

Published: May 16, 2012 21:19 IST | Updated: May 16, 2012 21:19 IST

## Management of soil pathogens in nursery

Soil is a complex habitat where a large number of different micro organisms including fungal pathogens interacting with plants. These soil pathogens always depend on host to survive and reproduce.

They prefer to live within the soil and causing diseases in plants particularly tree seedlings.

### Fungal pathogens

Common soil borne fungal pathogens and the diseases caused by them in tree seedlings are as follows.

Fusarium is a common soil fungal pathogen mainly cause root rots and wilt diseases in several tree seedlings in nursery. It reproduces very rapidly in the soil with adequate moisture.

Phytophthora causes root rot, crown rot and leaf blight in oak, poplar and eucalyptus seedlings. It is mostly found in contaminated soils and easily spreads through water.

Pythium is a fungal pathogen infects early stage of seedlings and causes damping off disease. Excessive moisture favours this pathogen to infect the seedlings.

Rhizoctonia causes leaf blight in teak and damping off in most of the native tree species.

Verticillium fungi causes wilt disease at nursery stage in poplar, oak and shisham. Water stagnant in nurseries is one of the predisposing factors for the verticillium wilt disease.

### Soil solarization

Soil solarization is the possible way to control or prevent these soil pathogens through raising of soil temperature.

Clean thin and transparent polythene sheet can be spread over the nursery soil. Solar energy will be trapped in this method and heats the soil This removes all the soil pathogens.

Soil fumigation with 4 per cent Formalin is also effective. The seed beds or nursery soils can be covered with thick polythene sheet and thereafter the Formalin solution sprayed on soil for fumigation. Overnight fumigation will give effective management of soil pathogens in nursery.

### **Preventive measures**

— Right location with good drainage and appropriate sun light must be chosen before establishment of nursery.

— Injuries in seedlings should be avoided.

**A.Karthikeyan & N. Krishnakumar**, *Institute of Forest Genetics and Tree Breeding, Coimbatore*

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### **A groundnut variety that does not need much water**

M.J. Prabu

*The pods are stronger and grow at lesser depth under the soil*



Better growth:Dhirajlal Thummar in his groundnut field.— photo: special arrangement

It is natural for farmers to invariably go in either for a change in their cropping pattern, or in some cases, even stop farming when their crops fail. But it is only a few determined ones who try to find the root cause of the problem and overcome it.

Mr. Dhirajlal Virjibhai Thummar, a groundnut farmer from Gujarat, is credited with developing a new groundnut variety named “Dhiraj 101,” which is resistant to stem rot.

### **Maturity period**

The crop matures in 95-105 days and bears 35-40 pods per plant. About 90-100 kg of seeds are required for sowing in an hectare.

“Groundnut cultivation is a major source of income for many farmers like me in this region. With five wells and a borewell, our fields are well irrigated.

“I also grow cotton (BT varieties), sorghum, wheat and vegetables. Sorghum is grown primarily for the cattle, and vegetables for our own consumption,” says the farmer.

In the year 2004 he sowed GG-20 groundnut variety and the whole crop got infested resulting in wilting and almost complete failure of the crop. Any other farmer would have become depressed but not Mr. Dhirajlal.

He identified a few plants, which did not get affected by this disease. Believing that these may contain some inherent property that makes them stem rot-resistant, he harvested and kept the seeds of these plants separately.

The farmer sowed the seeds separately in the next season and continued the screening and selection for three consecutive years. Finally he obtained plants, that were free from stem rot and wilt.

At 3,200-3,500 kg per hectare, the yield is higher than locally cultivated varieties in the region.

### **Oil content**

The oil content is also higher — 42-45 per cent — according to him. This variety performs well when the monsoon is average as well as in less irrigated conditions.

To promote good crop growth, Mr. Dhirajlal used only herbal pesticide such as neem, kidamari (Dutchman's Pipe), tulsi (Holy Basil) and akda (swallow-wort) for controlling insect pests and diseases.

He also distributed seeds to farmers in Amreli, Rajkot and Bhavnagar districts of Saurashtra regions. He received encouraging feedback about the variety's ability to grow well, remain free from wilt and rust diseases, and also yield well.

Usually before harvest farmers irrigate the fields and then pull out the plants. During pulling, the pods get broken from the roots and remain under the ground.

The problem is not encountered with this variety as it bears pods that are stronger and grow at lesser depth under the soil.

## **Soil conservation**

“Soil conservation and crops that require less water are urgent needs for farmers to keep agriculture sustainable in changing climatic conditions,” says Mr. Dhirajlal.

Professor Anil Gupta, vice-chairperson, National Innovation Foundation says, “Many technical innovations have been centred on groundnut crop in our country. There is an urgent need to invent and popularise crop varieties, which require less water and have more productivity and at the same time are affordable to farmers.”

## **Helping hand**

NIF facilitated the field trial of 'Dhiraj101' at the Oil Seed Research Station, Junagarh.

The report mentions that it is resistant to stem rot as well and its production is 1.5 times more than a local variety 'GG-20'.

It performs well even in when monsoon is average and requires less irrigation. This variety matures eight to ten days earlier and also has more average oil content.

For more information readers can contact Mr. Dhirajlal Virjibhai Thummar, Via Mota Akadiya, PO Pipal lag, Taluka Pipal lag, Amreli 365455, Gujarat, mobile: 02792-286093, 9825513469.

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## **Farm query Six types of operations**

Can you kindly give details about a farmer in Maharashtra who has developed a farming device that has six types of operational facilities?

S. Manjunath

*Mumbai*

Mr. Shamrao Parhate, Madhya Pradesh developed a agriculture machine that can do several operations. Named 'Shivraj,' the lightweight device priced at Rs. 12,000, inclusive of attachments performs nearly six types of agricultural work. For details contact Mr. Parhate, Pandhurna, Chinndwara, Madhya Pradesh, phone: 07164-220308, Fax: 07164-220637, mobile: 09424648655.

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## Vegetable traders deplore encroachment in market

Staff Reporter

*Mayor Rajan Chellappa to look into the issue*



Needs special attention:A view of Central Vegetable Market in Madurai.File Photo

: Traders of Central Vegetable Market are up in arms against the indifferent attitude of the Corporation officials in removing encroachment at the market in Mattuthavani.

Around 50 vociferous traders, majority of them women, on Wednesday barged into Mayor V.V. Rajan Chellappa's chamber and complained to him the lackadaisical attitude of the officers in removing the encroachment.

“We have paid Rs. 50,000 deposit to the Corporation for the shops allotted to us at the new Central Vegetable Market. We pay Rs. 700 rent a month to the Corporation. But, the rampant encroachment by outsiders on the platform and road has been eating into our revenue rendering us in loss,” shouted a woman trader Petchi, standing outside the Mayor's chamber.

President of one of the traders' association in the market M. Thavamani, said that many of the traders, who had their shops for more than 35 years, were allocated shops in the rear rows in the market. "The shops in the prime spots in the market were usurped by influential politicians," he said.

"Despite paying the deposit and monthly rental for our shops in the rear side, many of us are forced to occupy the shops of the politicians for a daily rental of around Rs. 100. Even then we are not able to sell our produce as hundreds of outsiders put up shops on the roadside and platforms denying access to the customers to reach our shops," Mr. Thavamani said.

He added that the association has made several representations to the authorities concerned, from the Corporation Commissioner to the Collector and also to the Chief Minister's office. Despite a High Court ruling on eviction of encroachment, the Corporation officials were not complying with it, he said.

The Mayor has promised to look into the issue at the earliest, Mr. Thavamani said.

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## **29 refugees get sewing machines**

Special Correspondent

Twenty-nine women at the Sri Lankan refugee camp at Thuraimangalam in the district were provided sewing machines for taking up self-employment, here on Wednesday.

Distributing the machines, Collector Darez Ahmed said the State was implementing various schemes for the benefit of Sri Lankan refugees. The 70 families at the camp were being given monthly assistance. A separate ration shop has been opened on the campus and arrangements have been made to provide education to the children of the refugees.

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## **Unfavourable weather hits global tea production, says UPASI**

There was an acute shortage in the tea supply at the Global level during the first quarter of 2012, according to Peter Mathias, Chairman, United Planters Association of Southern India (UPASI) Tea Committee.

In a statement issued at Coonoor on Wednesday, he said that all the major producing destinations reported decline in crop intake due to the non-conducive weather pattern.

Information made available to the UPASI revealed that during the period, the world tea crop was estimated to be lower by 30.0 Million kilograms.

While Kenya reported a decline of 12.7 M.Kgs., it was followed by North India 8.1 M.Kgs., Sri Lanka 5.3 M.Kgs., South India 4.0 M.Kgs. and Bangladesh 0.3 M.Kgs.

Stating that UPASI estimates that the South Indian tea crop during April 2012 would be lower by 5.4 Million Kgs, he said that South India witnessed one of longest dry spells which has led to a crop loss of such magnitude.

The fall in crop to such an extent will make it difficult to recoup the loss in the remaining months.

Hence for the fourth year in succession there will be decline in the crop from South India.

The price realization across auction centres in the world reported gains during the first quarter in response to the tight world supply situation. The quantity offered at Mombasa auction and to a lesser extent at Colombo auction suggests a very tight supply situation.

At Mombasa Auction, the quantity offered for the just concluded 19th sale was 47 % lower than the quantity offered at the corresponding sale during 2011. It was 4.7 M.Kgs now compared to 8.8 M.Kgs during 2011.

The quantity offered for the ensuing sales are also in the region 5 to 5.5 M.Kgs much below the average of 8 M.Kgs levels.

The average price realization in South India (January /March 2012) was Rs.76.26 per Kg.

The buoyant prices are on account of the increased world and domestic demand.

The exports of tea look very encouraging this year, unlike the last year where the world demand was tweaked by internal disturbance in WANA [West Asia and North Africa] region and the payment problem with Iran. Pakistan market has also been very encouraging for South India during the last few years.

During 2011, South Indian exports to Pakistan touched a record high of 23 M.Kgs. The recent Pakistan delegation visit to South India has further reinforced this trade potential and it is anticipated that in a few years tea exports could touch 50 M.Kgs.

During their visit the Pakistan delegation were exposed to a wide range of quality tea from South India. Since the Pakistan tea market is huge and quality conscious the way forward for South India tea industry will be to offer straight line teas.

This could be done by sending garden samples directly to Pakistan Tea Association so that they could organize tasting sessions on regular basis for the benefit of their members.

Pakistan buyers, in-turn could buy these teas from auction by appointing agents to operate at the auctions.

At the policy level, the opening of Wagha-Attari border would be ideal route for tea export to Pakistan which would save considerable time, as the land route could transport teas in a week's time while shipments through sea could easily take more than two weeks.

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## **Sowing begins in Chamarajanagar**

Paneesha V.

*It's been completed on 20 p.c of targeted area*

Farmers in Chamarajanagar have started sowing, after pre-monsoon showers in various parts of the district.

Sowing has been completed on 31,488 hectares (20 per cent) of the 1.58 lakh ha targeted for agriculture this year.

Rain-fed crops such as jowar, ragi, maize, sunflower and groundnut are usually sown.

Farmers in Chamarajanagar and Gundlupet have opted to grow rain-fed jowar, as the crop would also ease the problem of fodder for cattle. But the cultivation of jowar has got less importance from farmers in Kollegal and Yelandur taluks, as they get Kabini waters for irrigation.

### **Seeds**

According to the Agriculture Department's scientific seed changing ratio, the district requires 16,821 quintals of seeds for sowing. The department has distributed 67 quintal green gram seeds, 59 quintal hybrid jowar seeds, 125 quintal sunflower seeds and 75 quintal groundnut oil seeds at subsidised rates.



There is said to be no shortage of fertilizer or seeds.

The department has urged farmers to contact the nearest raitha samparka kendras to get micronutrients at 50 per cent subsidy under the Bhoo Chetana scheme.

### **Rainfall**

The cloudy weather and intermittent drizzle has brought smiles on the faces of farmers, as the rain will help ease the drinking water scarcity as well as the problem of fodder. The district received 79.18 mm of rain in April, as against the normal of 58 mm.

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- *Many farmers have opted to grow jowar, as it will help ease fodder shortage*
  - *'There is no shortage of fertilizer or seeds'*
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### **Training in inland fisheries**

The Department of Fisheries has invited applications for two-month training in inland fisheries at its centre near Krishnaraja Sagar in Srirangapatna taluk. Those aged between 18 and 40 are eligible. Selected candidates will get Rs. 1,000 a month as stipend. Contact the Assistant Director of Fisheries, KRS, for details. May 26 is the last date to apply, according to a release.

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### **They learnt how to add value to ragi products**

Staff Correspondent

Twenty-four women entrepreneurs drawn from various self-help groups (SHGs) in Mysore district took part in a demonstration of technologies on value-added products of ragi at the Central Food Technological Research Institute (CFTRI) here as part of the National Technology Day celebrations.

## **Nationwide programme**

According to a press release, G. Venkateswara Rao, acting Director, CFTRI, who inaugurated the programme, said the demonstration was part of 'CSIR 800', a nationwide programme of the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR), New Delhi, to reach out technologies developed by its 38 national laboratories to the needy. He urged the entrepreneurs to make best use of the opportunity.

## **Banking facilities**

N. Aravamudan, assistant general manager, National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development, Mysore, spoke on the banking facilities available for neo-entrepreneurs.

The programme focused on value-addition to ragi, a staple food in the region with a rich source of nutrients. Processes developed by the CFTRI for preparing ragi-based products such as semolina, vermicelli, 'muruku' mix, papad, shelf-stable roti or chapati, malted ragi flour, malted weaning food, flour suitable for ragi 'mudde' and decortication of ragi were demonstrated to the participants, the release added.

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## **Fix 'suitable' price for sugarcane, State urged**

Staff Correspondent

The frequent "power struggle" in Karnataka has affected administration and drought relief measures, the Federation of State Farmers' Associations and the Karnataka State Sugarcane Growers' Association have said.

In a statement here, federation president Kurubur Shanthakumar said the government had not fixed a "suitable" price for sugarcane although Punjab and Haryana had done that at Rs. 3,000 a tonne and Rs. 2,850 a tonne respectively.

## **Dues from factories**

Sugar factories here were paying between Rs. 1,800 and Rs. 2,000 for a tonne of sugarcane; factories owed growers Rs. 1,500 crore in dues against sugarcane supplied in the last four months, he said.

## **Turmeric growers**

Mr. Shanthakumar said the Rs. 4 crore released towards opening purchase centres for turmeric was “insufficient”. “At least Rs. 100 crore should be released for purchasing turmeric from growers of Mysore, Chamarajanagar and Hassan districts, as there are over 5,000 whose produce must be bought.”

He urged the Central team to visit all 123 drought-affected taluks to understand the plight of farmers.

The Karnataka Rajya Raitha Sangha and Hasiru Sene staged a protest outside the office of the Deputy Commissioner on Tuesday, against the “misgovernance” of the BJP.

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### **Subsidised groundnut seed sanctioned for Chittoor**

Special Correspondent

Chittoor, one of the largest groundnut growing districts in the State would be getting as much as 1.1 lakh quintals of groundnut seed for the ensuing kharif season for distribution to the farmers at subsidised rates. This will be against 93,754 quintals made available to the district last year.

Disclosing this to media persons after a review meeting with the officials of the Agriculture and other allied departments in Chittoor on Wednesday, Collector Solomon Arokiyaraj has said that under the scheme, a 30 kg bag of 'K-6' variety groundnut seed after a subsidy of Rs.585 would be Rs.1,185 while the 'Narayani' variety would be Rs.1,155. He said arrangements were on to ensure that the seed stocks reached all the concerned government godowns before May 25. The exact date when the distribution would start would be announced later, he said in a note.

Among those who participated in the review meeting were the Managing Director of the AP Seeds Christina Chandha, Joint Collector Vinay Chand, Sub-Collector, Madanapalle, Haricharan and Joint Director (Agriculture) J. Ravikumar.

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### **Global warming enhances cumulonimbus formation**

B. Madhu Gopal

*These are the clouds that are cause lightning*

Global warming has enhanced the frequency of cumulonimbus (Cb) activity during the pre-monsoon season this year. The sun is close to the earth during April – May in India, and this results in atmospheric instability.

This is an important condition for formation of Cb clouds, according to an emeritus scientist of the Meteorology and Oceanography Department of Andhra University OSRU Bhanu Kumar. “Gale winds, rain, lightning and hailstorms occur as a result of these clouds which form in the proximity of hills and sea, where moisture is more.

Tornadoes which are a by-product of Cb clouds, occur in places where there are water sprouts. While the vertical velocity of ordinary clouds is cm/sec, it's in m/sec for Cb clouds,” he told *The Hindu* on Wednesday.

“When the thickness of Cb clouds is more than 3 km, the conditions would be favourable for lightning.

The greater the thickness of the clouds, the more would be the lightning.

The lightning would be within the clouds in the first instance and later the positives would be attracted by the earth and the trees on the earth.”

“This year, the weather and cloud pattern are normal. High humidity makes one feel as though it's very hot.

### **'No heat wave yet'**

But in reality, there are no heat wave-like conditions so far this summer.

The temperatures may shoot up in the next few weeks before the onset of the monsoon by the last week of May or the first week of June,” he says “Cb clouds are like balloons that drift due to wind activity. These clouds have strong up drifts and down drafts due to which it is not safe for aircraft to move close to them.

India receives 65 to 70 per cent of rainfall due to the south west monsoon and about 25 per cent as a result of North East monsoon (October-December) and the remaining due to pre-monsoon activity”, says Prof. Bhanu Kumar.

Meanwhile, the trough which has formed in the Bay of Bengal and was strong till Tuesday weakened and moved off the coast on Wednesday, according to a spokesman of the Cyclone Warning Centre here.

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- *The temperatures may shoot up in the next few weeks before the onset of monsoon*
  - *It is not safe for an aircraft to move close to cumulonimbus clouds*
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### **Wheat buying in Punjab at record high**

Wheat procurement in Punjab has touched an all-time high of 124.65 lakh tonnes on the back of high arrival.

Out of the total procurement, government agencies procured almost 99 per cent of arrival in grain markets, a spokesman said here. The Food Corporation of India has procured 18.72 lakh tonnes.

Private traders lifted just 2,141 tonnes in the ongoing rabi marketing season, he said. The target was set at 115 lakh tonnes.

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### **Canadian honour for Haryana agricultural scientist**

Special Correspondent

Agricultural scientist Moti Lal Madan, who is also the chairman of the livestock sub-group of the Haryana Government's Farmers' Commission, is being honoured with an honorary degree of Doctor of Sciences by the University of Guelph, Ontario, Canada, "in recognition of significant contributions in veterinary science, agriculture and production".

An official spokesman said here on Wednesday that the degree will be conferred next month at the university's convocation. He has been selected by Ontario Veterinary College, which is completing 150 years.

Prof. Madan, a physiologist and reproductive biotechnologist, has served as Vice-Chancellor of the University of Veterinary and Animal Sciences, Mathura, and Agricultural University, Akola. As former Joint Director (Research) at NDRI, Karnal, he had led the Rajiv Gandhi Embryo Biotechnology Mission Project for livestock development.

He also served as Chairman of the National Animal Biotechnology task force of the Union Government. He is considered pioneer of embryo transfer technology (ETT) and animal cloning among large ruminants and is credited with having produced the world's first test-tube buffalo calf, "Pratham".

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## Potato cultivation in Hassan and the Bihar connection

Staff Correspondent

*Many labourers at cold storage units are from that State*



Away from home: Labourers from Bihar at work in a cold storage unit in Hassan.— Photo: Prakash Hassan

Potato cultivation in Hassan district has a close association with Punjab and Bihar. While farmers from Punjab bring seed potato, labourers from Bihar work in cold storage units where they are kept.

The Hassan district administration began sale of seed potato at the Agricultural Produce Marketing Committee yard on May 10. Since then, nearly 100 youth from Bihar are seen loading bags of potato from various cold storage units into lorries that are taken to the APMC yard.

The temperature in cold storage units is normally between 4 degrees Celsius and 6 degrees Celsius. Sometimes, it is even maintained at 2 degrees Celsius. These labourers are seen tuning into FM radio channels on their cellphones to listen to popular Hindi songs while they work.

“We don't get local people to work in the cold storage units,” said S.N. Pratap of Perfect Cold Storage. Most of these workers are from Bihar and West Bengal. The trend of migrant labourers working in cold storage units began in 2001, and in the last couple of years there have been people from Jammu and Kashmir and Nepal too, he said.

“In north India, people are used to low temperatures and they don't find it difficult to work in cold storage units. Local labourers can't stand the temperature even for 10 minutes,” Mr. Pratap said.

### Hiring

Traders, who hire cold storage units to store their produce, hire these labourers through middlemen. Ranjit Kumar, who has brought 35 workers from Bihar this year, said he had been bringing labourers for the last six years. “Normally, they come here around February-end and return in early June. During this time, each one of them earns about Rs. 20,000,” he said. The workers are paid Rs. 2.35 a bag of seed potato they fill. A labourer loads around 200 bags a day.

Asked whether these labourers face any health hazards while working in low temperatures, he said: “So far nothing has come to our notice. If there are any, our trader will look into it.”

Most of these workers are farmers. They prefer working in Karnataka to staying in Bihar during summer. Mantu, a labourer, said: “I don't get good wages there. That's why I work here for three or four months, earn some money and go home to do farming.”

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**hindustantimes**

■ Thu, 17 May 2012

weather

Chennai - INDIA

#### Today's Weather



Sunny

Thursday, May 17

Max Min

40.9° | 27.9°

#### Tomorrow's Forecast



Cloudy

Friday, May 18






Max Min

39° | 29°

**Rain:** 00 mm in 24hrs      **Sunrise:** 6:35  
**Humidity:** 63%              **Sunset:** 18:03  
**Wind:** Normal                **Barometer:** 1005



**Extended Forecast for a week**

Saturday May 19	Sunday May 20	Monday May 21	Tuesday May 22	Wednesday May 23
				
37°   29°	38°   29°	38°   29°	38°   28°	36°   26°
Cloudy	Partly Cloudy	Partly Cloudy	Sunny	Partly Cloudy

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# THE ECONOMIC TIMES

16 MAY, 2012, 04.19PM IST, REUTERS

## Chana down in choppy session

MUMBAI: Indian chana futures fell in a choppy session on Wednesday as selling by traders ahead of the expiry of the near month contract outweighed declining arrivals in spot markets and an estimated fall in output.

At 3:12 p.m, the chana June contract on the National Commodity and Derivatives Exchange ( NCDEX ) was trading down 0.30 percent at 4,299 rupees per 100 kg.

The near-month contract is schedule to expire on Friday.

"We expect prices to move up as fundamental factors are supporting bullish trend in the contract," said Badruddin Khan, associate vice president of research at Angel Commodities Broking.



Chana, or chickpea, production in the current crop year ending in June is estimated at 7.4 million tonnes, lower than 8.22 million tonnes in the previous year, the farm ministry data showed.

The recent changes made by the exchange in the delivery structure was also weighing on the sentiment, traders said.

As per the new guidelines, buyers and sellers have to inform the exchange well in advance about the delivery, a move aimed at reducing speculative trade.

In the Delhi spot market, chana rose 29 rupees to 4,300 rupees per 100 kg.

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# Business Standard

Thursday, May 17, 2012

## Groundnut oil prices on downward trend

Vimukt Dave / Mumbai/ Rajkot May 17, 2012, 0:04 IST

Groundnut oil prices have started declining after a higher production estimate for summer groundnut crop. Also, low demand for the edible oil has also added to the weakness in the groundnut oil prices. Millers and traders see prices to remain weak during this month.

In spot market at Rajkot, groundnut oil prices hovered in the range of Rs 2030-2035 per 15 kg new tin on Monday, down by Rs 80 per tin over the past one week.

Groundnut oil prices had touched a historic high of Rs 2100-2110 per tin in end of April this year. The demand for groundnut oil remained almost nil even as prices have started declining.

"Currently, the demand for groundnut oil is almost nil as prices were too high till recently. We are hopeful to get better supply for crushing as summer groundnut crop arrivals are about to start. Moreover, this year we are expecting 50 per cent higher summer groundnut crop," said Ravajibhai Mandanaka, president of Gondal Oil Mills Association.

Mandanaka estimated summer groundnut production in Gujarat at about 450,000 tonnes.

Even as arrivals of summer groundnut crop has started in some places, the prices of the oilseed has also started coming down. During May, groundnut prices have declined by Rs 60-70 per 20 kg to Rs 900-1050 per 20 kg.

"Due to high prices of groundnut oil, most of the oil consumers have diverted to other edible oils like cotton oil, soya oil and sunflower oil. Only higher income class is buying groundnut oil," informed a Rajkot-based edible oil trader. According to industry players, lower demand for peanuts from traders and exporters has increased the availability of groundnut for crushing. "Groundnut oil price is coming down as availability of groundnut has increased. Moreover, new summer crop will start arriving in the market after 10 to 15 days. It would further put downward pressure on the prices," said Suresh Kaneriya, managing director of Kaneriya Oil Mill.

"Over the past months, the consumption of groundnut oil has fallen by 30-40 per cent as compared to last year," he said adding that groundnut oil prices may decline to Rs 1800-1900 per tin in a month's time.

The Indian Oilseed and Produce Export Promotion Council (IOPEPC) has estimated summer groundnut production in Gujarat at around 459,000 tonnes, about 56 per cent higher than 294,000 tonnes last year.

### Potato extends gains on spot demand

The rise in potato prices at futures trade was attributed to the rising spot demand

Press Trust of India / New Delhi May 16, 2012, 15:24 IST



Potato prices rose by Rs 6.10 to Rs 1,110.40 per quintal in futures trade today as traders enlarged their positions on pick-up in spot market demand.

Sentiment improved further on restricted arrivals from producing regions.

At the MCX, the June contract rose by Rs 6.10, or 0.55%, to Rs 1,110.40 per quintal, with a trading volume of 30 lots.

The July contract also increased by Rs 3.50, or 0.30%, to Rs 1,170.80 per quintal, with a business volume of 3 lots.

Marketmen said the rise in potato prices at futures trade was attributed to the rising spot demand.

Restricted arrivals in the markets from producing belts also influenced the prices, they said.

### **Cardamom rises 1.3% on spot demand Press Trust of India / New Delhi May 16, 2012, 12:10 IST**

A trend at the spot markets on the back of pick-up in demand against restricted arrivals from producing regions attributed the rise in cardamom prices



Cardamom prices rose by Rs 16.50 to Rs 1,290 per kg in futures trade today largely on the back of pick-up in demand in the spot market amid low stocks following restricted arrivals from producing regions.

On the MCX, the July contract surged Rs 16.50, or 1.29%, to Rs 1,290 per kg in a business volume of 200 lots.

The June contract rose by Rs 14.70, or 1.13%, to Rs 1,308.90 per kg in a business volume of 1,448 lots.

Traders said a firming trend at the spot markets on the back of pick-up in demand against restricted arrivals from producing regions attributed the rise in cardamom prices in the futures market.

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# THE HINDU Business Line

Poultry feed products may ease on cheaper inputs

Our Correspondent



Karnal, May 16:

Prices of poultry feed products are likely to turn cheaper in the near future on fall in soyameal, maize and bajra rates. Similarly, bajra prices may drop further in the next fortnight or so as new arrivals are expected to start.

Though prices of the key ingredients have started to soften, the industry has not slashed prices of poultry feed products as the old contracts have not been executed yet, said Mr Subhash Sharma, Financial Head, Sarvottam Poultry Feed Supply Centre Pvt Ltd.

On Wednesday, soyameal prices decreased by Rs 400 and quoted at around Rs 3,000 a quintal against Rs 3,400 quoted last weekend.

Similarly, arrivals from Bihar have dragged maize prices further down by Rs 150 to Rs 1,200-1250 a quintal. Bajra eased by Rs 40 and settled at Rs 1,110 a quintal.

On the other hand, the price of fish oil improved by Rs 2 and quoted at Rs 70 a litre.

Market sources alleged that traders are creating artificial scarcity of soyameal in the domestic market by claiming that a major part of the meal has been exported to Iran.

Earlier, speculations were rife in the market that soyameal may touch the Rs 4,000-a-quintal mark but after the recent corrections, it seems that it is back on track, said sources.

With the new contracts signed according to current trends, prices of poultry feed products may fall.

On Wednesday, broiler concentrates feed was quoted at Rs 1,600 for a 50-kg bag, broiler starter mash was at Rs 1,280 for a 50-kg bag and broiler finisher was at Rs 1,260 for a 50-kg bag.

“Broiler Pre-Starter Concentrate 30 per cent” was at Rs 1,400 for a 30-kg bag, while layer concentrate was quoted at Rs 1,210 for a 50-kg bag.

### Export, bulk demand lifts turmeric

Our Correspondent



Erode, May 16:

Bulk buyers and exporters quoted Rs 100-150 a quintal higher on Wednesday for quality turmeric. Seventy per cent of the stocks were sold.

“The exporters prefer quality turmeric and purchased almost all the quality turmeric. Some exporters and bulk buyers have received orders from foreign exporters. Upcountry exporters

have received reasonable orders, so they bought the stocks and sent them immediately,” said Mr R.K.V. Ravishankar, President, Erode Turmeric Merchants Association.

Foreign exporters prefer turmeric with high curcumine content. More than 1,000 bags of such quality turmeric were sold in Erode on Wednesday. Though futures were up 2 per cent, prices in the local market did not rise much. The demand for the root variety was high and exporters purchased almost all the stock to fulfil new orders from Punjab.

Mr Chinnasamy Gounder, a grower, said farmers were bringing less produce to the market because of falling prices. But lower arrivals have failed to perk up the spice, he said.

In the Regulated Marketing Committee, all the 1,646 bags were purchased.

At the Erode Turmeric Merchants Association sales yard, the finger variety was sold at Rs 2,411-3,661 a quintal and the root variety at Rs 2,319-3,417.

**Salem Crop:** The finger variety was sold at Rs 3,009-4,619 a quintal and the root variety at Rs 3,511-3,791. Out of the 2,527 bags kept for sale, 1,234 were sold.

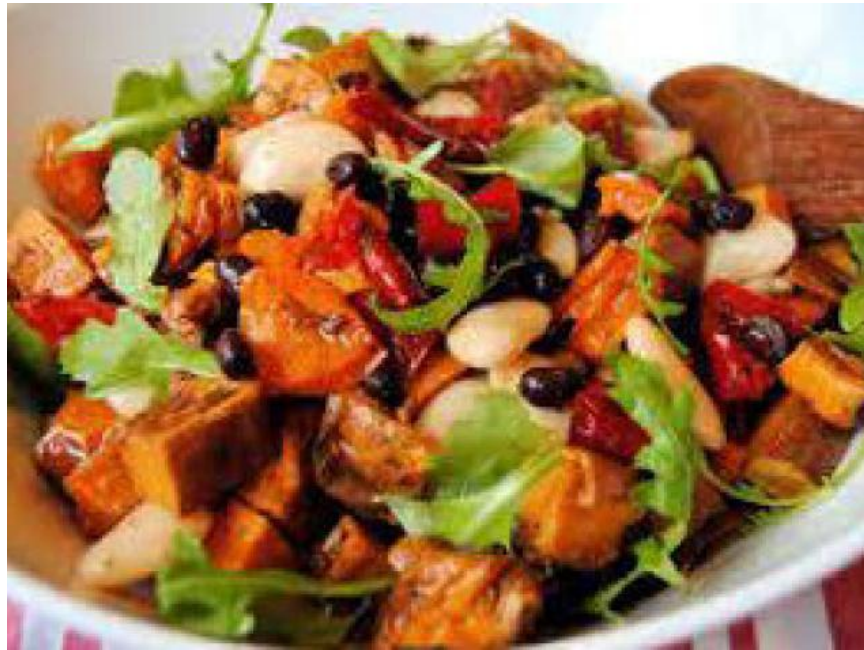
At the Regulated marketing Committee, the finger variety was sold at Rs 3,469-3,881 a quintal and the root variety at Rs 3,419-3,739. All the 1,646 bags that arrived were sold.

At the Erode Cooperative Marketing Society, the finger variety fetched Rs 3,009-3,861 a quintal and the root variety Rs 3,039-3,780. All the 1,044 bags kept for sale were sold.

At the Gobichettipalayam Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Society, the finger variety was sold at Rs 2,868-3,588 a quintal and the root variety at Rs 2,869-3,769. All the 387 bags kept for sale were sold.

## Beware, your veggies may have been grown in sewage water

Vishwanath Kulkarni



New Delhi, May 16:

There's garbage in your greens. That fresh cucumber in your salad or your dose of green leafy veggies could well have been grown using raw sewage discharge.

As water scarcity mounts, farmers in the semi-urban areas are increasingly using sewage or waste water to grow veggies, cereals and fodder. The big concern is a large part of the sewage discharge from the urban centres is untreated, thereby triggering contamination risks on health and environmental issues.

"The area under waste water irrigation is on the rise in India at an estimated one million hectares," said Mr Avinash Chand Tyagi, Secretary-General, International Commission on Irrigation and Drainage (ICID), an inter-governmental body.

"The poor farmers have no other option but to use the free flowing sewage that's available round the year. The cropping intensity is also high as they grow three to four crops," Mr Tyagi said.

**Rich in macro nutrients**

Moreover, the sewage water is rich in macro nutrients such as nitrogen and potash and even in micro-nutrients like phosphorous, calcium and magnesium. “It reduces the demand for nitrogen and phosphatic fertilisers by 25-50 per cent and increases the yield by 15-27 per cent,” said, Ms Ravinder Kaur of the Water Technology Centre of the Indian Agriculture Research Institute.

India is the third largest user of waste water in irrigation after China and Mexico. The ICID, in collaboration with the United Nations Environmental Programme, the UN Water Decade Programme, and the International Water Management Institute, is trying to raise awareness on the safe use of waste water.

“Only 37-38 per cent of the sewage is treated in India due to inadequate capacity,” said Mr J. S.Samra, CEO of the National Rainfed Area Authority under the Planning Commission. He suggests the need to treat sewage even in the rural areas, where rising income levels have boosted consumption levels. Safe water use in agriculture is important mainly from the point of food security, livelihood security and environmental safety, Mr Samra added.

### **Major limitations**

“There's mismatch between the waste generated and the waste treated,” Ms Kaur said, stressing the need to devise strategies for promoting use of waste water in agriculture.

High installation and operational costs, coupled with the shortage of skilled labour, are the major limitations for the proper functioning of the installed sewage treatment plants that are energy-intensive.

At present, about 83 per cent of the total water available is consumed by agriculture. With increasing trend in urbanisation and industrialisation and climate change impacting the supplies, the share of water usage in agriculture is likely to come down to around 70 per cent by 2050, says Mr Samra.

The low government investments in waste water treatment and management and the absence of any national guidelines for safe disposal and application in agriculture are some of the biggest challenges, Ms Kaur said. Further, there is no impact assessment of waste water irrigation in terms of soil, groundwater, food quality and health risks, Ms Kaur said stating that “pollutants are spread all over”.



## White stem borer menace threatens coffee crop

Our Bureau



Chennai/New Delhi, May 16:

Coffee plantations face a new problem after weathering a prolonged dry period. The incidence of white stem borer, a pest that attacks Arabica coffee plants, has flared up this year due to the prolonged dry period.

Growers feel the pest attack, which has resurfaced almost after four years, could possibly eat into the Arabica output for the 2012-13 crop year (October-September). However, they preferred not to hazard any guess at this point in time.

“White stem borer is a concern. Unable to tackle this menace, people are beginning to uproot affected plants,” said Mr Marvin Rodrigues, President of the Karnataka Planters Association (KPA).

Growers prefer to uproot trees and burn them to prevent the spread of borers to other plants as all other methods have been found to be ineffective in combating the menace.

Karnataka accounts for about 70 per cent of the country's coffee output and the incidence of borer is more pronounced in districts of Kodagu and to some extent in Chikmagalur.

### **Arabicas affected**

The 2012-13 season starting October is an off-year for the Arabicas – a premium variety, where the crop size naturally shrinks every alternate year, said Mr Rodrigues. “The coming arabica crop will be down,” he said.

“It is the one of the worst attacks of the borer that we are seeing this year. Every year, we assume things are improving but the problem continues,” said Mr Bose Mandanna, a large coffee planter from Coorg. “Even the new variety of coffee – Chandragiri – introduced by the Coffee Board has not been spared. Its young plants have been attacked badly,” said Mr Mandanna, a former Vice-Chairman of the Board .

Growers have traditionally preferred to replace the affected Arabica plants with the sturdy variety Robustas.

“It is not a panic situation,” said the Coffee Board Chairman, Mr Jawaid Akhtar. The incidence of borer has been more this year compared to the last because of prolonged drought.

### **Climate changes**

“It's too early to jump to any conclusion,” Mr Akhtar said commenting on the potential crop loss due to borer. The Board will come out with crop estimates in two months, he said.

“The climate change has led to change in the flight and breeding pattern of the white stem borer. It seems to proliferate even more now,” said Mr A.K. Bhandari, former President of the United Planters' Association of Southern India.

“Concerns over the white stem borer are normal during a long dry period like this,” said Mr Ramesh Rajah, President of the Coffee Exporters Association.

“The climate change has led to longer dry period and delay in monsoon setting in. This has led to the borer spreading and increasing its infestation,” said Mr Bhandari.

The problem this time is that the borer attack is from below the ground. Till now, it was attacking from above the ground. “Now, the borer seems to find space in the holes made next to the plant's stem by porcupines and ant eaters in coffee estates. These are at least two inches deep and the borer goes inside and hatches,” said Mr Mandanna. “The borer menace can be curtailed once monsoon picks up. We doubt if it will take hectic proposition,” said Mr Bhandari.

### **Blossoms and showers**

On the other hand, some areas have received good rains, particularly North Kodagu.

“The rain activity is good. The crop is likely to alright,” said Mr Bhandari. “The arabica crop looks good. Robusta will be similar to last year,” said Mr Rajah. “The blossoming in arabica has been good. Robusta has also been helped by irrigation,” said Mr Bhandari.

“The damage (due to delay in rain) may not be as feared,” he said.

“It is early days yet. Rainfall in the growing areas has been adequate except in Anamalais in Tamil Nadu. We will be doing a survey in 2-3 weeks time to assess the crop,” said Mr Rajah.

During the current season ending September, coffee production has been estimated at a record 3.2 lakh tonnes with arabica making up 1.03 lakh tonnes and robusta the rest. Last season, the production was 3.02 lakh tonnes (arabica 94,000 tonnes and robusta the rest).

### **Global cues sap spot rubber**



Kottayam, May 16:

Spot rubber turned weak on Wednesday. Declines in the domestic and international futures and other trend setting markets continued to put the pressure on the commodity. The trend was mixed.

The fall in natural rubber production and depreciating rupee were expected to provide support to the market at lower levels. However, lacklustre demand from tyre manufacturers and high imports may limit gains.

Sheet rubber dropped to Rs 193.50 (194) a kg, as quoted by the traders. The grade slipped to Rs 194 (194.25) a kg at Kottayam and Kochi, according to the Rubber Board.

RSS 4 weakened with the June contracts slipping to Rs 193.50 (196.49), July to Rs 196.48 (199.37), August to Rs 196.25 (199), September to Rs 195.80 (198.90) and October to Rs 197 (200) a kg on the National Multi Commodity Exchange.

RSS 3 (spot) declined to Rs 196.95 (198.56) a kg at Bangkok. The May futures slipped to ₹253 (Rs 171.09) from ₹256.2 a kg during the day session on the Tokyo Commodity Exchange.

Spot rates were (Rs/kg): RSS-4: 193.50 (194); RSS-5: 191.50 (192); ungraded: 189 (189); ISNR 20: 193 (193.50) and latex 60 per cent: 124 (124).

### More fall likely in moong on higher arrivals

Indore, May 16:

Moong prices dropped by Rs 150-200 a quintal in the last couple of days on rise in arrival of summer crop and weak buying support.

In the spot, moong new declined to Rs 4,000-4,200 a quintal, while moong (medium) slid to Rs 3,600-3,700 a quintal.

According to a trader, moong prices are expected to decline further in coming days with further rise in arrivals. Arrival of new summer moong in local *mandis* has gathered momentum with about 300-400 bags being offloaded in local *mandis* on Wednesday.

Moong dal prices, on the other hand, ruled stable with moong dal (average) being quoted at Rs 5,100-5,150 a quintal, while moong dal (bold) ruled at Rs 5,650-5,700. Moong mongar quoted at Rs 5,300-5,600 a quintal.

**Tur down**

Weak buying support dragged with the Maharashtra variety being quoted at Rs 3,775-3,800 a quintal (Rs 3,800-3,825).

Tur (Nimari) ruled steady at Rs 3,100-3,200. According to Mr Sanjay Bansal, a trader, a bullish trend is likely in tur despite traders holding adequate old stocks. Tur dal slipped with the full one being quoted at Rs 5,600-5,700 (Rs 5,800-5,900).

### **Masoor sluggish**

The trend in masoor was sluggish on slack buying support. Masoor (bold), which perked up to Rs 3,600 a quintal on Tuesday on improved buying support, declined to Rs 3,550-3,375 a quintal. . Masoor dal (average) was quoted at Rs 4,000-4,025 a quintal and masoor dal (medium) at Rs 4,075-4,100 a quintal.

### **Coconut oil prices hold steady**

V. Sajeev Kumar



Kochi, May 16:

The price of coconut oil has remained steady in the Kerala market this week. It quoted at Rs 61 per kg against last week's price of Rs 62 per kg.

Mr Prakash B. Rao, Vice-President of the Coconut Oil Merchants' Association (COMA), said the absence of local demand has resulted in a drop in prices in the Kerala market. However, support from corporates in Tamil Nadu was holding prices up at Rs 60 per kg. Corporates, who

had stayed away from the market in the last couple of weeks, had started buying in a limited way at the support price of Rs 60 per kg, he said.

Besides, north Indian Vanaspati manufacturers were seen buying marginal quantities of coconut oil, he said.

Mr Bharat N. Khona, former Board Member, COMA, said though the movement of oil tankers had started picking up, upcountry buyers were still reluctant to buy. Movement is expected to start in full swing shortly and this would lead to higher consumption in the North Indian markets, he said.

According to him, the prices quoted this week were attractive as far as corporates were concerned. However, despite the attractive prices as compared with other edible oils, there was no demand, he said.

Edible oils such as palm oil and palm kernel oil, which are close substitutes for coconut oil, are still on the higher side. The price of palm oil has dropped to Rs 68 per kg this week against last week's Rs 70 per kg, and palm kernel oil is quoting at Rs 74 against Rs 76 per kg.

Copra prices ruled at Rs 4,100 a quintal in the Kerala market and at Rs 3,800 in Tamil Nadu.

According to Mr Thalath Mahamood, President, COMA, the market has witnessed low demand from local consumers in the last two weeks. He added that April-May is a lean season for consumption of all commodities in Kerala.