which could help the crop sustain the dry period of seven to 10 days, would be given. An amount of Rs. four crore would be approved. Five hundred mini-portable sprinklers would be procured at a cost of Rs. 2.25 crore.

Awareness camps would be held to motivate farmers to take innovative methods to save samba crop and Rs. 75 lakh would be provided to organise the camps. Agricultural workers who have lost jobs would be accommodated under the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Scheme, she added.

Perambalur mill expected to produce 3.8 lakh quintals of sugar

8,203 farmers registered with the mill this season



Off to the crushers:Collector Darez Ahmed inaugurating the crushing at Perambalur Government Sugar Mill on Wednesday.

Perambalur Government Sugar Mill at Erayur is expected to crush four lakh tonnes of sugarcane this season and to produce 3.8 lakh quintals of sugar.

According to an official release, Collector Darez Ahmed, who switched on the crushing for the 2012-13 crushing season on Wednesday morning, told reporters that 8,203 farmers had registered themselves with the mill this season. This is 2,053 more than last year. The total registered cane area for the season was 14,159 acres. This would provide at least 3,000 tonnes of cane for crushing which would last for 167 days.

The Collector said that the machinery maintenance at the mill had been taken up at a total estimate of Rs.1.14 crore. The works for the cogeneration plant to generate 18 megawatt of electricity at a cost of Rs.96 crore were also going on in full swing.

Besides, modernisation works had been taken up at the 34-year-old mill at an estimate of Rs.42 crore.

P.Manimaran, Chief Executive Officer of the mill, S.Raghuvatsa Chari, Chief Regional Manager, Indian Overseas Bank, Sankaralingam, Joint Director (Agriculture), Thangavelu, Deputy Chief Engineer, and P.Selvaraj, Cane Development Officer, participated.

Farmers lose hope of samba crop

They let cattle graze their parched paddy fields



Cracks have developed on the fields and crops have started withering. A paddy field at Bhudarayanallur in Thanjavur on Wednesday.— Photo:B.Velankanni Raj

The samba crop in the Cauvery delta districts of Thanjavur and Tiruvarur is as good as lost with neither Karnataka nor the northeast monsoon coming to their rescue.

Cracks have developed in paddy fields which have not seen water for many days. Standing samba crop has started withering in many places. In places such as Vinnamangalam and Bhudarayanallur villages in Thiruvaiyaru block in Thanjavur district, farmers allowed cattle to graze the transplanted seedlings.

The situation is worse than what it prevailed in 1980s when for want of water a new technology called direct sowing was introduced. At that time, however, the rains helped farmers reap a good crop. Under direct sowing, seeds are sown and allowed to grow in rainwater after initial wetting. There is no transplantation. This minimises water requirement.

While in the eighties, the entire cultivation area went for direct sowing, this year it is a mixed bag: direct sowing in some areas, transplantation in some areas and transplantation with the innovative method of System of Rice Intensification (SRI) in other areas.

With respect to normal transplantation, the State government came out with a scheme of making farmers who have agriculture pumpsets to raise community seedlings. Everything went on well till water was available at Mettur dam and the Neelam cyclone giving copious showers for a few days. But water supply could not be maintained due to dead storage in the Mettur dam which could have been avoided had Karnataka released water. Now the entire samba crop is under threat.

Kamalanandam, a farmer of Vinnamangalam village said he raised samba under direct sowing on 20 acres of land. “The crop came up well but now for want for water, it started withering. We were hoping that we may get some water from Karnataka. But as we are certain now that we

may not get water and the northeast monsoon also coming to an end, we allowed the cattle to graze”, Kamalanandam said.

Nearly 400 acres of crop in this village is lost, he said. He had spent Rs. 6,000 per acre. Like him all the farmers spent the money to raise the crop. Asked about government subsidies for direct sowing, he said that it was yet to come. Veeramani of the same village concurred with him. He raised samba crop on seven acres of land under direct sowing.

But now he allowed the cattle to graze.

The villages are irrigated by Vennar.

These are upper reaches. When this is the case in upper reaches, one can imagine the situation in the tailend areas in Tiruvarur district.

“While the State government may make efforts to get water from Karnataka on the one hand, it should provide relief to farmers on the other,” a cross section of farmers said. They expect relief both from State and central Governments.

11.18 lakh tonnes of cotton procured

The government agencies and the traders have procured 11.18 lakh tonnes of cotton from the farmers at 13 agriculture market yards in the district till Tuesday in the current season.

The Cotton Corporation of India (CCI) and the National Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Federation Limited (Nafed) procured 3.82 lakh tonnes and 6,081 tonnes respectively from October 16 to November 4.

The private traders have purchased 7.29 lakh tonnes of cotton during the same period at 13 market yards, including the cotton market yard in Khammam.

The CCI has set up its purchase centres at the market yards in Khammam, Burgumpadu, Madhira, Nelakondapalli, Yellendu, Bhadrachalam, Chandrugonda, and Enkoor.

The Nafed has procured cotton only at Wyra market yard.

Directive

Meanwhile, Collector Siddharth Jain has instructed the revenue officials to effectively monitor the cotton purchase transactions at the market yards on a daily basis to ensure payment of MSP to all the farmers.

Disburse compensation to Nilam-hit farmers: TDP

A delegation of the TDP, led by its district president and Chilakaluripet MLA Prathipati Pulla Rao, met Joint Director of Agriculture V. Sridhar on Wednesday and sought urgent steps for disbursing compensation to farmers for the loss they had incurred under the impact of cyclone Nilam.

They also pointed out lapses in estimating crop damages and sought remedial action.

The farmers incurred heavy loss due to devouring of cotton, chilli, and paddy by rains and required speedy assistance. "Supply of seed free of cost and sanctioning of fresh loans after writing off dues have been the main demands, but the government has failed on both the counts," the TDP leaders said.

Mr. Pulla Rao said many farmers were in such dire straits that any further delay in extending them compensation might force some of them to take the extreme step to save themselves from financial distress.

The Agriculture Department should make out proper plans for the coming kharif so that farmers could salvage the situation, the TDP leaders suggested to the Joint Director.

Ponnur MLA Dhulipalla Narendra Kumar said the loss incurred by farmers due to torrential rains last year had not yet been fully compensated. "This shows the government's negligence in alleviating the plight of farmers, who are bogged down by volatility in the markets," he said. Responding to the memorandum, Mr. Sridhar said he would ensure that no eligible farmer was deprived of compensation and bring other issues to the government's notice. Pedakurapadu MLA K. Sridhar was present

Government decision on permanent irrigation projects for parched areas welcomed

The district unit of the Karnataka Rajya Raitha Sangha and Hasiru Sene on Wednesday welcomed the decision of a meeting in Bangalore on Tuesday in which Chief Minister Jagadish Shettar took part. The meeting, in which Irrigation Minister Basavaraj Bommai and people's representatives from various districts participated, has decided to implement permanent irrigation projects to benefit the parched districts of central Karnataka region based on a report submitted by irrigation expert G.S. Paramashivaiah.

The members of the outfit gathered at the KSRTC Bus Stand Circle to celebrate the occasion. They distributed sweets to the public to express pleasure over the government's move. The organisation will launch agitations if the government lags behind in implementing its assurance, they said.

District president of the outfit G. Manjunath, leaders Gopal Gowda and Ashwath Reddy participated.

HDUDA lures farmers for partnership



Looking for takers: Chief Minister Jagadish Shettar releasing brochures brought out by the Hubli-Dharwad Urban Development Authority on the PPP model of development of residential sites in Hubli on Wednesday.— Photo: Kiran Bakale

The Hubli-Dharwad Urban Development Authority (HDUDA), which is keen on developing more residential layouts in the twin cities, plans to take up the project on a public-private partnership (PPP) model, and has brought out brochures to create awareness on it.

On Wednesday, Chief Minister Jagadish Shettar released brochures brought out by HDUDA at his residence here before leaving for the legislature session in Belgaum.

The Chief Minister called upon farmers to make use of the scheme to get maximum benefit out of their partnership with the government agency. He said that under the scheme beneficiaries would get well-developed residential sites in return for their partnership.

Under the PPP model, HDUDA would bear the price of developing residential sites, and farmers would get 40 per cent of the sites. HDUDA will then allot its share of 60 per cent to residents who apply for them.

HDUDA chairman Lingaraj Patil told *The Hindu* that if land owners handed over their share of residential plots in the layout to HDUDA, the authority would hold a public auction of the sites on their behalf. After the auction, HDUDA would hand over the amount collected from the auction to the farmers, after deducting 2 per cent as maintenance charge, he said. "In fact, the farmers are likely to get more profit by partnering with us instead of selling their land to a private land developer," he said.

HDUDA wanted other farmers to join hands with the authority in developing residential sites and the brochures would be distributed through Raitha Sampark Kendras, said Mr. Patil. The authority also planned to conduct awareness programmes on the scheme.

Shettar promises passage of State Advisory Price Act to appease farmers

Chief Minister Jagadish Shettar on Wednesday told the Legislative Assembly that the government will pass the State Advisory Price

(SAP) Act in the present session to meet the demands of protesting farmers who are seeking hike in sugarcane prices.

"I am getting the model Acts from the States who have implemented the SAP Act. If possible, it will be passed in this session," Mr. Shettar said.

Earlier, Leader of the Opposition in the Legislative Assembly Siddaramaiah, who sought to move an adjournment motion on sugarcane prices, demanded that SAP Act be passed in this

session. He also said that the sugar factory owners should clear arrears to sugarcane farmers immediately.

Mr. Shettar said in case the government was not able to pass the SAP Act in this session, it would at least bring it before the Cabinet as an ordinance for approval. He also announced waiver of sugarcane purchase tax.

Assurance

The Chief Minister met the protesting sugarcane growers at the deputy commissioner's office and assured them of passing the SAP Act in the present session.

Karnataka Rajya Kabbu Belegarara Sangha president Kurbur Shanthakumar threatened that a large number of sugarcane growers from across the

State would picket the Suvarna Soudha during the session. They have been demanding Rs. 3,000 per tonne of sugarcane.

In the Legislative Council, Minister for Horticulture S.A. Ravindranath said the government is waiting for the recommendations of the high-level committee formed to fix sugarcane price for 2012-13.

Three meetings

The committee, comprising representatives of government, sugar factories and farmers' representatives chaired by him, has held three meetings, Mr. Ravindranath said.

He was replying to a calling attention motion moved by Basavaraja Horatti of the Janata Dal (Secular) in the Legislative Council.

KAU-NABARD training programme

Kerala Agricultural University (KAU) is joining hands with National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) for a training programme to groom agri-consultants and entrepreneurs.

The programme seeks to provide agricultural professionals with specialised training in areas related to agri-clinics and agribusiness to become consultants or entrepreneurs, a pressnote issued here said. Unemployed or retired agri graduates having a degree or diploma in agriculture or allied subjects such as animal husbandry or dairy farming from a Central or State agricultural university/Indian Council of Agricultural Research institute in India are eligible to apply. Selected candidates will be provided free boarding and lodging. Total seats are limited to 35.

Candidates should apply in the prescribed form enclosing a passport-size photograph and a copy of degree or diploma certificate. The application has to reach the Nodal Officer, Training Service Scheme, College of Agriculture, Vellayani P.O., Thiruvananthapuram- 695 522, on or before December 15.

For details, contact the Nodal Officer, ACABC Nodal Centre, Training Service Scheme, College of Agriculture, Vellayani P.O., Thiruvananthapuram- 695 522 (ph: 0471 2388061, 9496 313254).

Water insufficient to save samba crop: Jayalalithaa

Chief Minister Jayalalithaa on Wednesday said the Supreme Court's interim direction to Karnataka to release 10,000 cubic feet per second (cusecs) provided some consolation to Tamil Nadu.

However, she added that this would not be sufficient to save the standing samba crop.

In a statement, she quoted the order, according to which Karnataka should release 10,000 cusecs till the Cauvery Monitoring Committee met; it should decide further releases and report to the court, which would hear the case again on Monday.

[An official source said the committee, headed by Union Water Resources Secretary, would meet in New Delhi on Friday afternoon]

Meanwhile, the order evoked mostly a negative response from farmers of the Cauvery basin.

Even though a section of agriculturists of Thanjavur and Tiruvarur districts was appreciative of the Supreme Court's order, their counterparts of Nagapattinam district, which is at the tailend of the system, and Tiruchi district have expressed disappointment.

Notwithstanding their different responses, farmers were unanimous in saying that the quantum would be inadequate to save the Samba crop.

S. Ranganathan, secretary, Cauvery Delta Farmers Welfare Association, said the quantum, as ordered by the Court, was pittance. The State government demanded 30 thousand million cubic feet (tmcft of) water over 15 days at the rate of two tmc ft per day. But, now, what had been ordered was the release of only three tmcft at the rate of 0.75 tmcft a day.

When the Monitoring Committee meets, it should impress upon the Prime Minister the need for providing more power to Tamil Nadu to save the samba crop on three lakh acres that were dependent on agriculture pump sets. If possible, Tamil Nadu should be provided with the entire quantum of power generated by thermal plants in Neyveli.

Reacting positively to the order, P.R. Pandiyan, State council member, Tamil Nadu Vivasayigal Sangam, said that at a time when farmers were worried about getting Cauvery water, the Supreme Court order had come as a relief.

V. Jeevakumar, a farmer from Budalur, said 10,000 cusecs would not be sufficient to save the samba crop, as paddy fields had developed cracks.

In Nagapattinam, it was disappointment writ large for the farmers with the interim relief seen as arriving too little too late for tail end agriculture.

The water ordered to be released would get sucked in by the river and would not flow, says Kaveri Danapalan, Cauvery Farmers Protection Association.

State package for delta farmers

Chief Minister Jayalalithaa on Wednesday announced a package of measures to provide succour to farmers of the Cauvery delta in the State.

The cost of measures would be around Rs. 69.88 crore, which did not include the amount of compensation to be paid to farmers in the event of crop loss, according to an official release.

An official release issued by Ms. Jayalalithaa stated that if farmers lost the crop even after the government implemented a host of measures, steps would be taken to cover them under the National Agricultural Insurance Scheme and the revised scheme.

Considering the present extraordinary situation, the government would pay the premium on behalf of the farmers. Through this move, all delta farmers would be provided with crop insurance cover. This would mean an expenditure of about Rs. 30 crore. If crop loss occurred, solatium of Rs. 8,962 per acre would be given under crop insurance schemes. Besides, under the State Disaster Relief Fund, compensation for paddy would go up from Rs. 4,000 per acre to Rs. 5,000. Totally, the farmers would get Rs. 13,692 per acre.

Power supply

Since November 29, three-phase power supply to delta farmers was in vogue for six hours each during day and night. This would continue till February 2013, she said.

A subsidy of Rs. 600 per acre would be given to meet the cost of diesel in respect of 32,000 pump sets. A sum of Rs. 15 crore would be set apart for the purpose.

A cent per cent subsidy would be granted for procuring 180-metre-long high-density polyethylene (HDPE) pipes that would prevent loss of water conveyed from main canals to agricultural lands. The subsidy would cover 6,000 units at a unit cost of Rs. 20,000. A total of Rs. 12 crore would be sanctioned.

Likewise, 100 per cent subsidy would be given to 6,000 units of low-density polythelene pipes at a cost of Rs. 2,800 per unit. This would mean an allocation of Rs. 1.68 crore.

Three hundred multi-purpose boom sprayers would be given through the Tamil Nadu Agricultural University and Agriculture Research Station for crops on the verge of withering. A sum of Rs. 1.20 crore would be earmarked. Besides, Rs. three crore would be provided for administration of the scheme. Muriate of Potash (MOP) fertilizer and pink pigmented facultative methylotrop, which could help the crop sustain the dry period of seven to 10 days, would be given. An amount of Rs. four crore would be approved. Five hundred mini-portable sprinklers would be procured at a cost of Rs. 2.25 crore.

Awareness camps would be held to motivate farmers to take innovative methods to save samba crop and Rs. 75 lakh would be provided to organise the camps. Considering water shortage, those agricultural workers who have lost jobs would be accommodated under the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Scheme, she added. The release also mentioned that while framing its package, the government kept in mind that there were chances for rainfall to occur in December.

Earlier in the day, the Chief Minister held discussions with senior Ministers and officials to review the situation.

Weather

Chennai ▾

Chennai - INDIA

Today's Weather



Partly Cloudy

Thursday, Dec 6

Max Min

31.9° | 22.6°

Rain: 0

Humidity: 94

Wind: normal

Sunrise: 06:18

Sunset: 05:41

Barometer: 1011

Tomorrow's Forecast



Cloudy

Friday, Dec 7

Max Min

30° | 23°

Extended Forecast for a week

Saturday
Dec 8



31° | 23°

Cloudy

Sunday
Dec 9



26° | 24°

Cloudy

Monday
Dec 10



25° | 23°

Overcast

Tuesday
Dec 11



25° | 22°

Overcast

Wednesday
Dec 12



25° | 22°

Cloudy

Airport Weather

Delhi ▾

Delhi

Rain: 0

Humidity: 62

Wind: normal

Sunrise: 07:00

Sunset: 05:24

Barometer: 1015



THE HINDU Business Line

TODAY FARM NEWS

05.11.2012 P.M

06.12.2012 A.M

05thdec 2012 P.M

New retail brand launched in Kerala

Lan Mark, a leading home appliances retailer in Kerala, has launched a new brand – White Mart – targeting the opportunities in organised retail.

Jerry Mathew, Managing Director of Lan Mark Shops India Ltd, said that nearly 200 showrooms across the State that are operated under the Lan Mark brand are now being renamed White Mart.

The group will increase its product range and reaches out to far-flung corners of the State where its services are not yet available.

The company has identified more small and medium-sized towns in the State to appoint franchisees in the next 12 months, he told a press conference.

Irrigation management institute in Bikaner

To impart training about water efficient agricultural practices, a regional centre of Kota's irrigation management institute will come up in Rajasthan's Bikaner district.

A proposal in this regard has been approved by Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot, an official spokesperson said today.

To be established with an investment of Rs 24 crore, the centre, through its 11 departments, will provide information about water management activities in agriculture, he said.

The new centre will contribute to the work already being carried out in the state by various national and international organisations in the field of irrigation management, he said.

Pepper moves upon profit booking

The pepper market moved up as far as one of the active contracts is concerned while another declined. The third contract remained steady.

December contract moved up as short position holders were squaring up while some were squeezing and these factors pushed the market up, market sources told *Business Line*. Those holding long positions were liquidating, they said.

A similar scenario was there last year also, they said. Turnover increased sharply while the total open interest fell substantially, they said.

There were no arrivals from the primary markets. However, small volume of new pepper started trickling in in the primary markets in all the growing areas of Kerala, primary market sources said.

December contract on the NCDEX increased by Rs 435 a quintal to close at Rs 39,205 a quintal while February declined by Rs 70 a quintal to close at Rs 34,160 a quintal. March remained unchanged at Rs 33,700 a quintal.

Turnover

Total turnover increased by 2,071 tonnes to close at 3,936 tonnes. Total open interest decreased by 977 tonnes to 6,331 tonnes indicating heavy liquidation.

December open interest fell by 1,152 tonnes to 3,610 tonnes while that of February and March increased by 82 tonnes and 90 tonnes respectively to close at 2,212 tonnes and 449 tonnes.

Spot prices in tandem with the futures market trend moved up by Rs 100 a quintal to close at Rs 37,300 (ungarbled) and Rs 38,800 (MG 1) a quintal.

Indian parity in the international market was at \$7,300 a tonne (c&f) at December delivery prices while at February and March, prices the parity were at \$6,700 and \$6,600 a tonne (c&f) respectively for Europe and remained in line with other origins. All other origins are steady as activities were very much limited, they said.

4 agri students win Borlaug scholarships

Four young Indian agriculture students have been awarded the Monsanto Beachell-Borlaug International Scholars Programme Research Fellowships for 2012, encouraging new plant breeding research for rice and wheat production among young scientists. The four Indian winners are Amandeep Kaur from the Punjab University, Navdeep S. Jamwal from CSK Himachal Pradesh Agriculture University, Bharathi R. Ramadoss from the Tamil Nadu University, and Bharath Reddy from Texas A&M University. With a grant of Rs 50 crore from Monsanto, the scholarship is administered by the Texas AgriLife Research, an agency of the US-based Texas A&M University System. The programme allows the scholar to develop advanced breeding techniques, conduct at least one season of field work in a developing country and includes a full package of support.

Coonoor tea auction volume hits 19-week high

The volume offered for the first auction of December of Coonoor Tea Trade Association to be held on Thursday and Friday has risen to 19-week high, reveals an analysis of brokers' listing.

In all, 14.93 lakh kg has been catalogued for Sale No: 49. It is as much as 3.99 lakh kg more than last week's offer and about 70,000 kg more than the offer this time last year.

Of the 14.93 lakh kg on offer, 10.69 lakh kg belongs to the leaf grades and 4.24 lakh kg belongs to the dust grades. As much as 14 lakh kg belongs to CTC variety and only 0.93 lakh kg, orthodox variety. In the leaf counter, only 0.49 lakh kg belongs to orthodox while 10.20 lakh kg, CTC. Among the dusts, only 0.44 lakh kg belongs to orthodox while 3.80 lakh kg, CTC.

Fresh tea accounts for 14.72 lakh kg while about 21,000 kg comprises teas which had remained unsold in previous auctions.

Last week, in the leaf tea auction, Hindustan Unilever Ltd (HUL) and Tata Global Beverages Ltd bought good medium varieties. Duncans Tea Ltd showed interest on good medium broken. Godfrey Philips India Ltd was selective. There was good demand from exporters for medium and plainer varieties. Internal buyers were less active.

In the dust tea auction, HUL and Tata Global bought good medium varieties. Indcoserve showed interest on medium smaller grades. Exporters preferred medium and plainer varieties. Internal buyers were fairly active.

There was good demand for brighter liquoring teas from upcountry buyers.

Imports of edible nuts rise as Indians consume more



Indians are consuming more nuts, especially high-value cashew and almonds. Increase in affordability driven by rise in disposable incomes, coupled with awareness of nutritional benefits, is driving the consumption.

Such a trend is reflected in the increased imports of raw cashew nuts and almonds into the country. In the past three years, imports of almonds have grown 36 per cent, while raw cashew shipments into the country have risen by 7 per cent in volumes.

India imported about 8.09 lakh tonnes (lt) of raw cashew nuts valued at Rs 5,337.76 crore in 2011-12. This is up from 5.29 lt in 2010-11 and 7.55 lt in 2009-10. This information was provided by Minister of State for Commerce D. Purandeswari to Rajya Sabha on Wednesday.

The major source of raw cashew nut imports were Ivory Coast, Guinea Bissau, Benin, Ghana, Tanzania, Indonesia, Gambia, Guinea, Mozambique and Senegal.

Domestic output

“Imports are necessary to meet the processing requirement as domestic production is inadequate,” said K. Sasi Verma, Executive Director and Secretary, Cashew Export Promotion Council. The country’s current cashew processing capacity stands at 15 lt, up from 13 lt two years ago.

However, the domestic cashew nut output is pegged at about seven lakh tonnes. The shortfall in processing requirement is met mainly through imports, Verma said.

From about 100 kg of raw cashew nuts, about 22 kg of kernels are extracted. India produces about 3.5 lt of kernel from 15 lt of raw cashew nuts.

About 2.2 lt of cashew kernel is consumed domestically, while about 1.3-1.4 lt are exported.

In case of almonds, the entire quantity is imported into the country. California accounts for 95 per cent of the imports, while the rest is from countries such as Afghanistan.

“The growth in imports in some ways mirrors the overall prosperity in Indian economy, which has continued to boom despite the overall global slow down,” said Sumit Saran, Director at The SCS Group, an agri-business consulting firm.

“Growing awareness of healthy lifestyles and rising disposable incomes is driving the consumption of high-value food,” he said.

Fruit, vegetable exports up 24% in 2011-12

The export of fruit and vegetables, including processed food items, have risen 24 per cent in value terms to Rs 8,241 crore in 2011-12 over Rs 6,638 crore in the previous year. This information was given by the Minister of State for Commerce and Industry D. Purandeswari in a written reply to Lok Sabha on Wednesday.

Exports of onions fell marginally to Rs 1,723 crore in 2011-12 against Rs 1,779 crore in the previous year. Fresh vegetables were up 43 per cent at Rs 1,299 crore (Rs 910 crore). Similarly, the shipments of fresh fruits were up 48 per cent at Rs 736 crore (Rs 496 crore).

The exports of fresh grapes increased to Rs 603 crore (Rs 428 crore), while walnuts increased to Rs 231 crore (Rs 166 crore). The exports of fresh mangoes stood at Rs 210 crore (Rs 165 crore).

The effect of growth in export of fruits and vegetables on the Indian market does not seem to be visible as the share of exports of fruits and vegetables were only 0.55 per cent and 1.24 per cent, respectively, of their total production in 2010-11, the Minister said.

Uralkali to slash potash output on slack Asian demand



Poor offtake in India and China amid excess global supplies has prompted Russian firm Uralkali, the largest miner of potash, to trim its output by half to two million tonnes in the December-March period.

Fertiliser makers in India expect to delay signing their new contracts with global suppliers, such as Uralkali, to next financial year on high stocks.

“Starting from December and during the first quarter, we will work with 50 per cent of capacity because demand will be rather weak,” Urakali’s spokesperson said in a statement. Buyers in India and China had stopped purchases of the crop nutrient in the second half of 2012. Uralkali expects its customers in these countries to contract lower volumes next year, making for a slow start in 2013.

Indian consumption

In India, the stocks of potash used to produce NP and NPK nutrients are currently estimated at about 8-10 lakh tonnes (lt). “The rabi offtake is down by 50 per cent due to high prices” said P.S. Gehlaut, Managing Director of India Potash Ltd (IPL). Potash prices are at Rs 16,800 a tonne, almost twice that of last year.

At present, the monthly potash consumption is about a lakh tonnes, against two lakh tonnes in corresponding period last year, Gehlaut said. Besides high prices, poor kharif output due to erratic monsoon has hit the purchasing power of farmers, he said.

No new contracts

The existing stocks in India are expected to last till March and this has forced the buyers to go slow on new contracts. Traditionally, the Indian buyers used to sign new contracts in December for next season.

“There will be no new contracts signed in this financial year,” said Suresh Krishnan, Managing Director, Zuari Agro Chemicals Ltd. However, the earlier contracts are being honoured. Krishnan expects demand for fertilisers to pick up only next season in June.

Price outlook

While Uralkali expects potash prices to remain stable ahead, the Indian fertiliser makers believe prices to come down further from the current level of around \$470-490 a tonne.

“We expect potash prices to come down further” said U.S. Awasthi, Managing Director of IFFCO, stating that the stocks position was quite comfortable at present. “Negotiations with global suppliers are expected to commence sometime in next week,” he said.

Mixed trend in spot rubber

Spot rubber showed a mixed mood on Wednesday. Covering purchases at lower levels following a moderate recovery in the domestic and international futures kept selected counters firm during closing hours. But the overall gains were limited in the absence of quantity buyers even at lower levels. Sheet rubber increased to Rs 161 (160) a kg, according to traders. The grade firmed up to Rs 162 (161) a kg at Kottayam and Kochi as reported by the Rubber Board.

The December series recovered to Rs 165.25 (163.83), January to Rs 167.45 (165.82), February to Rs 169.79 (167.59) and March to Rs 171.78 (170.14) a kg on the National Multi Commodity Exchange.

RSS 3 improved at its December delivery to ¥251.5 (Rs 166.65) from ¥250 a kg during the day session and then to ¥252.2 (Rs 167.11) a kg in the night session on the Tokyo Commodity Exchange.

Spot rates were (Rs/kg): RSS-4: 161 (160); RSS-5: 156 (156); ungraded: 151 (151); ISNR 20: 156 (157) and latex 60 per cent: 106 (107).

Rubber Skill Development Centre working to resolve manpower crunch



In a major initiative to resolve the serious issue of manpower crunch in the industry, the recently formed Rubber Skill Development Centre (RSDC) has chalked out a series of plans.

The Delhi-headquartered centre, set up by the National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC) in collaboration with All India Rubber Industries Association (AIRIA) and Automotive Tyre Manufacturers Association (ATMA), has already commenced its operations.

Speaking to *Business Line* on the roadmap of RSDC, Vinod Simon, Chairman, said the centre will assist the rubber sector across all touch points where skilling is an issue. Foremost it will identify skill development needs for the sector and prepare a catalogue of skill types.

It is already working towards standardisation of job roles/ skill types through development of the National Occupation Standards, he said.

“Skill development has been one of the key challenges for the manpower intensive rubber sector as five lakh people are directly employed in the rubber industry besides 10 million rubber growers. The sector is capable of generating another half a million jobs in the next 10 years”, he said adding that, unfortunately, there is a significant gap between the availability and demand of trained manpower in the rubber sector.

Four Indians in Monsanto Beachell-Borlaug International Scholars programme



Bharath Reddy from Bangalore is among the four young Indian agriculture scholars who have been awarded the Monsanto Beachell-Borlaug International Scholars Program (MBBISP) Research Fellowships for 2012 encouraging new plant breeding research for rice and wheat production among young scientists.

Bharath Reddy's wheat research is focused on enhancing the yield potential of hard red winter wheat at Texas A&M University, USA in collaboration with CIMMYT, Mexico and Turkey.

His earlier research on plant physiology and water use efficiency in sorghum will provide valuable information and experience.

The three other winners are Navdeep Jamval, whose wheat research is focused on improving drought tolerance and rust resistance in wheat at CSK Himachal Pradesh Agricultural University in collaboration with the University of Leicester, UK.

Bharathi Ramadoss, whose rice research is focused on optimal glycemic index in rice at Tamil Nadu Agricultural University in collaboration with the University of Saskatchewan, Canada and Amandeep Kaur whose rice research is focused on stabilising rice bran oil to avoid rancidity of oil at Punjab Agricultural University in collaboration with the University of Maine, USA.

Business Standard

TODAY FARM NEWS

06.12.2012 A.M

PepsiCo to double potato procurement in India in 5 yrs

PepsiCo today said it is looking to double procurement of potato in India annually over the next five years from the current 2.4 lakh tonnes, a day after BJP leader Sushma Swaraj stated that the food and beverages major rejected local produce in Punjab.

"We work with around 24,000 farmers right now and last year we procured about 2.4 lakh tonnes of potatoes through contract farming and the programme continues to expand. I think, over the next five years, this figure should double," PepsiCo India Executive Director Vivek Bharati told reporters here.

The company is at present engaged in contract farming in seven states, including West Bengal, Punjab and Karnataka.

During the debate on FDI in retail in Parliament yesterday, Swaraj had said that the most likely scenario would be that retail chains would not buy products from small and medium farmers at all and supported her contention by giving the example of PepsiCo in Punjab that rejected locally produced potatoes and tomatoes as being below standards.

Asked for his comments on FDI in retail, PepsiCo India Chairman Manu Anand said: "FDI is being debated in the Parliament, we do not want to get into this debate. As far as our sector is concerned, it is 100 per cent FDI (sector). Well, the more the points of sale, the better it is always for the industry."

Talking about its various initiatives for local people, he said the company has launched a community partnership initiative here, which will help conserve 400 million litres of water every year and help 7,500 people. The beverages plant here is the company's biggest unit in India.

"We have improved the water efficiency at our Sangareddy plant from 2.65 litres of water per

litre of finished beverage in 2007 to 1.88 litres in 2011, thereby saving 564 million litres of water," he said, adding the company has invested Rs 500 crore on this plant since 2006.

Under the project, the company encourages people in rain water harvesting and to form self-help groups.

Organic farming can create 8 mn jobs in Rajasthan: Assocham

Organic farming has the potential to generate over eight million jobs in Rajasthan in over the next five years if it is actively promoted, industry body Assocham said in a report today.

The study said promotion of organic farming in the state can generate over 6.5 million jobs apart from additional about 1.5 million jobs in on-farm storing, processing, value addition, packaging and marketing facilities are included.

Titled as 'Organic Rajasthan: Untapped Potential for Growth', the report was released here today jointly by former Assocham President Anil K Agrawal and Diya Kumari, chairperson of the Assocham's Rajasthan chapter.

The study said adoption of organic farming can increase net per capita income of a farmer in the state by 250 per cent, to over Rs 15,000 in the next five years from a meagre Rs 6,000 at present.

"Rajasthan has a crucial role to take India's share in global organic exports from about 0.2 per cent to about 2.5 per cent by 2017. Besides, the state has the potential of becoming India's export hub for certified organic food to the global market," the report said.

Kumari said the new chapter would be functional in the coming days and its office would be located in the city and accessible to all.

Cotton export procedure simplified

As cotton prices have remained barely above the support price in open market at a time when new crop arrivals have started, Government has decided to liberalise export procedures.

According to notification issued by the Director General of Foreign Trade (DGFT), maximum

limit for obtaining Registration Certificate (RC) has been increased to 30,000 bales. At present an exporter can get certificate only for quantity upto 10,000 bales(1 bale=170kg).

DGFT has also been allowed to issue Multiple RCs within this eligibility. To help more exporters to participate and make procedure to apply for RCs simple, DGFT has added three more centers for applying. Exporters can now apply for RCs with Registration Authorities at Ludhiana, Rajkot and Vishakhapatnam. Another change in the policy is to allow new comer exporter.

Notification issued by the DGFT said, “an exporter can apply for RC for a maximum quantity of 30,000 bales or actual quantity exported in the previous cotton season, whichever is less. Exporters who have exported upto 3,000 bales during previous cotton season and new comers (a new comer is an exporter who has not exported cotton in the previous cotton season) can apply upto 3,000 bales”.

Multiple RCs can be obtained within this eligibility. Eligibility to apply for a subsequent RC will be on completion of at least 50% of the exports against individual RC obtained and not on completing 50% exports against total eligibility of the exporter.

Sugar millers seek early decision on ethanol blending

Sugar millers have expressed disappointment over the delay in issuing the final gazette notification implementing a recent cabinet decision on mandatory 5 per cent ethanol blending across the country.

The Indian Sugar Mills Association (ISMA) has said that delay in issuing the notification despite a cabinet decision regarding the same in November has crimped Oil Marketing Companies (OMCs) freedom to float tenders as per the decision of the cabinet.

The union cabinet in its decision on November 22 had said that the mandatory 5 per cent ethanol blending with petrol should be implemented across the country and the price at which OMCs purchase ethanol from suppliers (mainly sugar companies) should be determined by both.

It also said that in case there is shortfall in ethanol in any given year, OMCs and chemical companies will be free to import ethanol to supplement their demand.

Sugar mills, who are the major suppliers of ethanol said that OMCs would need to procure around 88 crore litres of ethanol to implement the programme from January 1, 2012.

“10 months have already been wasted and in the absence of a gazette notification, manufacturers and suppliers of ethanol are selling alternate products made out of molasses or exporting the molasses or alcohol out of the country,” the millers said, adding that it could adversely impact the availability of ethanol for the mandatory 5 per cent blending.

The mills feel that by the time OMCs complete their formalities and float tender for procurement of ethanol, supplies could shrink limiting the ability of suppliers to meet the demand. “The government should therefore, issue the notification without any further loss,” ISMA said. The 5 per cent mandatory blending of ethanol with petrol has been hanging fire for a long time because of dispute between the suppliers and OMCs over the price at which ethanol should be purchased.

The government had even appointed a high-powered committee under the chairmanship of PMEAC member Saumitra Chaudhuri to break the imbroglio and get the programme started. The cabinet finally decided to leave the price as per the demand and supply in the market.

Chilli declines 1.28% on higher output estimate

Chilli prices fell 1.28%, to Rs 5,090 per quintal in futures trade today after speculators indulged in reducing their exposures amid higher output estimated in the current year.

At the National Commodity and Derivatives Exchange, the December chilli fell sharply by Rs 66, or 1.28%, to Rs 5,090 per quintal, with an open interest of 2,015 lots.

The March spice shed Rs 32, or 0.50%, to Rs 6,312 per quintal in 3,600 lots.

Marketmen said the fall in chilli prices at futures trade was mostly due to off-loading of positions by speculators on expectations of higher output in the current year.

Potato falls 0.52% on subdued demand



Potato prices fell by Rs 3.80 to Rs 720.60 per quintal in futures market today as traders offloaded their positions due to low demand in the domestic market amid adequate stocks.

The trading sentiment weakened further as a result of easy availability of potato in the spot markets following fresh arrivals from producing regions.

At the Multi Commodity Exchange, March potato fell by Rs 3.80, or 0.52%, to Rs 720.60 per quintal with a business volume of five lots.

The April delivery declined by Rs 1.30, or 0.19%, to Rs 691.50 per quintal in just one lot.

Market experts said traders offloaded their holdings at existing higher levels tracking a decline in spot market against fresh supply mainly pulled down potato prices.



THE TIMES OF INDIA

TODAY FARM NEWS

06.12.2012 A.M

Austrian farmers dip into internet 'milking' craze

VIENNA: Dumping a bottle of milk over your head and filming it for a video post on the internet has become a popular youth craze, but [Austrian farmers](#) say the spillage is a crying shame.

"Milking", as the trend is known, is among a variety of tongue-in-cheek stunts in which young people shoot pictures or videos of themselves posing as owls, planks of wood, or famous people and then share them on YouTube and other [social media](#).

Austria's [AMA farm](#) lobby on Wednesday launched its own "true milking" campaign to decry the wanton waste of dairy resources and to encourage consumers to drink it instead.

"At a time when too much food already lands in the trash, it is worth questioning dumping milk. This is a valuable product of nature that our farmers provide daily with lots of love and labour," AMA milk marketing manager Peter Hamedinger said.

Milking has become an internet hit, with one video from Newcastle in England getting more than half a million clicks on YouTube. [here](#)

AMA's marketing arm said the milking craze seemed to reflect a strange youthful protest against authority. It sought to one-up the video trend with its own clip featuring a young man who holds a carton of milk high above his head and drinks the contents without spilling a drop.

"In line with the nature of the medium, this message is not communicated in a commercial way

and absolutely not with finger pointing, but rather with a wink of the eye for the internet generation," the farm products board said in a statement.

Govt committed for justice to farmers: CM

BHOPAL: Chief minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan assured that his government is committed to justice for farmers and ruled out use of force to acquire their land anywhere in the state. He was replying to a debate on an adjournment motion on the farmers' agitation over land acquisition in Dongaria and Bujbuja villages in Katni district for the proposed 2000 MW thermal power plant to be set-up by Welspun Energy Private Limited (WEPL) moved by the opposition Congress party in the state Assembly here on Wednesday.

Speaker Ishwardas Rohani received 17 adjournment motion notices from Congress MLAs on the issue. Soon as the question hour ended, chief minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan accepted the Congress' demand for a discussion on the issue.

Speaking on the admissibility of the adjournment motion for debate leader of opposition Ajay Singh argued before the House: "In many districts across the state, land is being acquired for industrial houses to set-up their plants. Farmers are agitated with some of them committing suicide over the land acquisition. The issue urgently needs a discussion."

Ajay Singh alleged that the chief minister was "ignorant" about the plight of the farmers. Had he really been concerned with their plight, he would have gone to Katni to talk to the Bujbuja-Dongaria farmers whether they were willing to give their land for the power plant". He alleged that the government had even allocated 430 acres of Charnoi land to the Welspun company for the powerhouse.

Denying all the charges, Chouhan said, "The land would only be acquired after dialogue with the farmers and their consent." He told the House that the government acquires land only after following the Land Acquisition Act of the centre.

Earlier, initiating the debate on the adjournment motion Dr Govind Singh, Congress MLA from Lahar constituency in Bhind alleged that the government's Global Investors' Summits and investment policy is a conspiracy to grab the lands belonging to farmers. As he started to name

other districts where he alleged land was being acquired for industrial houses, the ruling members objected leading to a ruckus. The Speaker later intervened asking Dr Singh to stick to land problems in Katni region.

Replying to the Congress' allegations, minister for industry and commerce Kailash Vijayavargiya pointed out that all necessary clearances including environmental, coal linkage and others to Welspun Energy Private Limited were given by the Congress-led UPA Centre. The state government was only associated been part of the land acquisition process and have an adequate relief and rehabilitation package.

He said the state made it a condition with Welspun to not only pay adequate compensation as demanded by farmers but also ensured employment for affected family members and monthly pension for the handicapped, elderly and windowed members of affected families. Referring to the death of Sunia Bai he said, the state government was aggrieved about the suicide but the woman committed suicide because she was diseased and mentally unstable.

Karnataka to release 10k cusecs more Cauvery water to TN daily: SC

NEW DELHI: The Supreme Court on Wednesday ordered Karnataka to release an additional 10,000 cusecs of Cauvery water daily to Tamil Nadu till Monday and directed the Cauvery Monitoring Committee to meet within two days and submit a report on the quantum of water release for December.

After a three-day hearing on Tamil Nadu's application seeking urgent release of water to save its second crop, a bench of Justices D K Jain and Madan Lokur passed an interim order asking the upper riparian state to release 10,000 cusecs of Cauvery water. 11,000 cusecs of water make up 1TMC (thousand million cubic feet of water).

Given the high emotion quotient attached to the dispute that surfaces between the states every distress monsoon year, the bench did not want to take the onus of deciding implementation of distress water sharing formula on itself. It asked the CMC to meet either on Thursday or Friday and submit its report to the competent authority by Monday.

"CMC is requested to hold the meeting on December 6 or 7 to find out water requirement for crops in Tamil Nadu and Karnataka for the month of December and the report would be submitted to the concerned authority," the bench said.

"In the meantime, we direct that till the CMC submits its report, Karnataka shall release 10,000 cusecs water per day from today (Wednesday). We make it clear that the order will continue till CMC submits its report," the bench said.

The court said both states faced a distress situation and added that its effort was to see how best the crops in both states were saved. "We will keep our eyes open to the requirement of both the states and find out a practical solution to the problem," it said.

On the prodding of the bench, the chief ministers of the two states - J Jayalalithaa and Jagdish Shettar - had met to find a solution to the vexed problem but the meeting ended in a stalemate.

The court also sought the Union government's response on Monday on the reasons behind non-notification of the final award given by the Cauvery River Water Disputes Tribunal (CWDT).

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TODAY FARM NEWS

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Jayalalithaa announces Rs 70 crore relief package



Chennai: It was double bonanza for delta farmers on Wednesday. Shortly after the Supreme Court came to Tamil Nadu farmers' rescue by directing Karnataka to release 10,000 cusecs of water, chief minister J Jayalalithaa announced a Rs 70 crore relief package for farmers to save the standing samba crops.

Chairing a high-level meeting to take stock of the measures to provide succour to the farmers and save the second crop, Ms Jayalalithaa, among other announcements, also declared the extension of the 12-hour power supply to farmers since November 29 till February 2013 to enable farmers pump groundwater for irrigation.

The package also includes disbursement of Rs 600 per acre as diesel subsidy to farmers who use nearly 32,000 diesel pumpsets in the delta region. An amount of Rs 15 crore has been apportioned for diesel subsidy.

Ms Jayalalithaa said that a relief up to Rs 13,692 per acre would be given from the state disaster management fund and crop insurance schemes to farmers who have incurred crop loss.

The state government would spend Rs 30 crore towards paying the crop insurance premium of the farmers, which would bring all delta farmers under the crop insurance cover.

Provision of multi-purpose boom sprayer, MOP fertilisers and 500 mini-portable sprinklers are some of the other measures being taken up by the government to help farmers in the delta region.

While sanctioning Rs 75 lakh to conduct awareness camps and educate farmers about the new farming practices to be adopted to save samba crops, Ms Jayalalithaa said Rs 12 crore would be allocated for providing 100 per cent subsidy to buy and lay HDPE (high density poly ethylene) pipes that would reduce water loss from the main channels to the farm lands.

The Tamil Nadu chief minister also said efforts would also be made to provide employment to farmers who have lost their jobs due to drought situation under the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme.

“The state government would spend a sum of Rs 69.88 crore on account of all these measures and this would be over and above the relief provided by it,” she said, and added that the relief measures were explored and sanctioned as the temporary relief offered by the Supreme Court through Wednesday’s direction would not help save the samba crop entirely.