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TNAU's pest control measures for the season

Staff Reporter

Tamil Nadu Agricultural University has made some recommendations to farmers based on the pest and disease incidence forecast for the season.

Stemborer

In the case of rice, there were incidences of leaf folder and stemborer found in Dharmapuri, Kanchipuram, Nagapattinam, Pudukottai, Ramanathapuram, Sivaganga, Thanjavur, Theni, Thiruvarur, Tirunelveli, Thiruvannamalai and Kanyakumari, so spraying of neem seed kernel extract 5 per cent or phosphamidon 40 SL 600 ml / hectare or profenophos 50 EC 1,000 ml / ha, has been suggested.

For brown spot incidence in Sivaganga, farmers are asked to spray Mancozeb 2 gms / litre or edifenphos 1 ml / litre, two to three times at 10 to 15 day intervals based on the intensity of diseases.

Farmers can spray streptomycin sulphate and tetracycline combination 300 gms and copper oxychloride 1.25 kg / ha for bacterial leaf blight found in Dharmapuri, Kanchipuram, Nagapattinam, Pudukottai, Ramanathapuram, Thanjavur and Thiruvarur.

For cotton, sucking pests' jassids and thrips were noticed in Theni.

Sticky traps

Farmers are asked to set up yellow sticky traps to monitor the pest population. If needed, farmers may spray Imidacloprid 200 SL at 100 ml / ha or Methyl demeton 25 EC 500 ml / ha.

Bollworms were found below the Economic Threshold Level. Farmers can set up pheromone traps to attract and kill adults.

For sugarcane, farmers can release egg parasitoid Trichogramma at 6 cc / acre in the case of borer pest complex in Sivaganga, Thanjavur, Namakkal and Villupuram.

Red rot incidence can be controlled by treating with 0.1 per cent carbendazim or 0.05 per cent Triademefon for 15 minutes.

Neem spray

In Namakkal, leaf miner incidence was recorded. Farmers are advised to monitor using light traps or spray neem seed kernel extract at 5 per cent. For leaf spot in Dharmapuri and Ramanathapuram, farmers can spray carbendazim 0.1 per cent or mancozeb 0.2 per cent or chlorothalonil 0.2 per cent.

Papaya mealy bug

Tapioca, papaya and mulberry farmers are asked to watch out for incidence of papaya mealy bug and asked to contact the nearest TNAU research station / KVK / college for obtaining the parasitoids free of cost.

For details, contact 0422-6611214 / 6611226.

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- *Parasitoids available free of cost at TNAU research station/KVK/college*
 - *For details, contact 0422-6611214 / 6611226*
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Livestock farm to supply cattle to rural women

R. Arivanantham



A bull maintained at the District livestock farm in Hosur.

The District Livestock Farm in Hosur and other seven livestock farms in the state will supply cattle to rural women to improve their standard of living.

S. Selvaraj, Deputy Director, District Livestock Farm, Hosur, told *The Hindu* that that a government order has been issued in this connection to supply free milch cows and sheeps and goats to the rural women.

It will take at least two years to supply cattle from the livestock farms in Hosur, Chinna Salem, Ooty, Tiruvannamalai, Eachampadi, Pudukottai, Orathanadu and Chettinad, he said.

He said that there are 600 cattle, including Sindhi, Jersey, Kangeyam and HF cross breed bulls and cows, Large White Yorkshire Pigs, Sheeps (Thellachery and Kodiyadu breeds) and Chicks under the Giriraja scheme to be supplied to the Masanagudi backyard farms in the state.

Neighbourhood farmers

Though the farm was not supplying fodder to the cattle in the district, it supplied at least 10 lakh slips (grass saplings) to the farmers at a cost of 15 paise and 50 tonnes to 60 tonnes of organic manure to the neighbourhood farmers at a nominal rate per month.

Semen would be collected from the bulls every day at 8 a.m. and kept at the semen bank for supplying to the farmers across the state for the purpose of artificial insemination of the breeds.

Two bull sheds were built under the Rural Infrastructure Development Fund (RIDF) XI in 2007-08 under the financial help from the National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD).

Of the total 1641.41 acre livestock farm, 80 acres have been allotted in Paddock-4 region for the purpose of establishing Poultry Research University as announced by the government.

Though the government has issued GO in this regard, the enter up permission is yet to be released.

Besides this, 330 acres in Paddock 40 and 41 areas on Thalli road has been allotted to the Tamil Nadu Livestock Agency (TNLA) for setting up research centre, he said

Farm

The sprawling farm on 1641.41 acres called as 'Little England' was established in 1824 as Army Remount Depot by the British Army for the purpose of rearing horses. The salubrious climatic conditions and the scenic beauty of the landscape attracted the Britishers to establish such a big farm in Mathigiri. Later, it was handed over to the Agricultural Department of Govt. of Madras on September 1, 1924 as a Cattle Breeding Station.

It was subsequently taken over by the Madras Civil Veterinary Department on April 1, 1938 with the object to maintaining the purity of the Indian Milk Breeds of Cattle and to conduct basic research on animal breeding.

Research station

The farm was re-designed as livestock research station. It was renamed as district livestock farm subsequent to the reorganisation of Livestock Research station on January 1, 1970.

Banana farmers sore over lack of marketing facilities

They complain that middlemen are exploiting the situation



A view of a banana plantation raised by farmer Appala Naidu in Chodavaram mandal in Visakhapatnam district.

Banana farmers in the district are doing quite well, thanks to the adoption of drip irrigation systems with the cooperation of Andhra Pradesh Micro Irrigation Project (APMIP).

Mostly small farmers have taken to banana farming in an extent of two to three hectares of land each. Banana, being a nutritious fruit, is in great demand every where due to the habit of eating the fruit after a sumptuous lunch in rural and urban areas. People also believe that it has ingredients which help in easy digestion of non-vegetarian food. One hectare of plantation yields 30 tonnes of bananas. Farmers growing the crop by adopting tissue culture are registering a yield of 42 tonnes per hectare.

Krishna Rao, a banana farmer in Anandapuram mandal told *The Hindu* that he planted 2,500 banana plants in two and a half acres of land. On an average the bananas were being sold at Rs.8 to 10 per kg at the farm level. He had to contend with a small profit margin due to absence of marketing facilities.

Farmers in general are complaining that middlemen are exploiting them by buying their produce at the lowest price and selling the same at the market three times the price. While the traders are making 300 percent profit, the farmers are getting only marginal profit.

Koukuntla Appalanaidu, small farmer from Madugula mandal, says there is a wide gap between the farm level selling price and the general market price. The government should float a marketing corporation exclusively for vegetable and horticulture farmers and particularly for the small and marginal farmers who were losing heavily on account of middlemen.

If the government can procure their produce and supply the same to wholesalers, horticulture farming will become a profitable proposition. Thanks to the drip and sprinkler irrigation systems the plants were healthy and giving good yield. Banana farmers are happy at the extension of maximum subsidy of Rs.1 lakh to the farmers for adopting micro-irrigation system. Farmers irrespective of their land holdings are eligible for 40 per cent subsidy while small and marginal SC and ST farmers are eligible for 100 per cent subsidy and small and marginal farmers are eligible for 90 per cent subsidy. Big farmers are eligible for 60 per cent subsidy and medium farmers for 75 percent subsidy. A small farmer is earning Rs.2.50 lakh to Rs. 3 lakh per hectare. West Godavari district leads in banana plantation by recording crop in more than 15,000 hectares.

Assistant director of Horticulture G. Prabhakar Rao says despite practical problems of middlemen in marketing, the farmers are benefited by the crop as it has an assured market.

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Best management methods for cashew farming suggested

New approach is the need of the hour, says Rampachodavaram MLA

Rampachodavaram MLA K. Viswanath, ITDA project officer C. Nagarani on Monday inaugurated three-day training camp for tribal people in best management methods to be adopted in cashew growing. Director of Cashewnut, Coco Development Board, Cochin, YSR Horticulture Centre, Pandirimamidi, jointly organised this training camp.

Speaking on this occasion, the MLA said that cashew was one of the main cultivations of tribal people in Agency and officials and scientists had the responsibility to teach best techniques and

management methods in cultivating this crop. He said that a new approach towards cashew farming was important and tribals should be trained in these new techniques for getting higher yield.

He promised that he would initiate action to give 50 acres of land to establish Cashew Research Centre in Rampachodavaram.

Project Officer C. Nagarani said that scientists should give best solutions to tribal farmers in getting high yielding varieties and provide knowledge about latest techniques in farming.

She said that NREGS and subsidies in horticulture schemes will be passed on to tribal people when they take up cashew farming. She said that Maharashtra occupies first position in cashew farming and our state is in second position.

Horticulture Scientist K. Haribabu said that grafting is the best method than individual plantation of cashew saplings and this will give high quality yielding and production.

He said that they are going to supply 25,000 cashew grafting plants in next September and suggested to rare Nellore variety sheep and Vanamja cocks by tribals.

Another Scientist S. Amarender Reddy and others participated in this programme.

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- *Three-day training camp for tribal people inaugurated*
 - *Scientists are asked to help farmers learn the latest techniques*
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Seminar on farmers' issues

The State Sugarcane Growers' Association and the *Raitha Dhwani* magazine will jointly organise a seminar on farmer-related issues at the Rajendra Bhavan, JSS Hospital premises, at 11 a.m. on January 24. The seminar will be inaugurated by the president of the State Kirshi Mission, S.A. Patil.

A special edition of *Raitha Dhwani* magazine, edited by president of the State Sugarcane Growers' Association Kurubur Shantakumar, will be released. Farmers Mallanna Nagaraj, Chandrashekara Nimbaragi and Premamma will be felicitated.

Joint Director of the Department of Agriculture K.R. Krishnaiah and Deputy Director of the Department of Horticulture H.M. Nagaraju will be the guests.

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'Back turmeric growers's stir'

The Secretary of the National Turmeric Growers' Executive Committee, Kurubur Shantakumar, on Monday urged turmeric growers in the State to support the three-day stir from January 24 by their counterparts in Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu.

In a release, Mr. Shantakumar appealed to the turmeric growers in the State to extend their support to their counterparts who have threatened to stop the sale of turmeric at Erode in Tamil Nadu, Sangli in Maharashtra and Nizamabad in Andhra Pradesh on January 24, 25 and 26.

The protesting turmeric growers propose to stop the sales for three days to drawing attention of the Government to the falling prices and its effect on them.

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Increase support price of sugarcane: farmers

Sugarcane growers in the district have appealed to the State Government to raise the minimum support price for the produce as the cost of cultivation has increased several folds in the recent past.

Staging a demonstration under the banner Tamizhaga Vivasayigal Sangam here on Monday, they said the State Government had fixed Rs. 2,100 as the minimum support price for a tonne of sugarcane, including the transportation charges.

"The price is not remunerative as the cost of fertilizer and other inputs had gone up," they said.

The price of DAP fertilizer, which stood at Rs. 450 for a 50-kg bag, is now being sold at Rs. 920.

Similarly the price of potash increased from Rs. 235 to Rs. 565 a bag.

The farming community is experiencing a severe shortage of labour and it has led to a sharp increase in wages.

The State Government should fix Rs. 2,500 a tonne as support price excluding the cutting charges, the farmers said.

They wanted the government to take efforts to ensure remunerative prices for turmeric, tapioca, copra, and various other agriculture produces.

The Union and State Governments should encourage the export of turmeric, cotton, and other agriculture produces that would help farmers get remunerative prices, they said.

Import

The agitators wanted the Centre to import tapioca starch in order to protect the domestic industries and the tapioca growers.

Members of various farmers association participated in the demonstration.

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- *DAP fertilizer now costs Rs. 920 a bag*
 - *Cost of potash is Rs. 565 a bag*
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Training in sheep rearing

A one-day free training programme on sheep rearing has been organised by the Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK) at its premises here on January 24. According to a press release issued by KVK, participants will be trained on rearing different breeds of sheep, erecting sheds, feed management, protecting them from diseases and marketing. Interested persons should enrol themselves at the Kendra in person or over phone at 04286-266345, 266244 or 266650 on or before 5 p.m. on Monday, January 23.

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Kerala embargo on chicken from Theni

Health officials of Idukki district in Kerala have temporarily put an embargo on chicken reared in Theni district on Monday, as they suspected that the birds supplied to Kerala were afflicted with disease.

Acting on an order issued by the Health Department, Kerala, officials shut all the three check posts – near Kumily, Maharaja Mettu in Bodi and Cumbum Mettu near Cumbum – for chicken-laden vehicles. However, they did not stop vehicles carrying cattle. They were allowed to cross these check posts without any hassle.

The Kerala officials reportedly took samples of chicken from a van which was blocked at the check post and found the disease. Later, they ordered the check post officials to stop all chicken-laden lorries and send them back.

The check post officials in Kumily stated that they would not permit vehicles with chicken from Theni district meant for sale in Kerala till they received orders from the government.

In the meanwhile, traders in Kerala too advised the poultry farm owners in the district not to send chicken to them.

Poultry farmers felt that this problem could be solved only through talks between the Collectors of Theni and Idukki districts. Otherwise, the Veterinary Department, after thorough investigation of poultry farms, could certify that chicken reared in the district were disease-free, they added.

Normally, several loads of chicken are transported to Kerala every day through these three check posts. Poultry farming is one of the prime activities of many farmers in Goodalur, Cumbum, Royappanpatti, Chinnamanur and nearby villages.

Farmers in Goodalur said that such an action had been initiated hurriedly by the Kerala health officials following spread of information on death of chicken in Andipatti recently.

(Hundreds of chicken died in a private farm near Andipatti owing to some disease recently. All the birds were buried safely by the farm staff.) A team of veterinary officials, who inspected the farm, ruled out any outbreak. The disease did not spread to other fowls in the same farm, they added.

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Farmers withdraw agitation

The hundreds of farmers, who had laid siege to the Bangalore Development Authority headquarters here for five days, withdrew their agitation on Monday following assurances from Chief Minister D.V. Sadananda Gowda.

In a press release, Kodihalli Chandrashekar, leader of the agitation and president of the Karnataka Rajya Raitha Sangha, said Mr. Gowda had assured them of holding a meeting to thrash out the issues on February 22. Around 2,000 acres of the farmers' lands were notified for acquisition by the BDA in 2005 for the proposed 100 m wide, 67 km Peripheral Ring Road connecting Tumkur Road, Bellary Road, Kolar Road and Hosur Road. Since then, there has been no progress in the acquisition and the farmers have been facing an uncertain future. They have not even been told about the compensation amount either. The agitation was to pressure the BDA to take a final decision on whether or not it wanted the land or not.

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Sugar slips on fresh supply

Agencies Posted online: Mon Jan 23 2012, 18:40 hrs



New Delhi : Sugar prices shed Rs 50 per quintal in the national capital today, following restricted buying against mounting stocks positions.

Marketmen said apart from huge stocks position on fresh supply from mills, restricted buying mainly put pressure on sugar prices.

Sugar ready medium and second grade prices lost from Rs 3,075-3,225 and Rs 3,050-3,200 to settle at Rs 3,025-3,175 and Rs 3,000-3,150 per quintal, respectively.

Mill delivery medium and second grade prices also dropped to finish at Rs 2,875-3,050 and Rs 2,850-3,000 per quintal, respectively.

The following are today's quotations in rupees per quintal:

Sugar ready: M-30 3,025-3,175, S-30 3,000-3,150.

Mill delivery: M-30 2,875-3,040; S-30 2,850-3,025.

Sugar mill gate prices (excluding duty): Kinnoni 3,030, Asmoli 3,020, Mawana 2,990, Titabi 2,980, Thanabhavan 2,900, Budhana 2,890, Doralá 2,985, Khatauli 2950, Morna 2850 and Ramala 2840.



CM orders strengthening of wheat procurement procedures

TUESDAY, 24 JANUARY 2012 00:02

STAFF REPORTER | BHOPAL

In view of the experiences of the bumper wheat crop, its procurement and storage during the last Rabi season, preparations for procurement in the next season should be made right from now.

Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan instructed to strengthen all the procedures of procurement. The Chief Minister also instructed to make preparations for storage right from now. He gave these instructions during a quarterly review meeting of Food & Civil Supplies Corporation here on Monday.

Minister of State for Food and Civil Supplies Paras Chandra Jain, Chief Secretary Avani Vaish, Principal Secretary Food and Civil Supplies Antony D'sa and Principal Secretary Finance Ajay Nath also attended the meeting.

The Chief Minister instructed that registered farmers should not face difficulties in selling wheat. The Chief Minister instructed that every farmer's paddy should be procured. Instructions were also given for advance storage of adequate quantity of fertilisers for the Rabi season.

Wheat will be procured only from registered farmers in the state. So far, about 8 lakh farmers have got registered. This number is likely to reach 9 lakh. Farmers will be intimated through SMS to come to the procurement centre. The meeting was informed that arrangements are being made to procure 60 lakh metric tonne of wheat, its timely transportation and storage. The wheat procurement will begin on March 15 and conclude on May 15.

Additional Chief Secretary R Parshuram informed that advance stock of about 3 lakh metric tonne of fertilisers will be available in the State. Out of this, 1.50 lakh tonne will be available with societies and 2 lakh tonne with Markfed.

The meeting was also informed about procurement of 7 lakh tonne of paddy in the State. The Government procurement will continue till January 31. The meeting was informed that GPS System has been implemented for eliminating irregularities during transportation. At present, this system is in place in 29 districts. The system will be affixed in the vehicles of Civil Supplies Corporation as well. The Chief Minister instructed to implement the system within time-limit.

Business Standard

Tuesday, Jan 24, 2012

Maize exports may rise to 7% on higher demand

Press Trust of India / New Delhi January 23, 2012, 13:43 IST

Maize exports are likely to increase by 7% to three million tonnes in the ongoing 2011-12 marketing year on adequate supplies and expected higher demand owing to competitive prices.

The country had shipped 2.8 million tonnes of maize in the 2010-11 marketing year (October-September).

"So far, we have exported one million tonnes of maize and we will be able to ship a total of three million tonnes by the end of the year," an industry source said.

The demand for Indian maize from southeastern countries is likely to pick up as prices are lower by \$40-60 per tonne as against that of the US corn, sources said.

Maize prices in the US are quoting higher on an expected decline in its production. As a result, it makes sense for south-eastern region to buy from India, they added.

Last month, the US Department of Agriculture (USDA) had said in its Grains Report: "Indian corn (maize) is very competitive in the South Eastern market with prices in the range of \$240-245 per tonne on CIF (Cost, Insurance and Freight)."

On domestic supplies, market sources said that total output would be adequate to meet the local and export demand.

The country's maize production might touch 21 million tonnes in the 2011-12 crop year (July-June), marginally lower than 21.28 million tonnes in the previous year. The production is expected to be lower in both Kharif (summer) and rabi (winter) seasons, but it is adequate to meet the demand.

Much of the export of maize goes to South East Asia and the Middle East. That apart, maize is also used in the domestic market by starch, poultry and alcohol industries.

Currently, the wholesale prices of maize are ruling at Rs 1,250 per quintal in the national capital.

According to the International Grains Council, despite a smaller the US crop and a worsening outlook for South America, total global maize output in 2011-12 is forecast to increase by four% to a record 961 million tonnes.

Crude palm oil ends lower on subdued demand

Press Trust of India / January 23, 2012, 13:28 IST



Crude palm oil futures prices today traded marginally lower by 0.06% to Rs 521.90 per 10 kg, as speculators offloaded their positions due to subdued demand in the spot market.

At the Multi Commodity Exchange, crude palm oil for delivery in January traded lower by 30 paise, or 0.06%, to Rs 521.90 per 10 kg in business turnover of 99 lots.

The February contract shed 10 paise, or 0.04, to Rs 524.90 per 10 kg in 633 lots.

Traders said offloading of positions by speculators on the back of a weak trend at spot market due to subdued demand mainly helped crude palm oil futures prices to trade marginal lower.

Potato declines 0.56% on higher supplies

Press Trust of India / New Delhi January 23, 2012, 13:25 IST



Potato prices declined by Rs 4.10 to Rs 726.50 per quintal in futures market today on increased arrivals in the physical market against lower demand.

At the Multi Commodity Exchange, potato for delivery in March declined by Rs 4.10, or 0.56% to Rs 726.50 per quintal in business turnover of 400 lots.

The April contract shed Rs 2.80, or 0.39%, to Rs 713.50 per quintal in 30 lots.

Traders attributed the fall in potato futures prices to increased supply in the spot market amid lower demand.

Mentha oil futures moves up on pick-up in industrial demand

Buoyed by a pick-up in industrial demand, mentha oil prices shot up by Rs 20.10 to Rs 1,541.50 per kg in the futures market today.

Tight stocks availability in the physical market, following restricted arrivals from the growing belts of Chandausi in Uttar Pradesh further fuelled the uptrend in mentha oil prices at futures market.

At the Multi Commodity Exchange, mentha oil for delivery in February shot up by Rs 20.10, or 1.32%, to Rs 1,541.50 per kg, with a business turnover of 599 lots.

In a similar fashion, the oil for delivery in January moved up by Rs 15.60, or 1.10% to Rs 1,522.20 per kg in 1,528 lots.

Analysts said besides, pick up in industrial demand, tight stocks availability in the physical market due to less arrival from Chandausi in Uttar Pradesh, mainly pushed up mentha oil prices at futures trade.

THE HINDU Business Line

Nut and Dried Fruit body appoints envoy

G.K. Nair

Kochi, Jan. 23:

The International Nut and Dried Fruit Council (INC) has appointed Mr Prathap Nair, Partner, Vijayalaxmi Cashew Company, Kollam, as its ambassador in India.

The INC, formed with a mission is a source for information on nuts and dried fruits for health and nutrition, food safety, Government standards and regulations and trade quality standards, appoints an ambassador in each country to liaise between the council and the Government officials and all industries using nuts and dried fruits in different countries, according to Mr Prathap Nair.

He said INC has participated at the first ever International Symposium on Cashew Nuts held in Madurai last month.

(This article was published in the Business Line print edition dated January 24, 2012)

Turmeric farmers to boycott sale for 2 days

Our Correspondent



Erode, Jan. 23:

Turmeric farmers have decided to boycott auction on Tuesday and Wednesday in Erode. The Turmeric Merchants Association has declared holiday for the period. The Erode market will resume auction on Friday.

The Turmeric Farmers Association of India at its meeting here on Sunday unanimously resolved to boycott the turmeric market for 2 days, demanding direct procurement by Union and State Governments from farmers at Rs 10,000 a quintal. Informing this, Mr P.K. Deivasigamani, President of the Association, said on Monday that all the 15-lakh-and-odd turmeric growers in India will keep away from attending the turmeric markets for two days on Tuesday and Wednesday to press their demand with the Union and State Governments.

He said turmeric was sold at Rs 17,000 a quintal last year and now it is selling below Rs 4,000 a quintal. Farmers have incurred huge losses. The cost of production is around Rs 8,000 a quintal.

Meanwhile, the Erode Turmeric Merchants Association declared holiday for the turmeric market in Erode for three days : January 24 ,25 and 26

(This article was published in the Business Line print edition dated January 24, 2012)

Growers, Tea Board lock horns over orthodox tea subsidy

Santanu Sanyal

Industry demands an across-the-board hike of Rs 5/kg



Kolkata, Jan. 23:

Sharp differences have reportedly surfaced between a section of tea producers and the Tea Board over the orthodox tea subsidy.

The tea producers concerned are demanding an increase in the subsidy amount, something which the Tea Board is reluctant to concede unless convinced of substantial increase in orthodox production in gardens owned by the recipients of the subsidy so far.

The orthodox tea subsidy was launched in 2005 and an estimated Rs 150 crore has been disbursed so far to various producers.

Interestingly, a section in the Commerce Ministry, it is learnt, has thrown its weight behind the tea producers' demand and not behind its own organisation, Tea Board.

Tea Board's objection to the demand for increased subsidy has been prompted by the Comptroller and Auditor General remark that the evaluation of the subsidy is critical.

Tea Board must first satisfy itself with the result, i.e., whether the utilisation of the subsidy has really contributed to significant increase in the production of Orthodox tea.

But the tea producers concerned are not prepared to accept it. They, therefore, have started lobbying with the appropriate authorities in New Delhi and met with some success.

Tea Board first insisted on 25 per cent increase in last five years' average production but the tea producers objected to it.

The figure was subsequently scaled down twice, first to 15 per cent and then to five per cent. Even that is not acceptable to the producers.

Two consultancy firms, KPMG and AC Nielson, were asked to review the orthodox subsidy scheme. The stipulation of five per cent increase in production, as approved by the board of directors of Tea Board, was according to KPMG's recommendation. AC Nielson observed that there was no need for giving across the board subsidy to all orthodox producers; instead, Tea Board should be selective about it.

Only those orthodox producers in tea producing districts where the share of orthodox tea is less than 30 per cent of the total tea production of the district should be considered for the subsidy.

Right now, the orthodox subsidy is given at the following rates: Rs 3/kg of the leaf grade production and Rs 2/kg of dust grade production and another Rs 2/kg for incremental production.

The tea industry's demand is for an across-the-board a hike of Rs 5/kg without differentiating between the leaf grade and the dust grade.

What has been particularly upsetting is that the ministry, presumably at the insistence of the tea producers, has expressed itself in favour of granting an export subsidy of Rs 7/kg, knowing fully well that any increase in the subsidy amount will add to the government's burden and that too at a time when the thrust is towards reduction of the burden.

There is another point. How could the government recommend export subsidy when such an incentive is not compatible with WTO regulations?

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(This article was published in the Business Line print edition dated January 24, 2012)

87% tea sold at Coonoor sale

P. S. Sundar

Coonoor, Jan. 23:

Some 87 per cent of the 15-week low offer of 11.39 lakh kg at Sale No. 3 of Coonoor Tea Trade Association auctions was sold with medium teas gaining and brighter liquoring sorts losing.

“Orthodox leaf lost Re 1-Rs 2 a kg. Better liquoring CTC leaf eased as much as Rs 4-8, but mediums gained Rs 2-5 and cleaner blacker sorts Rs 2-3. Orthodox dusts oscillated up and down by Rs 2-4. Better liquoring CTC dusts lost as much as Rs 5-10 but mediums gained Rs 2-5,” an auctioneer told *Business Line*.

Among CTC teas from bought-leaf factories, Homedale Estate, auctioned by Global Tea Brokers, topped when Shah Traders bought it for Rs 151 a kg.

Darmona Estate and Hittakkal Estate got Rs 143 each, Kannavarai Estate Rs 142, Vigneshwar Estate Rs 140, Blue Mont Speciality Rs 138, Deepika Supreme and Shanthi Supreme Rs 137 each. In all, 97 marks got Rs 100 and more. Among orthodox teas from corporate sector, Chamraj got Rs 203, Curzon Rs 199, Kairbetta Rs 174, Havukal Rs 170, Singara Estate Rs 169 and Highfield Estate Rs 165. In all, 25 marks got Rs 100 and more. On the export front, Pakistan bought in wide range — Rs 50-85 a kg and the CIS Rs 47-64. Quotations held by brokers indicated bids at Rs 47-54 a kg for plain leaf grades and Rs 80-147 for brighter liquoring sorts. They were Rs 49-55 for plain dusts and Rs 85-140 for brighter liquoring dusts.

(This article was published in the Business Line print edition dated January 24, 2012)

Govt should boost competitiveness in plantation sector



Thiruvananthapuram, Jan. 23:

The Government has a major role in promoting sectoral competitiveness in the economy including plantations, says Dr Nagesh Kumar, Chief Economist, UNESCAP and Director UNESCAP for South and West Asia.

Dr Nagesh Kumar said this here on Monday while speaking at a seminar on 'Building competitiveness in a globalised world: Experience of India's plantation sector' organised by the Centre for Development Studies (CDS).

COMMON CAUSE

The seminar is being held as part of the National Research Programme on Plantation Development sponsored by the Union Ministry of Commerce.

The very fact that the plantation sector is largely unorganised allows scope for the Government to make effective and result-oriented interventions to make common cause with the aspirations of the sector.

For instance, it can set up common infrastructure for players of varying sizes, scales and capabilities in the sector.

Dominated by small and marginal holdings, it would not be viable for most of them to set up the required infrastructure by themselves; nor would it make perfect business sense either.

SELF-HELP GROUPS

The Government could also initiate the formation of self-help groups in the sector which can deliver common services to the benefit of these players, he said.

Similarly, common research and development infrastructure and technological extension services have acquired relevance of a scale imagined never before in these times of competition for survival.

These are must elements that need to be embedded in any meaningful intervention strategy aimed at improvement in yield, quality and overall productivity.

Two other major aspects that should not be lost sight of are the Sanitary and Phytosanitary measures (SPS) and the Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT) standards.

GOVT ASSISTANCE

The Government must come up with some expert guidance and an assistance programme for the plantation sector as the latter comes to terms with the rarefied field of trade negotiations and with immediate relevance to the export sector.

Marketing and promotion of brands is another area that calls for enhanced levels of sophistication on the part of sectoral players.

Organic farming and filing for geographical indications are two other issues that come to one's mind when thinking about enhanced 'facilitator' role of the Government.

The plantation sector needs to be sensitised on the need for moving up the value chain through focus on processing of value-added products, Dr Nagesh Kumar said.

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Export, upcountry buying boost cardamom a tad

G.K. Nair



Kochi, Jan. 23:

The cardamom market witnessed marginal improvement in prices on buying support from exporters and upcountry dealers last week at auctions.

Exporters are reported to have bought around 150 tonnes last week. North Indian dealers were also actively covering.

If the current weather conditions continue to persist, it could squeeze arrivals in the coming weeks, said traders. This phenomenon could be attributed to the revived upcountry demand and consequent marginal gain in the prices, Mr P.C. Punnoose, General Manager, CPMC, told *Business Line*.

The individual auction average price gained marginally from the previous week and fluctuated between Rs 490 and Rs 535 a kg.

Total arrivals at last Sunday's auction by the KCPMC stood at 111 tonnes and almost the entire quantity was sold. The maximum price was Rs 747 a kg and the minimum was Rs 331.50, while the auction average was at Rs 501 a kg, Mr Punnoose said.

Arrival of good quality capsules continued to be thin and it also restricted the upward trend in the prices, trade sources in Bodinayakannur said. Limited availability of 8mm bold continued to keep prices at Rs 800-820 a kg last week. Similarly, good bulk fetched Rs 580 a kg. "In fact, there was an overall improvement of Rs 15-20 a kg in the prices," they said.

Total arrivals as on January 22, stood at around 10,410 tonnes and sales were around 10,130 tonnes against 6,910 tonnes of arrivals and around 6,875 tonnes sales in the same period last year. The weighted average price as on January 22 was Rs 565 a kg against Rs 1,075 in the same period a year ago, auction sources said. Prices of graded varieties in Bodinayakannur on January 22 remained at the previous levels. Prices in Rs/kg were: AGEB Rs 640-650; AGB Rs 565-575; AGS Rs 540-550 and AGS 1: Rs 510, trade sources in Bodi said. Dry weather conditions are prevailing in the growing areas and there hasn't been a shower for the past month. If the current dry spell continued that would have a negative impact on the plants, some of the Idukki growers said.

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Cotton blooms in North on improved demand



Rajkot, Jan 23:

Cotton price remain unchanged in Gujarat with steady demand from mills and exporters. But prices gained in the North on Monday on improved demand and a firm undertone at the Surendranagar Commodity Exchange *kapasfutures*.

Shankar-6 cotton was quoted at Rs 36,800-37,000 for a candy of 356 kg. About 65,000-67,000 bales (170 kg each) of cotton arrived in Gujarat and 2.20 lakh bales arrived in the country.

Ready delivery RG cotton traded at Rs 3,830-3,860 a quintal in Punjab, Rs 3,775-3,795 in Haryana and Rs 3,770-3,790 in Rajasthan. Total arrivals stood at 32,000 bales. Traders said that local millers increased buying at lower level.

On National Commodity and Derivatives Exchange, kapas for April delivery were marginally up by Rs 4.20 to Rs 979.10 for *amaund* of 20 kg, with an open interest of 11,065 lots. At Rajkot spot market, kapas was traded at Rs 890-915 *amaund*, while Kadi delivery kapas price ruled at Rs 900-925. About 800 trucks of cotton arrived in Gujarat from Maharashtra and they were offered at Rs 860-890 *amaund*. Traders said that cotton prices will not increase much as buyers are not interested to purchase at higher levels. Moreover, inventories are huge this year and this will limit the gain. Market analysts said sluggish demand from cotton industries may drag futures.

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Raw Pusa basmati drops by Rs 300/quintal

Our Correspondent



Karnal, Jan. 23:

The rice market witnessed a mixed trend with prices of Pusa basmati (raw) dropping by Rs 300 a quintal. Prices of a few aromatic and Sharbati varieties also decreased, while prices of pure basmati Sela and Permal varieties increased by Rs 50-100 a quintal on Monday.

Mr Amit Chandna, proprietor of Hanuman Rice Trading Company, told *Business Line* that sluggish domestic demand against ample stocks resulted in prices of a few aromatic and Sharbati varieties dropping, while other varieties managed to rule firm. Bulk buyers are out of

the market and they are waiting for prices to stabilise as they don't want to bear any more loss, he added.

Pusa-1121(steam) decreased by Rs 25 and quoted at Rs 4,100 a quintal, while Pusa-1121(sela) was quoted at Rs 3,400-3,450 a quintal, down Rs 50 from previous level. Duplicate Basmati ruled at Rs 3,200 a quintal.

Pure Basmati (Raw) witnessed a major fall, easing by Rs 300 and sold at Rs 4,500-4,550 a quintal, while Pure Basmati (Sela) sold at Rs 4,100 a quintal, up Rs 100.

Among the brokens of Pusa-1121, Tibar sold at Rs 3,300, Dubar was at Rs 2,800 while Mongra was trading at Rs 2,250 a quintal.

Sharbati (steam) decreased by Rs 70 and quoted around Rs 2,830 a quintal while the Sharbati (Sela) ruled flat and sold at Rs 2,750-2,800 a quintal.

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Soya oil gains despite slack buying support

Our Correspondent



Indore, Jan 23:

Soyabean oil ruled marginally higher, though trading was subdued on slack buying support at the higher rate.

Soyabean refined oil ruled at Rs 670-675 for 10 kg (Rs 668-70) on Monday, though a majority of plants showed some buying interest at the rate Rs 670-73 for 10 kg. Soya solvent oil, on the hand, either ruled flat or gained marginally at Rs 636-644 for 10 kg (Rs 635-40).

However, due to lack of buying interest at the higher rate, a majority of trading in soya solvent oil was witnessed at Rs 635-640 for 10 kg. Strong global cues also perked up soya oil futures with soya refined oil February contract closing Rs 2.50 higher at Rs 708.30 for 10 kg on the National Board of Trade. Similarly on the National Commodities and Derivatives Exchange, soya oil February contracts closed Rs 2.35 higher at Rs 707.75 for 10 kg.

On the other hand, soya oil March contracta on the NCDEX gained marginally at Rs 693.85 after opening at Rs 694.95 in the morning.

With majority of *mandisin* Madhya Pradesh including Indore, Ujjain and Dewas remaining closed on Monday on account of `Somwati Amavasya', soyabean in private trading ruled marginally higher at Rs 2,360-Rs 2,410 a quintal. On the other hand, soyabean traded higher on the futures on strong buying support and improved foreign cues with soyabean February and March contracts on the NCDEX closing at Rs 2,542 a quintal (up Rs 10) and Rs 2,576 a quintal (up Rs 6).

Plant deliveries in soyabean ruled at Rs 2,490-Rs 2,510 a quintal.

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60% of turmeric arrivals go unsold

Our Correspondent



Erode, Jan. 23:

Spot turmeric prices decreased by Rs 200 a quintal on Monday as buying by traders was restricted.

“Usually by middle of January, the North Indian traders will place orders for Erode turmeric and so the bulk buyers and exporters will buy huge stock. Contrast to this, the traders in North India have placed order with the Erode traders by the middle of December and purchased huge stock. So, at present the traders here are quoting decreased price for purchases in order to fulfil pending orders of Masala firms,” said Mr R.K.V. Ravishankar, President, Erode Turmeric Merchants Association.

Liquidating stocks

He said 8,800 bags of turmeric arrived here on Monday for sales; but only 40 per cent was sold. Of the arrivals on Monday, 3,600 bags were new crop of Mysore crop and Number 8 variety. Traders purchased almost all the new crop. The quality of hybrid Salem crop is not up to the expected level, so a lower price was quoted. Only 50 per cent of the hybrid variety was sold.

At the Erode Turmeric Merchants Association Sales yard, the finger variety was sold at Rs 3,277-4,191, the root variety Rs 3,111-4,091.

Salem Crop: The finger variety fetched Rs 3,850-4,600, the root variety Rs 3,729-4,200. Totally, 2,361 bags of turmeric arrived for sale and 1,100 were sold.

At the Gobichettipalayam Agricultural Cooperative Marketing society, the finger variety was sold at Rs 2,369-4,200, the root variety at Rs 2,359-3,968. All the 115 bags that arrived were sold.

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