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Farmers hopeful of netting profits through hatcheries

G.Srinivasan

5,000 inland fish farmers are in the district: fisheries department

catch them alive:Workers catching fish at a farm at Orathanadu in Thanjavur district on Tuesday.Photo: M.Moorthy

Progressive fish farmers in the district have set up hatcheries to meet the demand for fingerlings and to improve their economic activity. Five hatcheries have come up in the district, thanks to the fisheries department and National Agriculture Development Programme, which has subsidised them.

Manal.Paramasivam is one such progressive fish farmer who has put up a hatchery. He has got a subsidy of Rs.5 lakh and has spent another Rs.12 lakh to establish a hatchery at his fish farm at Orathanadu, 27 km from Thanjavur.

“One kg fish can produce lakhs of fingerlings and we can now supply fingerlings up to three lakh at a time with the help of this hatchery,” said Mr. Paramasivam .

First, the brood stock conditioning is done - the processes of bringing fish to spawning condition.

This is done in brood stock holding tank, and eggs and sperms are released into water.

Fertilisation takes place in water and the seeds are brought to hatchling tank. The seeds hatch and young ones come out. They are safely grown into fingerlings in the hatchery.

Hatcheries are place of breeding, hatching and rearing through the early life stages of fish.

Hatcheries are safe because they provide the necessary condition for breeding, and protecting young fish from predators . Farmers who purchase fingerlings and use hatcheries to rear would be able to get a good yield.

“We supply fingerlings of Katla, Rohu, Common Carp and Cross Carp from our hatchery,” said Mr. Paramasivam. Fingerlings from this farm are sold to other states as well as Tamil Nadu. Mr. Paramasivam has also taken up inland prawn farming. The farm has 12 fish ponds. Mr. Paramasivam says that investment for an acre of land in fish farming is Rs.35,000 and one can earn a profit up to Rs.65,000.

According to fisheries department, there are 5,000 inland fish farmers in the district. They rear inland fish farm varieties such as Rohu, Mrigal, Catla, Common Carp and Silver Carp. Thanjavur district is also a good contributor of marine fish to the State.

With its 45.1 km of coastline in Palk Strait it contributes five per cent of the total marine fish catch in the State. There are 27 fishing villages from Thambikottai in Pattukottai taluk to Sembaganmadevi pattinam in Peravurani taluk.

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Showers fail to raise hope of horticulture farmers

G.Sathyamoorthi

Farmers switching over to floriculture from paddy, sugarcane

waiting for bounty:Horticulture crops would benefit if rain was to lash rural areas as predicted by the Indian Meteorological Department.File Photo

Though the rain that lashed the district on Monday was not widespread, official sources are confident of climate conducive for horticultural crops if the region were to have a couple of more showers.

Official sources described the Monday rain ‘disappointing’ as it was only part of the city which was drenched, not even parts like K.K.Nagar.

They pointed out that the district received 128 mm rain against the normal 161 mm in June. “As on date, we have received only 127 mm. If we can get about 200-250 mm within this month, it would be favourable for horticultural crops,” they added.

However, they feel that many horticultural crops would benefit if the rain was to lash the rural areas now that Indian Meteorological Department has forecast copious showers in the next couple of weeks in the peninsular region.

They point out that Tiruchi ranks eighth in the State in terms of horticultural crop cultivation. While banana is raised in about 9,000 hectares in the district, tapioca is the next major crop in about 6,000 hectares.

While small onion is raised in 3,000 hectares, other vegetables, including brinjal, tomato, snake gourd and drum sticks, are raised in about 500 hectares, lime in 1,000 hectares and chillies in 2,000 hectares.

As 'aadipattam' is considered the ideal season for vegetable cultivation, the department has stocks of vegetable seeds in all offices of the Assistant Director of Horticulture in the district. "Seeds, including the hybrid ones - brinjal, tomato, onion and chillies - would be given at 50 per cent of the cost to farmers who approach us," the sources said.

Among fruits, mango is raised in about 2,000 hectares, including at Marungapuri, Vaiyampatti, Manapparai, Andanallur, Lalgudi, and Manikandam region. Of them Marungapuri could be considered the rain-fed area while the rest are part of the delta region. Major varieties raised are himampasand, banganapalli, kallani and neelam.

Besides, the red and loamy soil, in many parts of the district offers tremendous scope for floriculture cultivation. Already farmers have started switching over to floriculture from traditional crops such as paddy and sugarcane.

The major flower in the district is jasmine in about 300 to 400 hectares followed by tuberose (sampangi), crossandra (kanakambaram), rose and chrysanthemum (samanthi).

The major areas where floriculture has become an important means of livelihood are Tiruchi, Manapparai, Musiri, Thuraiyur and Srirangam.

Though the total area under flower cultivation is not much, the total turnover is said to be around Rs. 20 crore even as early as 1998, according to the District Gazetteer. About 10,000 families, a majority of which own less than one hectare, are engaged in flower cultivation in the district.

HYDERABAD, July 11, 2012

Tagging tuna fish for sustainability

Y. MALLIKARJUN

Twenty Yellowfin tunas tagged on an experimental basis



In a bid to ensure sustainable management of tuna fish in the Indian Ocean, a project to tag the commercially-exploited fish with Satellite-tracked Pop-up Standard Archival Tags (PSAT) had been launched to study its habitat, environmental preference and migratory route.

The project, 'Satellite Telemetry Studies of Tuna in the Indian Seas' (SATTUNA) was initiated by the Indian National Centre for Ocean Information Services (INCOIS) in collaboration with Central Marine Fishery Research Institute (CMFRI), Fishery Survey of India (FSI) and Centre for Marine Living Resources and Ecology (CMLRE).

While 20 Yellowfin Tunas were tagged on an experimental basis off Visakhapatnam, Chennai and Lakshadweep Islands between December 2011 and April 2012, another 25 will be tagged from October this year. The tagging would be continued in the coming years to develop comprehensive data on the environmental and biological parameters influencing the tuna habitat and its migration in the Indian Ocean.

Observing that it was an ocean-wide migratory species, T. Srinivas Kumar, Head of Advisory Services and Satellite Oceanography Group (ASG), INCOIS, said the tagging of the 20 fish had already started providing vital data on temperature and depth information along the migratory routes. "First we need to understand its behaviour and environmental preference to find out if it was available in abundance and manage its sustainability".

He said that tuna fish was highly exploited in other oceans, including Pacific. Many of the advanced countries had imposed quotas on exploitation of various fish species. While the maximum sustainable yield or fish potential annually in the Indian Ocean was up to four million metric tonnes, less than 3.5 million metric tonnes was being exploited at present.

While the Indian Ocean Tuna Commission (IOTC) conducted five tagging cruises between 1988 and 1992 and tagged 995 fish with conventional tags, this was the first time that tuna was being tagged with PSAT.

With only 15 conventional tags recovered then, which was essential to obtain recorded data, alternative method with satellite-tracked tags was taken up as all the vital information could be obtained without recovering the tags.

ERODE, July 11, 2012

Turmeric price: farmers to wait and watch

S. RAMESH

Speculation was ripe among the farmers that there would be a sharp increase in the prices of turmeric following reports that the production of the yellow spice might witness a fall in the next season.

Turmeric farmers in the district were showing reluctance to sell their produce and started keeping the spice in stock, even after the market saw an increase of Rs. 2,500 a quintal during the last seven days.

The turmeric prices are currently hovering around Rs. 6,000 to Rs. 7,000 a quintal. The farmers were confident that the prices would go up further in the coming months. "We are very positive that the prices will touch Rs. 8,000 a quintal in all the turmeric markets including Erode by the end of July," Turmeric Farmers Association of India President P.K. Deivasigamani said.

Mr. Deivasigamani substantiated his views by pointing out the fall in the area of cultivation of turmeric.

"Over six lakh acres come under turmeric cultivation every year in the country. This has now come down to around 3.5 lakh acres following the drastic fall in the prices. The acreage in Tamil

Nadu, which cultivates the spice in about two lakh acres every year, went down to 40,000 acres this time," he said.

The common rule is when the supply goes down, prices are bound to increase. "We will not be surprised if the prices touch Rs. 20,000 a quintal in the first quarter of 2013," Mr. Deivasigamani said.

The traders admitted that the demand for turmeric had gone up last week, which contributed to the rise in the prices. But we do not expect a substantial increase. But there is no way for the prices to go beyond Rs. 10,000 a quintal, traders claimed.

Many farmers, however, had decided to wait and watch the price trend. They said they would be taking a decision after witnessing the outcome of the national level conference organised by the Turmeric Farmers Association of India on July 21.

THANJAVUR, July 11, 2012

Ducks thrive on harvested paddy fields in delta region



quacking away:Ducks wading through water-filled field at Orathanadu village in Thanjavur district.Photo:M.Moorthy.

: Duck rearing is catching up in Cauvery delta as paddy fields provide a good habitat for ducks. Ducks eat fallen grains in paddy fields, insects, snails and earth worms. They also eat aquatic plants, grass and small amphibians.

Ducks wading through water-filled paddy fields is a common sight in Cauvery delta districts of Thanjavur and Tiruvarur. Velu, a labourer engaged in rearing ducks for the past 10 years, said: "I rear them in paddy fields and put them in the field near the owners house at night. They lay eggs in the morning. Usually ducks lay eggs before nine a.m. Ducks can lay eggs throughout the year. I used to get a maximum of 500 eggs. Nowadays I get 300. I sell one egg for Rs 4.50. They are sent to Kerala also," Velu said chasing ducks into the water-filled paddy fields.

"Here farmers have raised nurseries and have started transplantation of kuruvai in pump set irrigated areas. I will go to Kumbakonam on Wednesday where harvest of paddy has been completed in some areas and where ducks can get good feed," Velu said. Normally ducks are moved in lorries to distant places. They are allowed to walk on roads for short distances. Veterinary doctors said ducks lay more eggs a year than chickens. The size of the egg is larger by about 15 to 20 grams. Ducks thrive well in scavenging conditions. Marshy riverside, wet land and barren moors are good for duck farming. They are suitable for integrated farming systems such as duck-cum-fish farming, duck farming with rice cultivation. The droppings of ducks serve as feed for fish and also as manure for the land. However, with rice cultivation, they promote intertillage as they search for food, their bills loosen the soil around the plant and they help in removing weeds.

ERODE, July 11, 2012

'Obama offers Rs. 10,000 a quintal to turmeric farmers'



Posters with interesting slogans have been put up in several parts of Erode inviting farmers to the national-level turmeric conference scheduled for July 21. —PHOTO: M. GOVARTHAN

The hoardings and posters put up by the Turmeric Farmers Association of India here have become the talk of the town.

The posters depict a turmeric farmer refusing to sell the spice to United States President Barack Obama, when the latter offers Rs. 10,000 a quintal. "We are going to fix the price for turmeric and we cannot sell the spice before we announce a price on July 21," reads the slogan.

The association has put up these posters and hoardings inviting the farmers and general public to its national conference scheduled to be held here on July 21. The association has planned to announce a floor price for turmeric on the lines of National Egg Co-ordination Committee.

"We have come up with these posters to boost the confidence of the turmeric farming community on our association. In our country, farmers are not able to determine the prices. The market forces fix the prices, which are not remunerative to the farmers. So we have taken the first step to solve this problem," association President P.K. Deivasigamani says.

Similar posters and campaign materials have been put up in different parts of Tamil Nadu and other States, he adds.

Union Agriculture Minister Sharad Pawar will participate in the conference. Representatives from various farmers associations across the country will discuss their issues in turmeric production and marketing.

"We have come up with such posters to boost the confidence of the turmeric farming community on our association."

VILLUPURAM, July 11, 2012

Banks told to disburse farm loans expeditiously

District Collector V.Sampath has urged the banks to extend the farm loans without any delay so as to make Villupuram a self-sufficient district in food production.

The Collector was speaking at the bankers' meeting held here to review the performance of the banks in the district in the first quarter of the current financial year. He said that the total exposure of the nationalized banks, the private banks and co-operative banks to farm loans was

in the order of Rs 136 crore given to 26,861 farmers in the first quarter, starting from April to June.

The banks had given away jewel loans amounting to Rs 66 crore to 13,342 farmers for the purpose of carrying on the farm production without any interruption. The banks had also extended short term loans to the tune of Rs 6 crore to 671 farmers.

BELGAUM, July 11, 2012

Farmers urged to go in for alternative crops

In view of the drought in different parts of the district, the Agriculture Department has advised farmers to go in for alternative crops.

Sources in the department said here that farmers need to take up alternative crops depending on the fertility of the soil and availability of water.

The crops which they could cultivate include soyabean, groundnut, maize, jowar, cotton, hybrid cotton, toor, bajra, sesamum, sunflower and so on.

In the event of rainfall in the first two weeks of August, farmers in Saundatti, Raibag, Athani, Gokak and Ramdurg taluks could sow bajra, toor, sesamum, maize and cotton in the event of rainfall in the first two weeks of the month.

If these areas receive rain during the second half of the month, the growers could take up toor, sesamum, maize, sunflower and cotton, among others.

Farmers in rainfed areas of Khanapur taluk could sow paddy, toor, cotton, maize during the month. In the event of rain in the first fortnight next month, they could go in for maize and fodder crops.

The officials also advised farmers to reduce the quantity of fertilizer for these crops by half and adopt scientific methods of cultivation.

For further information, farmers can visit the Agriculture Department's offices in their respective taluks.

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- *Crops such as soyabean, maize can be cultivated*
 - *Farmers advised to adopt scientific methods*
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DHARWAD, July 11, 2012

Demand to waive farm loans in Dharwad taluk

A large number of farmers here extended their support to the protest staged by the Congress outside the Deputy Commissioner's office on Tuesday. They demanded that the government waive farm loans in view of the scanty rainfall in Dharwad taluk.

Vinay Kulkarni, former MLA, said the government's failure to include Dharwad taluk in the list of drought-hit taluks had caused severe hardship to farmers. He said this was the second consecutive year that farmers had suffered losses owing to drought in the rabi season and floods in the kharif season.

The farmers suffered during the rabi season as well since the taluk got poor rainfall. Mr. Kulkarni said lack of rain in this kharif season meant the taluk stared at the prospect of a drought. Hence, he demanded the government immediately declare Dharwad taluk drought-hit.

Mr. Kulkarni said 4,800 farmers in the taluk had been severely affected by the drought.

He alleged banks were forcibly recovering loans from farmers and urged the government to direct banks to stop recovering loans from them.

DHARWAD, July 11, 2012

Training in dairy farming

A three-day training programme in dairy farming for farmers will begin at the University of Agricultural Sciences, Dharwad, here on July 16.

Those interested in have been requested to enrol on-the-spot with Election Photo Identity Cards (EPIC) or ration cards.

GUNTUR, July 11, 2012

Chilli farmers to stall transactions in cold storages on July 12, 13

The Joint Action Committee (JAC) of chilli farmers, who incurred a loss of Rs. 50 crore due to a string of fire accidents in cold storages in April and May last year, has resolved to protest against the inordinate delay in paying compensation by stalling transactions in about 70 cold storages in and around Guntur city on July 12 and 13. Chilli stocks of some 2,300 farmers belonging to Guntur, Krishna, Prakasam, Kurnool, Khammam, and Nalgonda districts were reduced to ashes by fire that raged through Nandini, Sai Surya and Vengamamba cold storages in early 2011 but their loss has not yet been compensated by National and Oriental Insurance Companies. The district administration's promise to pay compensation in two months came to naught and the farmers continue to run from pillar to post for covering up their loss. JAC convenor Muppalla Nageswara Rao stated in a press release that the insurance companies were showing one reason or the other for not completing their investigation and taking steps for releasing compensation to the farmers and the district officials have their own excuses for inaction. As a consequence, the farmers suffered an irreparable loss. The JAC called for protests as the issue of compensation remained unresolved and it informed the Collector, Joint Collector, market yard secretary, and insurance companies about the same.

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- *Protest against delay in payment of compensation*
 - *The decision was taken by Joint Action Committee*

KAKINADA, July 11, 2012

Corporate firms venture into paddy cultivation

K.N. MURALI SANKAR

'Farm mechanisation is need of the hour in the wake of shortage of labour'



NEW TREND:A farmer taking a look at a paddy nursery developed by a corporate company at Kandulapalem village in East Godavari district.

The gap between the Agriculture Department and the farmers seems to have paved the way for the entry of corporate firms into paddy cultivation.

For the first time in the State, a corporate company has ventured into the preparation of nurseries for paddy farmers in East Godavari district.

Along with the seed of their choice, the farmers have to pay a sum prescribed by the firm three weeks in advance of their transformation schedule.

The firm, in return, prepares nursery and transplants it in the paddy field.

“Farm mechanisation is the need of the hour in the wake of acute shortage of labour. It doesn’t mean that the agriculture activity goes into the hands of a few corporate companies,” says J. Kumara Swamy, State secretary of the Bharatiya Kisan Sangh. “The government is expected to take a proactive role,” he says.

Restrictions

As of now, the corporate firm is charging Rs. 5,600 per acre for arranging the nursery and transplantation through its mechanised unit.

“Provided the required machinery and guidance, farmers can do a better job than the corporate companies on any day,” says Kovvuri Trinadha Reddy, general secretary of the A.P. Farmers

Water Management Committees Association. Accusing the government of failing to chalk out a plan to make the farm machinery accessible to all the farmers, Mr. Reddy wonders why there are several restrictions on the subsidies being offered on farm implants.

Of the special package of Rs. 5 crore released by the government for farm mechanisation following the Konaseema crop holiday, only Rs. 1 crore has been used so far.

“The officials are insisting on formation of Rythu Mitra Groups by the farmers to avail the subsidies. There are many practical difficulties in doing so and a good number of farmers will come forward to go for the implants, provided the subsidy has been expanded to the individuals,” he explains.

Terming the farm mechanisation as an inevitable phenomenon, Commissioner of Agriculture K. Madhusudhana Rao says that henceforth the agriculture officials will interact with the farmers at the village level more often.

“Certain gaps have to be filled and we are already on the job,” he says.

WARANGAL, July 11, 2012

Avoid chemical fertilizer, ryots told

NABARD official asks farmers to prepare organic manure with bank loans

Farmers should revert to old methods of farming and avoid use of chemical fertilizer to reap maximum benefit, says National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) Chief General Manager P. Mohanaiah.

Addressing a group of farmers who turned up for a workshop on organic farming organised by the Pragathi Seva Samiti here on Tuesday, he said they came up with many schemes and loan facilities which not many farmers were aware of. Hence, the bank was encouraging self-help groups and Farmers' Clubs to reach out to the target sections. “Our effort is to involve all rural people in banking and help them avail themselves of banking services,” he told the farmers.

He appealed to the farmers to adopt organic farming by preparing and producing organic manure with the loans being extended by the banks.

Loss to farmers

“Excessive use of chemical fertilizers damages the soil health and health of people who consume the agricultural produce. It also results in loss to the farmers as the input costs have gone up steeply,” Mr. Mohanaiah said.

Retired Joint Director of Agriculture N. Ramachandraiah explained to the farmers that at one-time the use of chemical fertilizer was encouraged to facilitate green revolution, but no more.

When the population was high and agricultural produce was low, all methods were used to increase the production. “The situation is different now. The farmers should develop vermi-compost hatcheries and use cow dung and earthworms to produce organic manure. The input cost will come down and the produce will fetch more money in the market,” he explained.

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- *Organic farming reduces input costs and produce fetches more money: former farm official*
 - *Chemical fertilizer threatens health of human beings and environment and damages soil*
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hindustantimes

Wed, 11 Jul 2012

weather

Chennai - INDIA

Today's Weather



Sunny

Wednesday, Jul 11

Max Min
37.4° | 25.9°

Rain: 00 mm in 24hrs Sunrise: 5:45

Tomorrow's Forecast



Rainy

Thursday, Jul 12

Max Min
35° | 28°



Humidity: 62%

Sunset: 18:39

Wind: Normal

Barometer: 993

Extended Forecast for a week

Friday Jul 13	Saturday Jul 14	Sunday Jul 15	Monday Jul 16	Tuesday Jul 17
				
31° 28°	31° 27°	33° 27°	32° 27°	31° 27°
Rainy	Rainy	Rainy	Rainy	Rainy

THE ECONOMIC TIMES

11 JUL, 2012, 08.20AM IST, JAYASHREE BHOSALE,ET BUREAU

Domestic cotton now gives Bt variety a run for its money

PUNE: Maharashtra. Ravindra Daftari, chairman, Daftari Agro, said, "We used to sell 2,000 packets of desi seeds. But this year, sales went up to 9,000 packets. Next year, we plan to increase the production of desi seeds by four times."

Mahabeej, the Maharashtra government's seed corporation, has undertaken a programme with Punjabrao Deshmukh Krishi Vidyapeeth (PKV), Akola, to increase the production of desi cotton seeds from 200 quintals this year to 1,500 quintals next year. "There was a sudden increase in demand for desi cotton seeds this year," said PKV chief cotton scientist Dr BR Patil.

"We had reduced the production of desi cotton seeds considerably as almost all farmers had shifted to Bt. But in the last one year, we have noticed an increase in demand for the desi varieties," said an official of Mahabeej. Bt cotton did not give good returns to Maharashtra farmers.

A large percentage of cotton farmers in Rajasthan have still not adopted the Bt variety because they are happy with the desi variants. A similar trend, though on a smaller scale, has started emerging in Maharashtra because farmers find the desi varieties to be more resistant to drought besides being more remunerative.

Rajasthan is the only state where 40% farmers have stuck to desi cotton due to lack of irrigation facilities. In Maharashtra, almost 99% of area under cotton has shifted to Bt varieties. But this year, there is a shortage of desi seeds due to a sudden spurt in demand. Though the overall sale of desi cotton seeds is minuscule, there is a definite trend of growing demand.

Of the 5.67 lakh hectare cotton area in Rajasthan in 2011-12, 58% was under Bt cotton and the rest under desi varieties. "Except for the irrigated tracts of Ganganagar and Hanumangarh, Rajasthan farmers from rain-fed areas prefer local varieties such as Bikaneri and RST9 because hybrid seeds require a lot of water," said an official of the Rajasthan agriculture department.

Wardha-based Daftari Agro sells desi seed varieties in Maharashtra due to non-conducive weather conditions coupled with a fall in market prices of cotton. The production cost of Bt cotton is higher as it needs more water and fertilisers. The state had to give a historically high compensation to cotton farmers for the losses they suffered due to a fall in productivity.

A recent study commissioned by Bharat Krishak Samaj showed that cotton yield in Maharashtra (Rs 336 kg per ha) was the lowest as compared to Rs 943.67 kg per ha in Tamil Nadu and 659.33 kg per ha in Gujarat, the first and second ranking states in terms of productivity.

Farmers and agricultural scientists say the yield of Bt cotton grown in water deficient conditions is almost equal to the yield of desi seeds. A shortage of short-staple cotton in India lifted its price compared to the longer ones last year. Desi varieties mostly yield short- to medium-staple cotton.

10 JUL, 2012, 02.59PM IST, PTI

Jeera weakens on profit-booking in futures trade

NEW DELHI: Jeera prices fell by Rs 132.50, or 0.88 per cent to, Rs 14,910 per quintal in futures trade today after speculators booked profits.

However, export demand and thin supplies limited the losses.

At National Commodity and Derivatives Exchange, jeera for delivery in July declined by Rs 132.50, or 0.88 per cent, to Rs 14,910 per quintal, with an open interest of 12,109 lots.

Likewise, the spice for delivery in the August lost Rs 87.50, or 0.57 per cent, to Rs 15,332.50 per quintal in 19,980 lots.

Analysts said profit-booking by speculators after recent gains mainly pulled down jeera prices at futures trade here but export demand restricted supplies amid weak rainfall in growing regions restricted the losses.

10 JUL, 2012, 01.52PM IST, REUTERS

Turmeric hits contract high; jeera retreats

MUMBAI: Turmeric futures in India hit a new contract high for a second straight day on Tuesday on tepid sowing due to weak rainfall and a likely drop in area under cultivation after prices fell sharply this season.

At 0753 GMT, the August contract on the National Commodity and Derivatives Exchange (NCDEX) rose 1.63 percent to 4,740 rupees per 100 kg after hitting a contract high of 4,852 rupees.

"In the medium-to-long term (July to September), prices may take cues from the sowing figures as farmers are expected to shift to other remunerative crops," Angel Commodities said in a research note on Tuesday.

The slow progress of the rains could push back sowing, hurting yield and output. Turmeric is planted between June and August and takes about nine months to harvest.

Turmeric acreage in India, the world's biggest producer and exporter of the yellow spice, is likely to fall 30 percent this season, reducing exports in 2013/14 even though total overseas sales are still expected to be above average.

Analysts expect the most-active August contract to touch 5,000 rupees in the short term.

India's monsoon rains were 49 percent below average in the week ended July 4, widening the gap of an 18 percent shortfall in the previous week, data from the weather office showed on July 5.

JEERA

Jeera, or cumin seed, futures retreated from a fresh contract high hit early in the day on some profit-taking, outweighing fresh exports and improved demand from local buyers.

The August jeera contract on the NCDEX was down 0.52 percent to 15,340 rupees per 100 kg after hitting a contract high of 15,520 rupees. It has risen about 9 percent since the start of the month.

"Traders are booking profits on recent gains, but lower spot supplies and domestic demand ahead of festivals are expected to support prices at lower levels," said Shikha Mittal, an analyst at Karvy Comtrade.

Analysts said the overall trend still remains firm on fresh export enquiries and local buying amid declining spot arrivals as the season has ended.

Worries that deficit rains could crimp production and tighten supplies could also support buying on dips.

Jeera is a winter crop, whose planting starts from October, and farmers depend on the monsoon to moisten the land for sowing.

At Unjha, a leading market in Gujarat, jeera rose 51 rupees to 15,018 rupees per 100 kg.

PEPPER

Pepper futures fell as traders chose to cash out gains after a recent rally in prices, though a squeeze in supplies and dwindling domestic inventory limited the downside.

The most-active August contract on the NCDEX fell 1.35 percent to 42,780 rupees per 100 kg. It has risen nearly 5 percent since the start of this month until Monday's close.

Weak overseas sales due to high-priced Indian produce in the global market also supported selling at higher prices.

"Fresh arrivals from Indonesia and Malaysia are expected to gain pace by mid-July and this is weighing on sentiment," said Mittal.

In Kochi, an important market in Kerala, spot pepper rose 340 rupees to 41,433 rupees.

In Kerala and Karnataka, the leading pepper producing states in the country, the crop is harvested from December to February.

Business Standard

Wednesday, Jul 11, 2012

Sesame seed prices up 18% in four days

Vimukt Dave / Mumbai/ Rajkot July 11, 2012, 0:09 IST

Sesame prices increased by over Rs 225-250 per 20 kg or 18 per cent in past four days in the wake of upcoming South Korean tender for 12,000 tonnes. Exporters are learnt to have been creating stock for the upcoming tender.

"Sesame market has increased prices by almost Rs 200-250 per 20 kg in last four days as exporters are buying heavily to create stock for coming 12,000 tonnes South Korean tender for the commodity. However, this is a momentary rise and is likely to decline soon," said Chirag Adhiya of Dalal Shantilal Narandas from Rajkot.

Sesame was traded on Rs 1,600-1,650 per 20 kg on Saturday in various mandis of Gujarat as against Rs 1,375-1,400 per 20 kg on Wednesday. Hulled sorted sesame seed prices stood at Rs 1,800-1,900 per 20 kg.

The South Korean tender of 12,000 tonnes will open on 13th July.

A leading commodity broker from Saurashtra said, "The sesame market is being driven by export demand as this time the tender size is double than last time. Moreover summer sesame crop is expected to be lower than last time which obviously resulted in price rise. However, price will not gain much in coming days."

Add to the woes, Daily arrival of sesame seed in Gujarat has fallen drastically from 25,000-27,000 bags last month to around 8,000-9,000 bags now.

Previously, Korean tender opened on May 16 this year. Generally Korean tender order distributes mostly in India wherein most of the order are fulfilled by exporters from Gujarat. With the sesame market expecting a full order of 12,000 tonnes in India this time, prices have gone up.

"To fulfill export order of 12,000 tonnes, around 13,000-13,500 tonnes of sesame seed is required and to cover this amount exporters are buying aggressively right now," said Adhiya.

According to Solvent Extractors Association of India (SEA) data, sesame seed price is ruling higher by 47 per cent as compared to corresponding period last year. In July 2011, average price of sesame seed hovered at around Rs 51,337 a tonne while currently it is being traded at Rs 75,000 per tonne.

According to Indian Oilseed and Produce Export Promotion Council (IOPEPC), sesame production is also estimated to be higher by over 10 per cent. IOPEPC has estimated around 52,200 tonnes of sesame production this summer, up from 47,500 tonnes in last year.

Sugar futures costlier by over 1% on spot demand

Poor rains in key growing areas also took prices higher

Press Trust of India / New Delhi July 10, 2012, 13:47 IST



Sugar prices shot up by 1.12% to Rs 3,064 per quintal in futures trade today on rising demand

from bulk consumers in spot market amid poor rains in key growing areas. At the National Commodity and Derivatives Exchange, sugar for July delivery traded Rs 34, or 1.12%, higher at Rs 3,064 per quintal, with an open interest for 3,430 lots. Sugar for delivery in August also traded Rs 7, or 0.22%, higher at Rs 3,122 per quintal, with an open interest of 25,390 lots. Meanwhile, small sugar (S-30) rose by Rs 30/74 per quintal to Rs 3,102/3,235 per quintal at the Mumbai's Vashi wholesale market in yesterday's trade.

Analysts attributed the persistent rise in sugar futures to huge positions created by speculators, driven by a firming trend in spot markets as demand from bulk consumers goes up during summer. Deficient monsoon in key growing areas, which could hurt output next year, also affected the sentiment.

THE HINDU Business Line

States not willing to show hand on FDI in multi-brand retail

Shishir Sinha



THE HINDU The Centre has been working hard to evolve a consensus on FDI in multi-brand retail issue.

Dept of Industrial Policy query remains unanswered after a month

New Delhi, July 10:

States may be for majority foreign direct investment in multi-brand retail but are not willing to commit in writing. The Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion (DIPP), *Business Line* learns, is yet to get any response from the States to its letter seeking their views on this move.

India Inc has been lobbying hard for FDI in multi-brand retail.

On November 24, the Cabinet decided to allow 51 per cent FDI in multi-brand retail. However, the political uproar that followed forced the Centre to put the decision on hold.

Since then, the Centre has been trying to build a consensus on the issue. According to a highly-placed government source, the Secretary of DIPP wrote to the Chief Secretaries of all the States almost a month ago. But till date, no State has responded — even those ruled by the Congress or its allies in the UPA. “The political set-up has to take a call. The Chief Secretary will seek views from the political leadership in the States and frame an appropriate response and send it back to the Centre. The Chief Secretaries cannot be asked to send the response by a particular date,” the source added.

As for the Congress-ruled States, the source clarified that since some of those Chief Ministers had aired views in public about the issue, the Chief Secretaries of those States might not have thought it proper to send the response.

At present over a dozen States have Chief Ministers belonging to the Congress or its allies in the UPA.

It may be noted that Kerala’s Chief Minister, Mr Oommen Chandy, recently countered the Commerce and Industry Minister, Mr Anand Sharma’s claim of support of all the Congress-ruled States. Mr Chandy said his State did not favour FDI in retail.

Opposition from the BJP ruled States and that of the Trinamool Congress is well known. The source said that though Gujarat had shown initial support, it has now adopted the BJP line.

Another government official said that any policy on FDI is the prerogative of the Centre. So, this seems unusual that the Centre is awaiting States’ views before implementing any policy decision on FDI.

“Do remember, it is the local authorities or departments of the State Government that give the various permissions to start a venture. So you have to bring States on board before implementing such a decision,” he added.

Crop damage in AP may push up potato futures

Our Bureau



Below-average-rainfall coupled with supply concerns in Andhra Pradesh would now shift the focus to the other two major potato growing regions of Agra and West Bengal.

Mumbai, July 11:

Potato futures on NCDEX may gain on reports of crop damage in Andhra Pradesh and delayed monsoon. Besides, soaring vegetable prices might support the potato price rise in medium term.

On Tuesday, potato for August delivery on NCDEX opened up by more than 2 per cent, but gave away much of the gain to settle with a gain of 0.63 per cent.

Below-average-rainfall coupled with supply concerns in Andhra Pradesh would now shift the focus to the other two major potato growing regions of Agra and West Bengal for meeting the demand.

About 220 lakh tonnes of potato is stored in different cold storage.

Currently, the potato stock in Uttar Pradesh is down 11 per cent at about 89 lakh tonnes compared to 100.42 lakh tonnes stored in the same period last year.

Punjab has an inventory of about 16 lakh tonnes and in Bihar it was 10 lakh tonnes. West Bengal has about 50 lakh tonnes of potato in cold storage.

Sowing in Karnataka was affected by delayed rains, while in Maharashtra sowing for kharif season is yet begin.

Correction drags pepper down

G. K. Nair

Kochi, July 10:

The pepper market on Tuesday dropped in technical correction after having gone up substantially the previous days. All the active contracts fell sharply on some selling pressure.

Some section of trade who wanted to fulfil their earlier commitments were also allegedly playing all the tricks to pull the market down, market sources told *Business Line*.

Some were, meanwhile, holding back hoping for a better 'badla' so that they could switch over to August.

Around 140 tonnes were marked for staggered delivery in July while an estimated 1,100 tonnes remain for staggered delivery, they said.

Expert processors were processing validity expired stocks for investors at competitive rates for depositing in the exchange.

There was good demand for spot pepper today and, therefore, some 70 tonnes of it were traded at Rs 397 a kg for the commodity from the plains, Rs 400 a kg for that from Wayanad and Rs 405 for the material from the high ranges depending upon quality and grade. Malabar garbled was traded at Rs 412 a kg.

July contract on the NCDEX fell by Rs 535 a quintal to the last traded price (LTP) of Rs 42,300; August and September contracts dropped by Rs 690 and Rs 650 respectively to the LTP of Rs 42,675 and Rs 43,130 a quintal.

Turnover

Total turnover fell by 1,198 tonnes to 3,782 tonnes. Total open interest decreased by 241 tonnes to 5,073 tonnes showing liquidation and some switching over.

July open interest fell by 308 tonnes to 1,076 tonnes while Aug and Sep moved up by 61 tonnes and 7 tonnes respectively to 3,780 tonnes and 184 tonnes.

Spot prices in tandem with the futures market trend dropped by Rs 300 to close at Rs 39,700 (ungarbled) and Rs 41,200 (MG 1) a quintal.

Indian parity in the international market was at \$7,800 - \$7,850 a tonne (c&f) for the Europe and \$8,100-8,150 a tonne (c&f) for the US.

Overseas buyers who were hitherto depending on MG 1 are now said to have switched over to other origins following the sharp rise in the Indian parity, they said.

Overseas trend

According to an overseas report today the international markets are seen somewhat sluggish, even though there are indications that a "larger volume of pepper is still to be covered for Q3 and Q4". Right now other origins, more or less in dollar per tonne (fob) are: Vietnam FAQ, 500 g/l: 6,050; FAQ, 550 g/l: 6,400 ; V ASTA: 6,600; Brazil ASTA: 6,450; Brazil Gr1 min. 560 g/l: 6,350; and Lampong ASTA: 6,400.

Groundnut oil slips on poor demand



Rajkot, July 10:

On the back of poor retail demand, prices of groundnut oil declined by Rs 15 a tin on Tuesday. However, cottonseed oil price was up marginally.

Groundnut oil traded at Rs 2,040-2,045 for 15-kg tin, down by Rs 15. *Telia* tin stood at Rs 1,820-1,821 for 15 kg and loose groundnut oil was quoted Rs 1,185-1,190 for 10 kg. About 20-30 tonnes of groundnut oil were traded from Saurashtra mills.

About 10,000-12,000 bags of groundnut arrived in Saurashtra and price stood at Rs 750-1,100 for 20 kg.

On the other hand, cotton oil prices gained a tad on normal demand. Cotton oil rose by Rs 5 to Rs 1,150-1,160 for 15 kg tin and cotton oil wash traded at Rs 677-680 for 10 kg.

A Gondal-based miller said, “ Demand in groundnut oil is very poor as price has gained too much in last week. However, from today some buyers have started to enter the market and in the coming days price will not increase as mills have enough groundnut stock to crush.”

According to a Rajkot-based edible oil retailer, people prefer cotton oil to groundnut oil as it is cheaper.

New crop concerns, delayed rain heat up edible oils



Mumbai, July 10:

Barring groundnut oil which declined by Rs 5 for 10-kg, all other edible oils extended gain on Tuesday. Price hike by local refiners and lack of rain in producing areas and concerns about the new crop pushed up prices higher.

Local demand was poor and speculators preferred profit booking at higher price. Sentiment was slightly weak after lower closing of Malaysian palm oil futures.

In spot markets, imported palmolein and soya oil rose by Rs 2 and Rs 5 each for 10 kg, while rapeseed and cotton refined oil increased by Rs 7 and Rs 4 each.

Sunflower oil was up by Rs 10. Malaysian crude palm oil futures declined on Tuesday on weak palm oil exports during 1-10, although losses were capped by dry US weather potentially hurting soyabean output.

Malaysian palm oil exports for the first 10 days of July slipped 13.5 per cent from a month ago, said cargo surveyor Intertek Testing Services. A total of 363,975 tonnes of the commodity were tracked, versus 420,592 tonnes in the same period last month, Intertek said.

A wholesaler said in absence of fresh demand at local level volume was thin. About 80 – 100 tonnes of Palmolein was resale traded in the range of Rs 618-620.

Domestic refiners continued price hike in line with import parity and expecting higher demand coming days for Ramzan this month and other festivals during August – September.

Unfavourable weather in India could crimp domestic oilseed production and will import more cooking oil during peak festivals season he said.

Towards the end of the day, Liberty quoted palmolein at Rs 629-630, Super palmolein at Rs 662, Soya oil at Rs 760 and Sunflower refined oil at Rs 755. Ruchi quoted palmolein at Rs 622 for July and Rs 629-632 for August. Soya refined oil at Rs 755 for July and Rs 760 for August.

Sunflower refined oil at Rs 750-755. Allana's rate for Palmolein was Rs 627.

Mewah, Bunge and Vaibhavi's rate for Palmolein was Rs 625- 627. In Saurashtra-Rajkot, groundnut oil dropped by Rs 40 to Rs 1,830 for *Telia* tin and by Rs 10 to Rs 1,200 for loose - 10kg.

Malaysia's crude palm oil August contracts settled lower at MYR 3,126 (MYR 3,142), September at MYR 3,130 (MYR 3,153) and October at MYR 3,136 (MYR 3,155) a tonne.

The Bombay Commodity Exchange spot rates were (Rs/10 kg): groundnut oil 1,185 (1,190), soya refined oil 752 (747), sunflower exp. ref. 685 (675), sunflower ref. 755 (745), rapeseed ref. oil 860 (853), rapeseed expeller ref. 830 (823) cotton ref. oil 722 (718) and palmolein 622 (620).

Coconut oil may heat up on monsoon revival

V. Sajeev Kumar



Kochi, July 10:

Revival of monsoon in Kerala in the last couple of days may decrease copra arrivals in major markets.

This may also attract major buyers to step in for purchase of coconut oil, which is ruling low at Rs 60 a kg in Kerala and Rs 58.75 in Tamil Nadu, officials at the Coconut Oil Merchant Association (COMA) said.

Prices quoted last week in the Kerala market were Rs 62 a kg, while in Tamil Nadu they ruled at Rs 60.

Mr Prakash B. Rao, Vice-President, COMA, said that copra prices in Kerala are ruling firm at Rs 4,200 a quintal against Rs 4,400 last week. Prices in Tamil Nadu stood at Rs 4,000 against Rs 4,200.

Compared with substitute oils such as palm oil and palm kernel oil which are trading at Rs 62 and Rs 70, respectively, he said that coconut oil price is cheap at Rs 60 a kg currently. Hence, prices of both copra and coconut oil are likely to increase on buying at bottom levels by local traders and selective corporates, he said.

Prices of palm oil and palm kernel oil were quoted at Rs 61.50 a kg and Rs 68, respectively last week.

Mr Bharat N. Khona, former Board Member, COMA, said that the market is expected to stabilise at this rate and there will not be any further decline. As prices are low and attractive, the market can expect upcountry buyers to purchase. They may be interested in operating in the market at this price level, he said.

Mr Thalath Mahamood, President, COMA, said that the market is sluggish with buyers staying away. It is expected to revive once corporate buying starts..

Low arrivals, buying interest support wheat



Karnal, July 10:

Wheat spot and futures remained supportive on account of low arrivals and buying interest on Tuesday.

According to market experts, wheat futures are likely to touch a new contract high this week, following a rise in demand and high global prices.

India can now take good advantage by selling in the global markets as prices have increased globally, said market experts. Earlier, the Government had decided not to export in a hurry and opted for a wait-and-watch policy .

On the National Commodity and Derivatives Exchange, wheat for July delivery shot up by Rs 32, touching a high at Rs 1,268 a quintal. Spot prices on the MCX increased by Rs 0.90 at Rs 1,240.5/ quintal.

In the physical market Dara remained unchanged and was quoted at Rs 1,200-1,210/ quintal. Arrivals remained low as farmers are busy sowing paddy. Only 30 tonnes of dara variety arrived from Uttar Pradesh and the stocks were directly offloaded at the mills. Mill delivery was at Rs 1,200-1,205/ quintal, while delivery at the chakki was at Rs 1,210/ quintal.

Mr Satish Kumar, a wheat trader, told *Business Line* that steady domestic demand, coupled with low arrivals, kept wheat prices firm. Dara prices have been ruling unchanged since July 3 and may continue to rule around the current levels this week too, he said.

Similarly, desi wheat varieties continued to rule at the previous levels. Tohfa ruled at Rs 2,230/ quintal and Bhojan King was quoted at Rs 2,110, while the Nokia variety traded at 2,060/ quintal.

Flour Prices

With a steady trend in wheat, flour was ruling at the same prices of at Rs 1,190 for a 90 kg bag. Chokar prices remained unchanged and was sold at Rs 610-620 for a 49 kg bag.

Turmeric gains more on trickling inflow



Erode, July 10:

Turmeric prices were driven up for the second consecutive day by lower arrivals and stockists rush to cover their needs. Prices increased by Rs 300 a quintal and are now close to Rs 6,000 a quintal.

“Spot turmeric is on an upward trend. The current increase is due to low arrivals. Out of the 6,660 bags that arrived for sales, about 5,600 were sold, with stockists buying 95 per cent of it. The balance was purchased by traders for their local orders. So far no order has been received from merchants in North India. The upward trend will persist till stockists make their purchases,” said Mr R.K.V. Ravishankar, President, Erode Turmeric Merchants Association.

He said that after touching Rs 5,000 a quintal, many farmers have come forward to sell their produce and he expected arrivals to increase in the next couple of days. Only medium variety turmeric is arriving for sale, with farmers retaining fine quality stocks.

He said that price of the finger variety turmeric increased by Rs 800 a quintal in Gobichettipalayam Cooperative Marketing Society, Rs 300 a quintal at the Erode Cooperative Marketing Society and the Hybrid Salem Crop increased by Rs 800 a quintal.

In the Regulated Marketing Committee, the price of finger variety turmeric increased by Rs 820 a quintal and is touching Rs 6,000 a quintal.

Mr P.K. Deivasigamani, President, All India Turmeric Farmers Council, said within 10 days, prices will touch Rs 7,000 a quintal.

Some traders expect arrivals to rise from Wednesday with more number of farmers bringing higher quantity for sale.

At the Erode Turmeric Merchants Association Sales yard, the finger variety fetched Rs 2,386-5,106 a quintal and root variety Rs 2,250-4,869 a quintal.

Salem crop: The finger variety sold at Rs 5,866-6,316, and root variety Rs 5,099-5,526. Of the total arrival of 957 bags, 640 were sold.

At the Regulated Marketing Committee, the finger variety sold at Rs 5,151-5,939 and the root variety Rs 4,878-5,388. All the 566 bags were sold.

At the Erode Cooperative Marketing Society, the finger variety sold at Rs 4,980-5,799 and the root variety at Rs 4,068-5,013. Some 1,084 bags were sold against 1,112 on offer.

At the Gobichettipalayam Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Society, the finger variety sold at Rs 3,589-5,689 and the root variety at Rs 3,510-5,220. All the 68 bags earmarked for sales were sold.

Sugar market pauses as profit-booking sets in



Mumbai, July 10:

Sugar prices on the Vashi wholesale market ruled steady on Tuesday after rising continuously the last seven-eight days. Sugar prices in the domestic market increased by Rs 130-150 this month after the announcement of a less than expected quarterly free-sale quota of 45 lakh tonnes for July -September. The end of the crushing season and erratic rain has heightened the concerns on sugar production next year, leading to an overall bullish sentiment.

Sources said that local demand was routine, while there was some profit-selling pressure at the *naka* level. Mills are not eager to sell, expecting higher prices in the coming days on improved demand nearing the Ramzan festival. There were no changes in spot, *naka* and mill tender rates. Neighbouring States' buying was also missing. In the international markets, sugar traders have been bullish in the last six months, after the sweetener moved in a bear market since September. Prices rallied since the start of June, after heavy rainfall in Brazil raised concerns of shortages. The sugar price turnaround has been fast because of the supply issues in Brazil, analysts said. In the domestic market, sugar futures for the current month were higher by Rs 25 a quintal till noon, while prices for August-September futures were range-bound. In the Vashi market, arrivals were 53-54 truckloads and local dispatches were 50-52 -loads. On Monday, 19-20 mills offered tenders and sold about 68,000-70,000 bags (each, 100 kg) in the range of Rs. 3,030-3,100 (Rs 3,030-3,100) for S-grade and Rs 3,090-3,150 (Rs 3,090-3,150) for M-grade.

The Bombay Sugar Merchants Association's spot rates were: S-grade Rs 3,102-3,235 (Rs 3,102 -3,235) and M-grade Rs 3,201- 3,301 (Rs 3,201- 3,301). **Naka delivery rates:** S-grade Rs 3,100 -3,130 (Rs 3,100 -3,130) and M-grade Rs 3,160-3,240 (Rs 3,160-3,240).

Buyer resistance saps spot rubber



Kottayam, July 10:

Spot rubber showed a mixed trend on Tuesday. The commodity continued to remain under pressure on buyer resistance as major players were unwilling to join the buyers queue since the domestic futures were weak on NMCE. According to observers, the market managed to sustain at the prevailing levels on supply concerns. The volumes were dull.

Sheet rubber finished unchanged at Rs 187 a kg both at Kottayam and Kochi according to traders and the Rubber Board. Meanwhile, RSS 5 and ISNR 20 slipped marginally amidst scattered transactions.

July series slipped to Rs 184.80 (185.51), August to Rs 184.75 (185.20) and September to Rs 183.71 (184.19) a kg while the most distant months remained inactive on National Multi Commodity Exchange (NMCE).

RSS 3 (spot) improved to Rs 178.33 (177.12) a kg at Bangkok. The July futures weakened to ¥ 243.5 (Rs 169.86) from ¥ 244 during the day session and then to ¥ 243.4 (Rs 169.77) in the night session on Tokyo Commodity Exchange.

Spot rates were (Rs/kg): RSS-4: 187 (187); RSS-5: 181.50 (181.50); Ungraded: 176.50 (176.50); ISNR 20: 181.50 (181.50) and Latex 60 per cent: 133 (133).

Jeera futures may trade higher

Suresh P. Iyengar



Mumbai, July 10:

Jeera futures gained almost 4 per cent on Monday due to strong demand from stockists.

Spot prices touched Rs 14,700 per quintal in Unjha as arrivals fell to 5,000 bags. NCDEX has allotted 1,476 tonnes through staggered delivery for July contract.

Lower production estimate in Syria and Turkey may boost the demand for Indian produce.

AP plans to enact Seed Act

HYDERABAD, JULY 10:

The Andhra Pradesh government will bring out a Seed Act to keep tabs on those who sell spurious seeds. Mr Kanna Lakshminarayana, Minister for Agriculture, has asked officials to study whether it is possible to introduce a Bill in the ensuing Assembly session.

WORKSHOP

Addressing a workshop on seed policy here on Tuesday, he said the seed companies were able to get stay orders from courts on the GO 1117 that sought to stop dubious methods followed by some companies. "Using holes in the laws, the companies are able to deceive farmers," he said. Representatives from farmers' associations, non-governmental organisations and Acharya N G Ranga Agricultural University and seed producers attended the workshop held at Malakpet here. He asked them to come out with suggestions on how to go about this issue. "The Seed Bill is pending with the Rajya Sabha. We are planning to depute a team to New Delhi to suggest amendments to the Bill when it comes for discussion in the Monsoon Session," he said.

Tea Board allocates Rs 300 cr for small growers in 12th Plan

P. S. Sundar



Coonoor, July 10:

The Tea Board has finalised schemes at an outlay of Rs 2,550 crore during the 12th Plan.

"In this, two new schemes have been added at an outlay of Rs 350 crore – one to promote small grower development and the other to implement regulatory measures. The balance Rs 2,200

crore will be on continuing the five schemes of the previous Plan,” the Tea Board member, Dr S. Ramu, told *Business Line*.

“The revised outlay for the existing schemes entails Rs 800 crore for Plantations Development, Rs 500 crore for Quality Upgradation and Product Diversification, Rs 400 crore for Market Promotion, Rs 300 crore for Human Resources Development and Rs 200 crore for Research and Development,” he said.

“Under the new schemes, Rs 300 crore is for tea small grower development. This has to be carefully drawn up and implemented because, the productivity of this sector will have wide ramifications on the overall performance of the country’s tea industry,” said Mr P. Viswanathan, who represents the Lok Sabha on the Board.

“We have to examine the other new scheme meant to implement regulatory measures at an outlay of Rs 50 crore in the backdrop of the emerging concept that the Board should adopt the function of guiding and directing rather than regulating or controlling the tea industry,” he said.

Collectively, the Board’s outlay is aimed at taking India’s tea production to 1,185 million kg (mkg) when the XII 12th Plan ends from 1,050 mkg at the Plan’s opening year.

Slack trade continues in cashew market

G. K. Nair



Kochi, July 10:

Cashew continued to trade in a wide range last week. With prices dependent on origin, seller, buyer and shipment period, some trading took place across the price spectrum.

But the volume traded was small and limited mainly to the W-320 grade. Other grades were largely neglected. The domestic market was also quiet with no change in prices after the small increase last week, according to market sources based in Mumbai.

The price ranges offered were \$3.70-3.85 for W240, \$3.30-3.50 for W320, from \$3.15-3.30 for W450 and SW320, \$2.35-2.45 for splits, and for pieces it was \$1.90-2 a pound (f.o.b).

The import period for the cashew industry is the second and third quarters of the year as about 70 per cent of the world crop is collected then and a fair amount of kernel business also takes place. Hence, an analysis of the trend in the important period for the past five years would give some idea about the market movements, Mr Pankaj N. Sampat, a Mumbai-based dealer told *Business Line*. In general, prices for W320 have always been higher in September than in April by at least over 10 per cent.

“Although the cashew market rarely follows a historical trend, it would be interesting to see whether the history of last 5 years – September prices being higher than April – will be repeated in 2012,” he said.

The outlook on the demand side will continue to be hazy, which will be the key driver in the market for the coming months. This is because the 2012 supply side factors are already known and have been factored into the current market levels.

In Asia, we can reasonably expect retail offtake to be higher than in 2011 because prices are much lower than they were during the peak consumption period last year. Also, the difference with the competing nuts is lower, especially in India, he said.

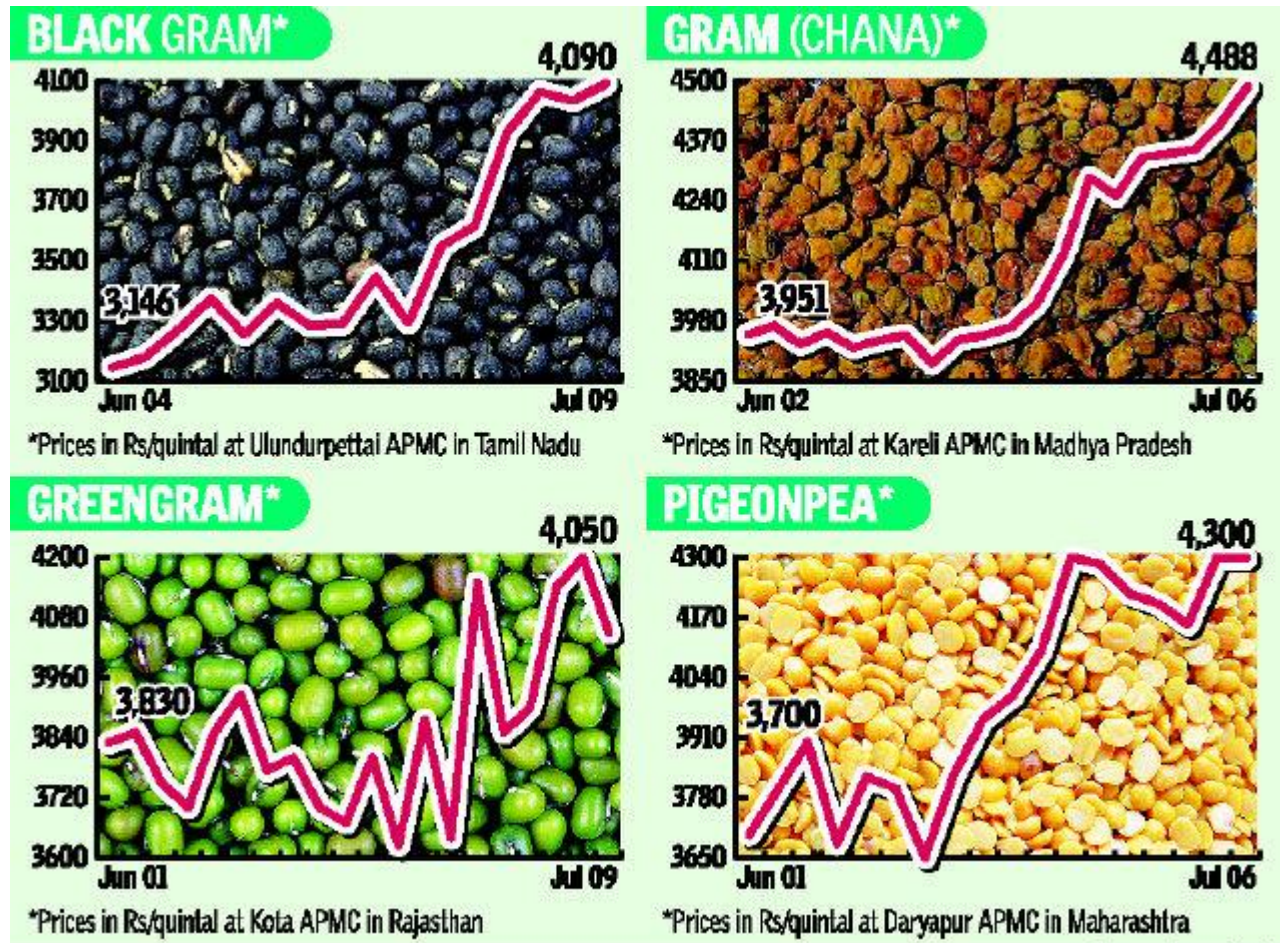
In the main importing regions, North America and the EU, apart from actual retail off take, “which we strongly believe is a combination of price and availability, a more important factor is likely to be the packers and retailers strategy,” he added. With the tough economic situation and tight financial markets, they may be inclined to buy just enough to meet core demand (without promotions) and live quarter to quarter. This will mean continuation of the trend of periodic short term buying leading to spikes and dips, he predicted.

Although there have been several enquiries in the last two weeks for later deliveries, not much has been converted into trades till now as there is still a large gap between sellers’ and buyers’ ideas. Sellers are not prepared to take large forward positions unless they have a cushion for forward risk. Most buyers do not want to pay the premium because they do not see any reason for big price change in coming months. This could change in the coming weeks.

A dullness prevails in the raw cashew nut (RCN) market also, Mr Sampat said. Shipments from Ivory Coast (IVC) are proceeding slowly. After a late beginning, Guinea Bissau has been relatively fast. Overall, like last year, it seems shipments from West Africa will continue through September, spreading the total volume over a longer period, he said.

Pulses may go up further on delayed monsoon

M R Subramani



Source: Agmarknet

Chennai, July 10:

Prices of pulses have surged over 10 per cent since the second half of June on deficient monsoon and depreciating rupee.

With monsoon still playing truant in most parts of the country, prices are expected to gain further.

“The rupee has devalued by 20 per cent. We need to import pulses such as gram (chana) this year. This has pushed up prices of gram,” said Mr Pravin Dongre, President, India Pulses and Grains Association.

Gram has witnessed a sharp rise in the last few weeks. For example, gram prices had hovered around Rs 3,950 a quintal until mid-June at the Kareli Agricultural Produce Marketing Committee (APMC) yard in Madhya Pradesh before beginning to rally to Rs 4,488 during last weekend. This week, prices are above Rs 4,600.

“There is an inherent shortage in chana. The area and yield of the crop this year have been lower. We could see the shortage extending till November,” said Mr Dongre.

Imports

Gram is a rabi crop that is harvested in March-April. “Imports will be made but it will take time,” he said.

According to a trading source, importers have to pay in dollars and the volatility is taking its toll.

“Canadian pulses for delivery in September are being quoted at \$615 a tonne f.o.b. If transportation and other costs are added, the landed price could be around Rs 45 a kg,” a source said.

Other pulses

On the National Commodities and Derivatives Exchange (NCDEX), gram for September delivery was quoted at Rs 4,750 a quintal on Tuesday, higher by Rs 56 from Monday. Prices in the futures market have increased by Rs 400 since June 15.

A similar pattern is being witnessed in other pulses such as pigeonpea (tur), black gram (urad) and green gram (moong).

“Other pulses are gaining due to deficient monsoon. Once monsoon catches up, things will settle down quickly,” Mr Dongre said.

“There seems to be too much speculation over monsoon. The gains in urad (black gram) has been negligible,” said Mr B. Krishnamurthy, Secretary, Tamil Nadu Pulses Importers Association.

But prices have seen a definite uptrend since mid-June. For example, rates at Ulundurpettai APMC in Tamil Nadu's Villupuram district have increased from Rs 3,360 a quintal on June 18 to Rs 4,090 on Monday.

One of the reasons pointed out for the rise in black gram is attributed to the hike in minimum support price (MSP) by the Centre to Rs 4,300 from Rs 3,300 a quintal.

"The MSP is only a moral booster and has got nothing to do with the price rise. There is no procurement of pulses in the country," said Mr Krishnamurthy.

Mr Dongre, too, aired the same view saying that farmers stand to gain nothing since pulses are not procured unlike rice or wheat.

Farmers who have held on to their stocks could gain, Mr Krishnamurthy said.

Since June 1, pigeonpea has gained Rs 600 a quintal to Rs 4,300 in APMCs around growing areas in Maharashtra, while green gram has increased to Rs 4,050 a quintal from around Rs 3,700 in various APMCs of Rajasthan.

Grim situation

A trader, who did not wish to be identified, said that with monsoon being delayed by nearly a month, the situation could turn grim if it turns out to be deficient this month too.

According to the India Meteorological Department, the monsoon is 25 per cent deficient until this week. Besides, weak monsoon poor storage levels in reservoirs is also causing concern.

'Coconut sugar is good for health'

Kochi, July 9:

Sugar made from coconut has been found to be beneficial to human health, especially for diabetics.

A natural sweetener, coconut sugar has a glycemic index of 35 and is classified as a low glycemic index food. Consumption of coconut sap sugar is good for people who want to reduce and maintain weight as it helps in proper control and management of diabetes mellitus.

It may also lower serum cholesterol and thus lower risk of cardiovascular and coronary heart disease, said Ms Yvonee T V Agustine, executive director, United Coconut Associations of the Philippines, in her technical presentation at the recently concluded Cocotech meeting.

She said that her country produces coconut sugar on a large scale, besides other coconut based products and by-products for export globally.

Coconut sugar export from the Philippines, the third largest coconut producing country, has grown from 11,200 kg in 2009 to 70,000 kg in 2011 with the list of importing countries spreading from Japan and the US in 2009 to West Asia, Asia, and Europe last year.

Virgin coconut oil is another product exported from the Philippines, she said.

The top 10 non-traditional export items from the Philippines in 2011 based on foreign exchange generation were glycerine, virgin coconut oil, toilet/bath soap, coconut water, coconut milk powder and so on.

The product basket netted \$112.794 million in exports during 2011, a sharp leap from \$65.447 million earned from these products in the previous year.

The increase in export earnings of Philippines was driven by massive rise in export of virgin coconut oil, coconut water, coconut milk powder, liquid coconut milk, and fresh coconuts, she added.

Water shortage: Cumbum valley farmers to keep off agriculture



Madurai, July 10:

Poor storage at the Periyar dam and failure of southwest monsoon have forced farmers in the Cumbum Valley to desist from taking up agricultural activities, sources here say.

Farmers' associations in the valley have taken the decision after being explained about the precarious storage position in the dam by the engineers of the Public Works Department in a special meeting held at Uthamapalayam, near here, on Monday.

It is said that they will not cultivate till the resumption of monsoon, following the firm expression of inability by the officials to supply water for raising fresh seedlings and transplantation while assuring the supply of water to standing crops.

As a result, those who had completed transplantation in certain pockets of Cumbum and Goodalur will not get water. Those who have raised seedlings in Margayankottai, Goodalur and Cumbim alone will get river water, but are not to take up transplantation till improvement in storage.

Farmers who did not raise seedling so far in Uthamapalayam, Chinnamanur, Veerapandi, Upparpatti and Palanichettipatti will not raise seedlings. Food production on around 14,700 acres in the Cumbum Valley has been affected.

Sowing completed in 16 lakh hectares in Gujarat



Sowing hopes: With the monsoon showers bringing cheers to the farming community, agricultural workers sowing seedlings on a field.

Gandhinagar, July 10:

Even as delayed monsoon rains began to drench many parts of Gujarat on Monday, sowing of rabi crops has been completed in about 16 lakh hectares (ha) across the State, a government official said here on Tuesday.

Most of this sowing was reported from the Saurashtra region, home to cotton and groundnut, sown in nearly 7 lakh and 6 lakh ha so far, respectively, the official added.

Despite delayed rains, farmers in most areas had started sowing as scheduled thanks to the Narmada waters, drip irrigation and more than two lakh check-dams built over the last 15 years.

With the pace of monsoon rains expected to pick, the State would close the sowing season with about 90 lakh ha. By October 2011, despite delayed rains, sowing had been completed in nearly 88 lakh ha, the official pointed out.

Over the last week, rains have been reported in most areas of Gujarat. However, for any eventuality, the State Government has reserved drinking water in the dams until July 15 to 20, prohibiting its use for irrigation.

There is also no dearth of water for industrial use so far, the official said. Most major dams in the State have still retained 25% water.