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High cost of fertilizers may hit paddy cultivation

Raviprasad Kamila

Many farmers say they will not use any fertilizer this season



Fertiliser cost per 50 k.g. bag

Fertiliser	May-June, 2011	May-June, 2012
Muriate of potash	Rs. 315	Rs. 882
Phosphorus	Rs. 250	Rs. 300
Diammonium phosphate (DAP)	Rs. 630	Rs. 1,260
20:20:0:13 (NPK)	Rs. 525	Rs. 866
Single super phosphate	Rs. 232 - Rs. 250	Rs. 330 - Rs. 400
10:26:26 (NPK)	Rs. 567	Rs. 975 - Rs. 1,166
15:15:15 (Suphala)	Rs. 414	Rs. 690

Source: Department of Agriculture, Mangalore

Area under paddy cultivation in Dakshina Kannada dwindled by over 5,000 hectares in the past decade owing to various reasons. High cost of fertilizer this year is likely to discourage farmers from going ahead with paddy cultivation, according to sources in the Department of Agriculture here.

The sources told *The Hindu* that there was an unprecedented hike in fertilizer cost this year, especially this season when paddy growers were preparing for khariff sowing.

A senior official in the department said that the price of muriate of potash (MoP) had more than doubled now when compared to the same period last year. Its price now stood at Rs. 882 for a 50 kg bag when compared to Rs. 315 for a 50 kg bag during the same period last year.

He said red soil in Dakshina Kannada had acute deficit of potash. Many paddy growers in the district needed it. As there was not much natural deposit of potash in the country, it was being imported. Devaluation of rupee against the dollar was said to be one of the reasons for the steep hike in the price of MoP.

The official said that the cost of 15:15:15 Suphala, widely used by farmers, had jumped from Rs. 414 a bag to more than Rs. 690.

He said that prices of other fertilizers used by farmers during sowing season had also gone up.

According to the department, the area under paddy cultivation in Dakshina Kannada was 38,291 hectares in 1999-2000 khariff season. It came down to 32,423 hectares in 2011-12 khariff.

Hayavadana Rao, a paddy grower from Kuthethur, said of the seven acres of field he owned, he cultivated paddy in two acres last year. As there was a steep hike in input cost and shortage of workers, he was re-thinking of growing paddy only in two acres this year.

Mr. Rao said that even if he grew paddy this season, he would stop using fertilizers as it was unaffordable.

Venkatesh, another grower from Madya, said that as the prices of fertilizers were on an upward trend from last year, he used only urea last season.

He said that he would not use any fertilizer this year as it was beyond his reach.

Mr. Ventakesh said that he would concentrate on organic farming.

He said that paddy growers should recover at least Rs. 18 for a kg of paddy to meet the production cost. "I could recover only Rs. 9.50 a kg last year," he added.

According to an agriculture official, the minimum support price for a kg of paddy was Rs. 13 last year.

Mr. Rao said that scanty rainfall this year might also affect paddy cultivation.

According to the department, Dakshina Kannada recorded 105.50 mm of rain from January 2012 to June 4, 2012 as against 364.52 mm recorded during the same period in 2011.

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Paddy procurement dues to be paid

Staff Reporter

The State government is taking steps to clear the Rs.300-crore paddy procurement arrears, Minister for Food and Civil Supplies Anoop Jacob has said.

(The State Civil Supplies Corporation [Supplyco] is the procurement agency).

A sum of Rs.75 crore, which was set aside in the 2012-13 State Budget, a financial assistance of Rs.97 crore from the Union government, and a Federal Bank loan of Rs.120 crore would be utilised to settle the dues, the State Minister said.

Allocation

The Budget allocation had already been disbursed to the farmers.

Rs.40 crore from the Federal Bank had also been given to the banks concerned, the Minister said.

Delay

The bank loan was being taken keeping in view the delay that would affect the process if the normal procedures to disburse the amount were followed, he added.

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'Double digit growth linked to farm output'

Special Correspondent

Double digit growth rate will be a reality only if agricultural productivity, secondary agriculture and agricultural industries grow, K.R. Jyotilal, acting Vice-Chancellor of the Kerala Agricultural University (KAU), has said.

He was addressing a function organised by the KAU to inaugurate a website for the placement cell and present the Sardar Patel Outstanding ICAR Institution Endowment Prizes for academic excellence.

“The importance of agricultural education lies in the inevitable need for food security.

Education in general, and agri education in particular, must be oriented to life, not for a living. The KAU's academic brilliance should lead to generation of technology," he said.

M.P. Vincent, MLA, presented the prizes to 14 students who excelled in different streams of study in 2009 and 2010.

He urged students to work for the State's agricultural prosperity.

"What you studied is yesterday's technology.

Move forward and introduce tomorrow's technology," he said.

The awards have been instituted using the interest on the cash component of the Sardar Patel Award received by the KAU in 2003.

The awards were received by Remya Vasudevan, Jess Vergis (B.VSc. & A.H.); Asha Eapen, R.S. Remya (B.Sc.- Agri); Shruti Thomas, Vikrant (B.Tech.- Dairy Engineering); P. R. Rani, Indu Lekshmi (B.Tech- Agri Engineering); R. Keerthi, Sbinamol (B.Sc.- Forestry) and R. Remya Nath and Aswathi Balakrishnan (B.Sc.- Cooperation and Banking).

Students may upload their resumes in doc or pdf formats in the new website for KAU's placement cell.

The web master will notify vacancies appropriate for all students. They may download application forms or apply for the vacancies available online.

The site provides instant access to all students in different colleges under the university.

Those present on the occasion included P.B. Pushpalatha, Registrar; Swarup John, Dean (Agriculture); M. Sivaswamy, Dean (Agriculture Engineering); P. K. Asokan, Director of Academic Studies, T.R. Gopalakrishnan, Director of Research, E.U. Rajan, Director of Students' Welfare, Avinash Reji Thomas, Jiju P. Alex and K. Gireendra Babu, governing council members; Associate Deans B. Mohan Kumar, A. Sukumaran, C.T. Abraham; and academic council members V.R. Ramachandran and Gleena Mary.

Paddy farmers still depending on seed companies

K.N. Murali Sankar,

Seed requirement in East Godavari district put at 1.10 lakh quintals



Activity begins: A farmer Godilanka preparing seed for the ensuing kharif season.

Even as the 'seed village' programme is being implemented in the district, a majority of paddy farmers are still depending on seed companies to get suitable varieties. Since selection of seed plays a key role in agriculture, farmers prefer to use popular varieties of the season. Only a few farmers are continuing the age old practice of collecting seed from their own fields.

In East Godavari district, paddy is being cultivated in 2.4 lakh hectares during the kharif season and the seed requirement is 1.10 lakh quintals. Of the total requirement, the department of Agriculture is making arrangements to supply 82,500 quintals, as the official estimates indicate that 27,500 quintals of seed is available with farmers.

Through the seed village programme, the officials have collected 15,500 quintals of seed. Though there is scope for another 10,000 quintals of seed under this programme, crop holiday being observed by the farmers in Konaseema region during the last kharif season had an affect on the seed quantity.

"We haven't received any complaints from the farmers who had sown seed from the seed village. The germination is above 80 per cent and the yield is good. That is why, the demand is increasing for this seed," C. Bhavani, Agriculture Officer (technical) has told *The Hindu* .

She said the extent of land being allocated for the seed village programme was being increased from 1,200 hectares to 1,750 hectares from this kharif season. "The seed output is 4,500 kg per quintal during the kharif and 5,000 kg per quintal during the rabi," Ms. Bhavani said.

"The officials are expected to propagate the availability of seed varieties under the seed village programme throughout the district. So that, those who need the seed can get it without any difficulty," said Kovvuri Trinadha Reddy, farmers' leader. Storing the seed is a major challenge for the seed farmers.

"The Union government is planning to encourage farmers to set up seed processing units and the idea is to ensure at least two centres in each mandal. Subsidy will be offered to the Rythu Mitra groups that come forward to set up the units, which will answer the problems pertaining to seed," said Ms. Bhavani.

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- *Only a few farmers continuing practice of collecting seed from their fields*
 - *Centre planning to encourage farmers to set up seed processing units*
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Margins slashed on mustard seed deals

Commodity markets regulator Forward Markets Commission (FMC) has reduced margins by 50 per cent on all contracts of soyabean and mustard seeds from Friday.

In a circular, the Commission said that special margins of 10 per cent (in cash) on the long side of all existing contracts of soyabean and rapeseed/mustard (R/M) seeds have been reduced to 5 per cent.

"The structure of special margin will come into effect from the beginning of trading day June 8, in all the running contracts and yet-to-be launched contracts," the circular added.

In view of the recent trends in the prices of soyabean and R/M seed contracts, the Commission had decided to revise the existing rate of special margin, Forward Markets Commission said.

Margin is a deposit that is required to be given by traders before entering into a pact to buy or sell the commodity at future date.

Substantial hike in allocation for Animal Husbandry

Special Correspondent

The State government has substantially increased the annual allocation for activities of the Animal Husbandry department.

In 2011-2012, the allocation was hiked to Rs.600 crore and this year, Rs. 814 crore.

This had been done to achieve a number of objectives including the increase in productivity of livestock.

In the years prior to the previous financial year, the Department was getting around Rs. 400 crore.

Stating this, K. Shanmugam, Principal Secretary (Finance), who inaugurated a seminar on advanced technologies in livestock production for socio-economic empowerment of rural farmers, said the government, which was conscious of the fact that 40 per cent of the State population was dependent on the primary sector, was giving top priority to the sector.

This was evident in Vision 2023 document.

With a view to improving infrastructure of the animal husbandry sector, a sum of Rs. 20 crore was set apart last year and this was repeated this year too. Similarly, more number of veterinary doctors were being appointed in rural areas.

Gagandeep Singh Bedi, Secretary of the Animal Husbandry, Dairying and Fisheries department, explained that as any impact on livestock would have a direct bearing on the rural population, the government had decided to provide perceptible hike in the allocation for animal husbandry.

He pointed out that Tamil Nadu now stood fourth in milk production through cooperative societies and fifth in meat production.

9 JUN, 2012, 02.16PM IST, PTI

Select edible oils remain weak on subdued demand

NEW DELHI: Select edible oils remained weak with prices falling further up to Rs 100 per quintal on the oils and oilseeds market today due to subdued demand against adequate stocks positions.

Neem oil in the non-edible section, also declined on reduced industrial offtake.

Traders said subdued demand against adequate supplies and reports of a weakening global trend mainly kept pressure on edible oil prices.

They said reduced offtake by stockists following sluggish demand from consuming industries kept pressure on neem oil prices.

In the national capital, mustard expeller (Dadri), sesame and cottonseed mill delivery (Haryana) oils traded lower by Rs 50 each to Rs 7,850, Rs 8,100 and Rs 6,350 per quintal, respectively.

Groundnut mill delivery oil (Gujarat) lost Rs 100 to Rs 11,450 per quintal.

Soyabean refined mill delivery (Indore) and soyabean degum (Kandla) oils fell by Rs 100 each to Rs 7,700 and Rs 7,250 and crude palm oil (ex-kandla) shed Rs 50 to Rs 7,350 per quintal, respectively.

Palmolein (rbd) and palmolein (Kandla) oils followed suit and declined by Rs 100 each to Rs 7,900 and Rs 7,550 per quintal, respectively.

In the non-edible section, neem oil lost Rs 50 to Rs 4,300-4,400 per quintal.

9 JUN, 2012, 01.54PM IST, PTI

Gur prices remain steady in thin trade

NEW DELHI: There was no change in the pattern of trading in the wholesale gur (Jaggery) market today as prices continued to be ruled at last levels in the absence of any worthwhile moving factor.

Muzaffarnagar and Muradnagar gur market, too, remained unchanged on little doing.

Marketmen said ample stocks position into the markets as compared to ongoing demand, mainly held prices unaltered.

The following are today's quotations per quintal: Gur chakku 3,200-3,300, pedi 3,250-3,350, dhayya 3,300-3,350 and shakkar 3,350-3,450.

Muzaffarnagar: Raskat 2,700-2,750, chakku 2,700-2,850 and khurpa N.T.

Muradnagar: Pedi 2,950-3,000 and dhayya 3,000-3,050.



FMC halves margins on soyabean, mustard seed contracts

Agencies Posted online: Fri Jun 08 2012, 14:53 hrs

New Delhi : Commodity markets regulator FMC has reduced margins by 50 per cent on all contracts of soyabean and mustard seeds from today.

In a circular, Forward Markets Commission (FMC) said that special margins of 10 per cent (in cash) on the long side of all existing contracts of soyabean and rapeseed/mustard (R/M) seeds have been reduced to 5 per cent.

"The structure of special margin will come into effect from the beginning of trading day June 8, 2012, in all the running contracts and yet to be launched contracts," the circular added.

In view of the recent trends in the prices of Soyabean and R/M seed contracts, the Commission has decided to revise the existing rate of special margin, FMC said.

Margin is a deposit that is required to be given by traders before entering into a pact to buy or sell the commodity at future date.

The soyabean contract for June was trading at Rs 3,429 per quintal at 1115 hours, against the previous closing of Rs 3,420 a quintal on the NCDEX.

The mustard seed contract for June was trading down 0.67 per cent at Rs 3,706 a quintal at 1130 hours, against previous close of Rs 3,731 a quintal.

The regulator in April had reduced open position limits - a restriction on the quantity of commodities that can be traded in the futures market - in soyabean, soya oil, mustard seed and chana to curb excessive price volatility.

Business Standard

Saturday, Jun 9, 2012

Farmers hope to repeat last year's success in paddy

Komal Amit Gera / Chandigarh June 9, 2012, 0:08 IST

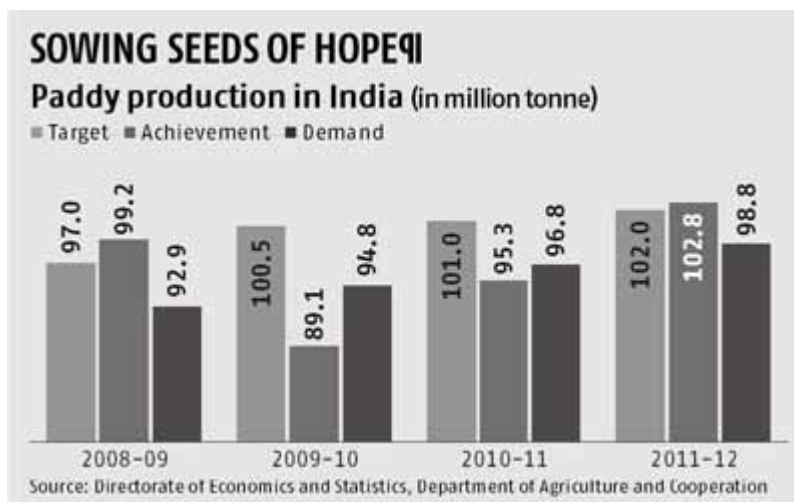
With monsoon reaching southern India, paddy growers in the region are hoping to harvest another good crop. Also, the recommendation by the Commission for Agricultural Costs and Prices (CACP) for a 16 per cent rise in minimum support price (MSP) for paddy has added to their joys.

CACP has recommended revising the MSP for paddy to Rs 1,250 per quintal for kharif 2012-13, up from the current Rs 1,080 per quintal now. Additional paddy sowing is likely in Punjab, as cotton growers plan to set aside land for this crop, to tide over the uncertainty in cotton prices.

However, the total area sown, say officials in the Union agriculture ministry, may remain stagnant at 44 million hectares across India.

The area under paddy has remained stagnant for some years. The crop this year is expected to surpass last year's 102.75 million tonnes (mt), the highest in four years (it was 96 mt in 2010-11).

The reasons for the higher projection are hopes of a good monsoon, higher MSP and focus on rise in yields in the eastern states.



Odisha, West Bengal, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Bihar, Assam and eastern Uttar Pradesh together make up 55 per cent of the sown paddy area in the country.

But these states produce an average of 1.7 tonnes per hectare compared to the national average of 2.4 tonnes per hectare. This yield can be easily, if gradually, doubled.

Under the 2007-12 Plan period, Rs 1,000 crore was earmarked for raising crop yields in these states, says D Mahapatra, director of the Rice Research Institute, Cuttack.

A Union agriculture ministry official said, "With the growing need for land for urbanisation and industrialisation, supply of fertile land has become inelastic. So, only improvement in agricultural practices can fetch better yield."

THE HINDU Business Line

Chilli, turmeric fall on subdued demand

PTI



New Delhi, June 9:

Red chilli and turmeric prices drifted by Rs 200 per quintal in the national capital on Saturday due to sluggish demand from retailers and stockists amid adequate stocks.

Increased arrivals from producing regions also put pressure on the prices.

Red chilli and turmeric prices declined by Rs 200 each to settle at Rs 5,600-11,000 and Rs 4,500-8,000 per quintal, respectively.

Marketmen said subdued demand from retailers and stockists amid adequate stocks mainly pulled down the chilli and turmeric prices at the wholesale kirana market here.

The following are today's quotations:

Ajwain 10,000-15,500, black pepper (per kg) 480-550, betelnut (kg) 160-195, cardamom brown-Jhundiwali (kg) 850-950, and cardamom brown-Kanchicut (kg) 950-1,100.

Cardamom small (kg): Chitridar 800-900, cardamom (colour robin) 800-830, cardamom bold 810-880, cardamom extra (bold) 1,050-1,080 and cloves (kg) 700-800.

Pistachio declines on subdued demand

PTI



New Delhi, June 9:

Pistachio prices fell up to Rs 10 per kg in the national capital on Saturday due to subdued demand from retailers and stockists.

Adequate stocks position following fresh arrivals from overseas markets also put pressure on pistachio prices.

Pistachio hairati and peshawari fell up to Rs 10 to conclude at Rs 950-1,000 and Rs 1,175-1,250 per kg, respectively.

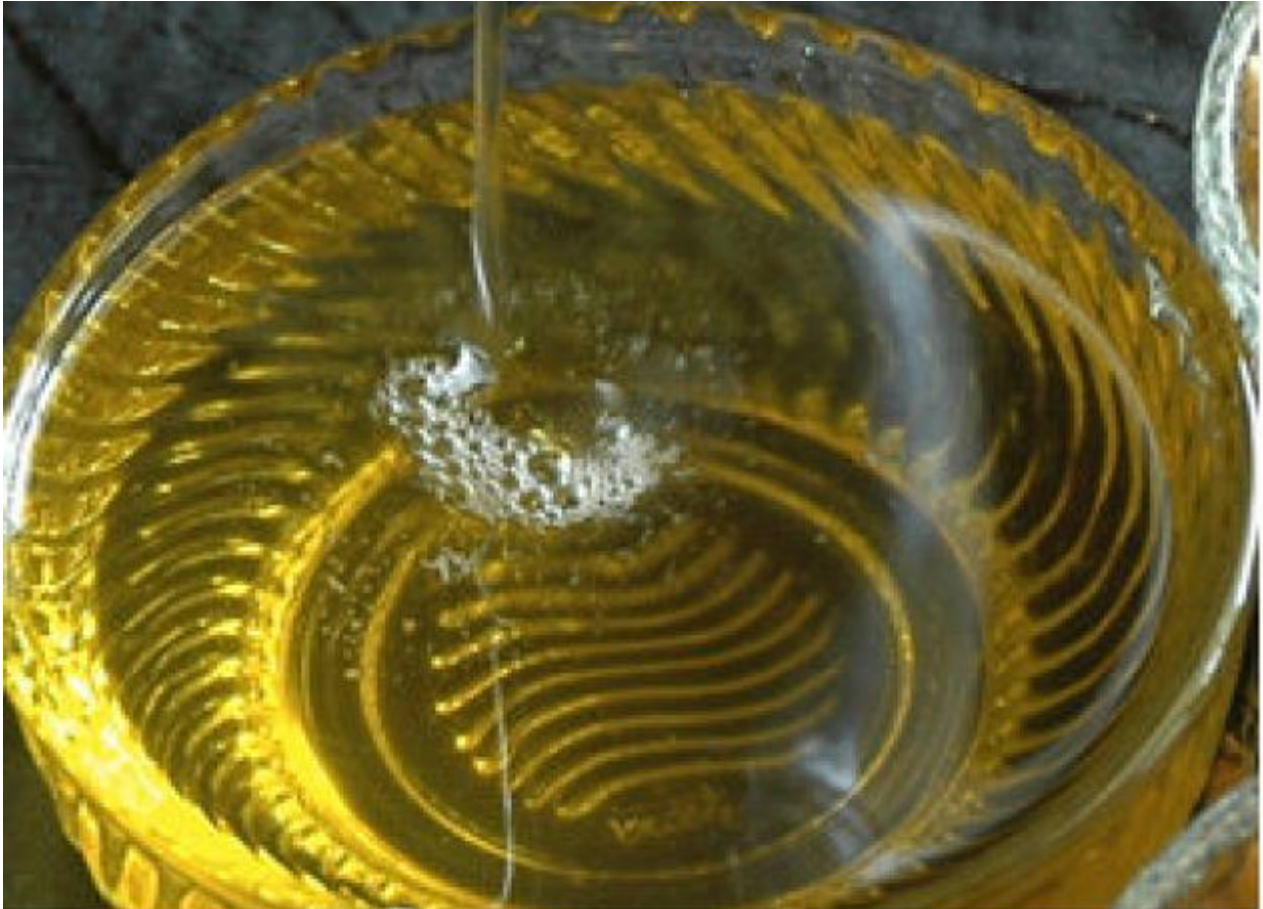
Traders said subdued demand from retailers and stockists mainly weighed on the pistachio prices.

The following are today's quotations (per 40 kg): Almond (California) Rs 12,200 Almond (Gurbandi-new) Rs 6,400-7,100; Almond (Girdhi) Rs 2,900-3,100; Abjosh Afghani Rs 6,000-20,000.

Almond Kernel (California) Rs 430-440 per kg, Almond Kernel (Gurbandi-new) Rs 320-400 per kg.

Edible oils slip further on poor demand

PTI



New Delhi, June 9:

Select edible oils remained weak with prices falling further up to Rs 100 a quintal on the oils and oilseeds market on Saturday due to subdued demand against adequate stocks positions.

Neem oil in the non-edible section also declined on reduced industrial offtake.

Traders said subdued demand against adequate supplies and reports of a weakening global trend mainly kept pressure on edible oil prices.

In the national capital, mustard expeller (Dadri), sesame and cottonseed mill delivery (Haryana) oils traded lower by Rs 50 each to Rs 7,850, Rs 8,100 and Rs 6,350 a quintal, respectively.

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Palmolein (rbd) and palmolein (Kandla) oils followed suit and declined by Rs 100 each to Rs 7,900 and Rs 7,550 a quintal, respectively.

In the non-edible section, neem oil lost Rs 50 to Rs 4,300-4,400 a quintal.

Wheat, rice basmati prices fall on adequate supply



The Hindu

New Delhi, June 9:

Weak conditions developed at the wholesale grains market today as select pulses led by rice basmati and wheat declined on adequate supplies against reduced offtake by stockists and retailers.

Expectations of higher output this year also put pressure on wheat and rice basmati prices.

Marketmen said adequate stocks position against weak demand from stockists and retailers mainly led to fall in wheat and rice basmati prices.

In the national capital, wheat dara (for mills) declined by Rs 10 to Rs 1,210-1,215 per quintal. Atta chakki delivery followed suit and traded lower by the same margin to Rs 1,215-1,220 per 90 kg.

In the rice section, rice basmati common and Pusa-1121 eased to Rs 5,800-5,900 and Rs 4,900-5,800 against the previous close of Rs 6,100-6,200 and Rs 5,200-6,100 per quintal.

Following are today's quotations per quintal:

Wheat MP (desi) 1,605-1,825, Wheat dara (for mills) 1,210-1,215, Chakki atta (delivery) 1,215-1,220, Atta Rajdhani (10 kg) 190, Shakti bhog (10 kg) 190, Roller flour mill 620-640 (50 kg), Maida 650-680 (50 kg) and Sooji 750-780 (50kg).

Basmati rice (Lal Quila) 9,500, Shri Lal Mahal 9,500, Super Basmati Rice, 9,000, Basmati common new 5,800-5,900, Rice Pusa-(1121) new 4,900-5,800, Permal raw 2,100-2150, Permal wand 2,300-2,350, Sela 2,500-2,600 and Rice IR-8 1,600-1,650, Bajra 1,000-1,005, Jowar yellow 1,200-1,250, white 2,000-2,150, Maize 1,050-1,060, Barley 1,290-1,300, and Rajasthan 1,080-1,090.

Thin trading in sugar market



New Delhi, June 9:

Wholesale sugar prices ended quiet in the national capital today following scattered small buying against sufficient stocks position.

Marketmen said adequate stocks position against demand mainly kept the prices unmoved.

Following are today's quotations per quintal:

Sugar ready: M-30 3,060-3,260, S-30 3,040-3,240.

Mill delivery: M-30 2,925-3,145; S-30 2,900-3,125.

Sugar mill gate prices (excluding duty): Mawana 3,020, Kinnoni 3,150, Asmoli 3,070, Doral 3,000, Budhana 2,985, Thanabhavan 2,980, Ramala 2,900, Bulandshar 2,925, Morna 2,910, Sakoti 2,900, Chandpur 2,910, Dhanora 2,960, Khatuli 2,975 and Baghpat 2,920.

Mixed trend in foodgrains market



A storekeeper checks foodgrains at a market in Hyderabad. An RBI survey in 1Q FY12 suggests that households expect WPI inflation to rise to 12.7 per cent by the end of FY12.

Chennai, June 9:

A mixed trend prevailed at the wholesale foodgrains market during the week ended on Saturday.

While the prices of tur dal, moong dal and sugar went up, that of gram dal, maida and sooji declined, but all other commodities traded at their previous week's close.

Tur dal and moong dal closed the week at Rs 6,800 and Rs 6,400 per quintal, posting a gain of Rs 200 and Rs 100, respectively.

Sugar edged up by Rs 50 per quintal on Monday and held at the same rate of Rs 3,000.

Gram dal, which closed the previous week at Rs,5,500, was the loser as it settled at Rs 5,300 after trading at various levels during the week.

Both maida and sooji (90 kg) shed Rs 50 to Rs 1,700 and Rs 1,900 from their previous rates of Rs 1,750 and Rs 1,950, respectively.

Urad dal and wheat were taken at their previous week rates Rs 5,200 and Rs 1,950.

TN records highest cotton yield in last 3 yrs: Study

K. V. Kurmanath



Hyderabad, June 9:

Though the average area under cotton was the highest in Maharashtra, Gujarat and Andhra Pradesh, there is no proportionate increase in productivity in the last three years.

A socio-economic study on Bt cotton commissioned by Bharat Krishak Samaj found that Tamil Nadu had seen the highest yield at 944 kg a hectare with a cotton area of 1.19 lakh ha.

Gujarat and Andhra Pradesh followed with yields of 659.33 kg/ha and 564.33 kg/ha, which have a cotton area of over 20 lakh ha.

Maharashtra, which tops in cotton acreage with 38 lakh ha, registered the lowest yield of 336 kg/ha.

The average yields showed decline mainly because of expansion of crop in marginal lands (shallow soils in rain-fed areas), erratic weather conditions and increased attacks by sucking pests, the study said.

The study tracked the performance of 1,050 farmers and 300 agricultural labourers in the cotton-growing states of Punjab, Haryana, Rajasthan, Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu and Gujarat.

Rough seas halt Goa fishing trawler operations ahead of ban

Panaji, June 9:

Fishing trawlers in Goa have already ceased operations owing to the rough seas, even though a week is still left before the official ban actually comes into force in the state.

Goa Fishing Boat Owners Association President, Simon Pereira, said that bulk of the fishing boats were anchored at shore as the sea was too rough already.

The fishing ban would be implemented across the state shoreline from June 15 to July 31.

The state government has agreed to maintain the 45-day long ban, even as environmentalists and traditional fishermen feel the ban should be extended.

Chief Minister Manohar Parrikar said that the ban period will remain same as that of last year.

The trawlers and canoes with high powered motor are banned from going into the waters during monsoons, which also happens to be the fish breeding season. Only small canoes with minor motor or manual rowing are allowed to fish during the ban period.

The Goa Government has also decided to tackle the issue of fishing trawlers from neighbouring Karnataka and Maharashtra encroaching into the Goan waters during the ban.

As per official statistics, 28,000 people in Goa are dependent on fishing for livelihood. And some 7,000 from other states find employment on trawlers here.

Bay of Bengal under scanner for monsoon cues

Vinson Kurian

Thiruvananthapuram, June 9:

The clouding over the Bay of Bengal as persisted overnight thanks to a cyclonic circulation in the north Andaman Sea and adjoining east-central Bay of Bengal.

That's about the only saving grace on the monsoon front, as the seasonal rain system remained frustratingly locked-in across peninsular India for a third morning on Saturday after a delayed onset.

Low-pressure area

The Bay circulation may intensify as a low-pressure area and move north-northeast towards Myanmar over the next few days but take the rains along with it, too.

Normally, it takes these low-pressure areas to travel west-northwest and cross the southeast coast of the country to bring rains to east and east-central India.

That can happen only when the monsoon system is 'fully developed' over the mainland to comply with a horde of essential parameters; not with a truncated system obtaining concurrently.

IMD forecast

India Meteorological Department (IMD) does not expect rains to revive over the peninsula till June 16; but global models are less pessimistic.

They suggest that the build-up for the 'next pulse' might start building after the next two to three days to constitute a full-fledged revival of monsoon a couple of days after.

In this context, the Bay of Bengal circulation would be watched with keen interest for implications for the monsoon.