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Urban people may not know the real problems of farmers

M. J. Prabu



Sweat & toil: Mahavir Singh Arya, Rajasthan in his field.

The common man views farming as something to do only with government

It is an accepted fact that importing food cannot solve the problem of food shortage. “Modern technologies do offer vast prospects for crop improvement, but that alone need not make it popular among small and marginal farmers,” says farmer Mr. Mahavir Singh Arya, from Churu district, Rajasthan.

Despite facing acute problem of water shortage, Mr. Mahavir, an advocate of organic farming, developed numerous varieties of wheat and mustard, and claims that he never used any inorganic fertilizer to grow crops and still managed to generate good yield.

Ignorant

“Urban people do not seem to know the real problem we farmers face,” he says and adds: “To them it becomes an issue only during price hike. Though farming encompasses a vast area, a large section of the public view agriculture as something involving only the government, and it becomes a job for elected persons to resolve the farmers' problems.

“The fact, that we import food to cater to domestic demand, besides large scale migration to cities does not seem to cause any serious concern in the urban man's mind,” he notes with concern.

According to him, though urban people may be fascinated by the simple village life, in reality it is not that easy.

“The aspiration of rural folk is to seek out greener pastures in nearby metros, educate their kids and push them out of the village. Hence statistically, food supply is dwindling and demand is shooting up — we are all sitting on a volcano ready to erupt anytime,” he feels.

“A farmer's life is a tale of continuous experimentation and struggle for existence, and even getting a good price for the produce is difficult for us,” he explains.

Several odds

In spite of all odds, inquisitiveness made him visit Hissar Agriculture University to see some breeding experiments in crop varieties and learn the method of selection and crossing between different varieties.

He returned to start experimenting in the fields. Encouraged by success, he got interested in breeding and thereafter he made it a point to visit various research institutions and universities, to keep himself updated.

The farmer developed more than 10 varieties of mustard by crossing the varieties available in Delhi region.

The maturity period of all these varieties ranges from 130 to 150 days and the yield from about 1.8 tonnes to 2.4 tonnes per hectare. All the varieties are disease resistant and high yielding, according to him.

He chanced upon a variety of tall and high yielding wheat and crossed it with a locally popular variety.

The next year, the farmer observed that the crops grew taller and bore bolder grains that were resistant to disease.

He selected plants possessing characteristics like height of the plant, resistance to disease, etc., every year and developed the variety ‘Mahavir Kisan Mahan.’

15 wheat varieties

In the same way, he kept on crossing varieties obtained from different regions with other local varieties and successfully developed more than 15 varieties of wheat.

The maturity period of all the wheat varieties varies from 135-160 days, except one, named Mahavir Kishan Pragati, a short duration dwarf variety developed by him that comes to harvest in 95-110 days.

The yield of these varieties varies from 4-8 tonnes for a hectare. "For a farmer every available area of space needs to be utilised so that some sort of income can be generated.

Water shortage

"In places like ours where water is a scarce commodity, extra effort is needed to obtain even average yield. Government should look into the cause of the millions of farmers like Mr Mahavir who toil day in and day out to feed the over billion plus population of the country." says Sundaram Verma, a progressive farmer himself and Honey Bee Network collaborator of Rajasthan.

Mr. Mahavir mentions that the government may be trying its best, but an extra effort towards providing enough support to the farmers would go a long way in making India a self-reliant country in food crops.

For more information, contact Mahavir Singh Arya, village Gudan, taluka Rajgad, district Churu, Rajasthan, Mobile 09461932854.

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Managing blossom midge in jasmine

Jasmine is an important flower crop grown on a commercial scale. It is often seriously affected by a mosquito like insect called the blossom midge.

Due to its attack, the base of the flower buds get swollen, deformed, discoloured into pink or purple colour and drops prematurely.

Pest biology

About 100 minute eggs are deposited into the open tips of young flower buds by the adult female. Within 24 hours maggots emerge from the eggs and move into the buds.

With their rasping mouth parts as they feed the open flower buds, the larvae inject some toxic substances which induce swelling, malformation and colour change of the blossom.

The colour of the maggot ranges from white in the early stage to pink in the later stage.

Maggots mature in 5 to 7 days inside the buds and flip into air to exit the flower buds and burrow into the soil for pupation by spinning a cocoon.

Pupal period

Pupae are light yellow in colour. The pupal period ranges from 12 to 21 days according to the environmental conditions.

Adult midge emerges from the soil surface in due course of time but survive for only 4 days.

Entire life cycle is completed in 21 to 28 days under optimum conditions.

Management methods

Collect and destroy fallen and discoloured flower buds.

Maintain sanitation of the jasmine garden with good drainage facilities.

Avoid planting of alternate host plants such as tomato, brinjal and bitter gourd around the main cropped area. Rake the soil to kill the pupae in the ground. Prune the bushes during winter.

Setting of light traps or sticky traps would also be helpful in controlling this pest.

Spraying of monocrotophos 36 WSC or profenofos 50EC at 2 ml/lit, acephate 75 SP or carbaryl 50WP at 2gm/lit and neem seed kernel extract 5 per cent.

Soil application of carbofuron 3G at 30kg/ha Drenching the soil surface with chlorpyrifos 20EC at 5ml/lit may also prove effective.

J. Jayaraj & S. Manisegaran, *Agricultural College and Research Institute Madurai*

May 3, 2012

Farm query

PEARLSPOT FISH REARING How to do pearlspot fish farming in backyard? James

Vasanth, Kerala

Pearlspot farming in captivity is profitable as it requires minimum investment and harvesting is easy. Even small scale farmers and women can grow the fishes in the backyard.

For more details you can contact Mr. K.K. Manoj, Koodathumkandi House, Velur Post, Atholi (Via), Kozhikode- 673315. mobile: 09387527887 and Dr. B Pradeep, email: kvk@spices.res.in, phone: 0091-496- 2662372. Mr. Manoj has been conferred the best pearlspot fish farmer by the Indian Institute of Spices Research Institute, Kozhikode.

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Refrigerated onions

How does refrigerating onions prevent them from causing tears in our eyes when chopped?

SRIRAM G.*Bengaluru*

Onions contain amino acid sulphoxides that form sulphenic acids in the onion cells. Both the enzymes and the sulphenic acids are kept separately in the cells.

When you cut the onion, the otherwise separate enzymes start mixing and produce propanethiol S-oxide which is a volatile sulphur compound that starts wafting towards your eyes.

The gas that is emitted reacts with the water of your eyes and forms sulphuric acid. The sulphuric acid thus produced causes burning sensation in your eyes and this in turn leads to the tear glands secreting more tears.

Thus you end up with watery eyes every time you cut onions at home.

When you chill an onion, either in the refrigerator or in a bowl of cold water, the enzymes in the onion slow down at a molecular level.

This means that when you cut into a cold onion, the slow-moving enzymes and sulphur molecules have less momentum when they combine to make the irritating sulphurous molecules.

They also move much more slowly as they escape the onion walls and often will not reach your eyes or nose. This simple tactic can greatly reduce or eliminate an onion's ability to make you cry.

JENIE HANNAH, Chennai

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Training at TNAU in fast food preparation

Staff Reporter

The Tamil Nadu Agricultural University will organise a training programme in fast food preparation on May 8 and May 9 on the university premises.

According to a university release, the training will cover the following aspects: confectionery fast foods, mushroom-based ready-to-eat fast foods, cauliflower-based ready to eat foods, and sweet chutney.

Details

Those interested can attend the training by paying a fee of Rs. 1,000. For details, contact Head, Post Harvest Technology Centre, Tamil Nadu Agricultural University, Coimbatore – 641003.

For registration and details, contact 0422-6611340 / 6611268, the release adds.

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Sunflower outshines gingelly as preferred oilseed crop

L. Renganathan

Farmers consider it as a remunerative alternative



in full bloom: Sensing the rising demand, a regulated market for sunflower oilseed has been set up at Panjapatti. File photo

Farmers in the district, known for their acumen in crop economy, have overwhelmingly shown preference for sunflower which is getting them good returns over the usual top-oilseed gingelly. The area under sunflower cultivation has increased, at the expense of gingelly, as farmers have sensed its economic value.

During the current year, a total of 6,106 hectares have been brought under sunflower, up from the last year's 2,251 hectares. Gingelly's cultivation area in the current is 3,524 hectares as compared 6,272 hectares last year. The decline in the area under gingelly over the last two years is attributed to the rise of sunflower as a viable and remunerative alternative. Productivity of gingelly averages only 627 kg per hectare while that of sunflower touches 1,923 kg per hectare. Adding to that, the price offered for gingelly oil seed is Rs. 42 to Rs.45 per kg while sunflower seed fetches Rs. 30-35 per kg in the regulated market. Sources say that in the open market buyers pay more in many cases.

Word on the higher reward of sunflower cultivation has spread among farmers who are taking to the crop fast. Sensing the rising demand for sunflower and heeding the plea for a regulated market, Collector V. Shobana took the initiative to establish a regulated market for sunflower oilseed at Panjapatti, reaping rich dividends for farmers. Already, farmers have traded 42 tonnes of sunflower seed worth Rs. 13 lakh. Panjapatti market is the second in the district after Rayanur.

Sunflower oilseed cultivation in Karur block account for 19 hectares (42 hectares last year), Thanthoni 697 ha (340 ha), Aravakurichi 1,292 ha (473 ha), K. Paramathi 1,004 ha (350 ha), Kulithalai 177 ha (220 ha), Thogamalai 690 ha (1,119 ha), Taragampatti 756 ha (41 ha) and Krishnarayapuram 1,327 hectare (350 ha).

The decline has been noticeable for gingelly over the past five years when the maximum coverage for the oilseed was around 8,000 hectare in the district.

The gradual decline has only accentuated over the past couple of years, farmers point out.

As of now sunflower standing crop in the district is on just 150 hectares and the rest of the field harvest has been completed with farmers getting good returns.

The next sowing season commences in June-July.

No virus outbreak: poultry farmers

M.K. Ananth



Dip in production because of climate conditions Demand for egg, chicken on the rise

The Tamil Nadu Poultry Farmers Association (TNPFA) and the National Egg Coordination Committee (NECC) have denied reports that there was an outbreak of Velogenic Viscerotropic Newcastle Disease (VVND) that badly affected chicken in the poultry hub over the last few days.

TNPFA president R. Nallathambi told *The Hindu* that there is a drop in production caused by drop in feed consumption over the last few days. He noted that chicken reduce feed intake and drink more water to beat the heat in the summer. “This annual phenomenon results in egg production drop by about 10 per cent to 15 per cent and there is no need to panic”, he added.

He said that an egg laying chicken consumes about 110 gm of feed during normal days and it comes down to about 85 gm and 90 gm in the summer. “It exists during the dry months – March, April and May – and soon picks up when the season draws to an end”, he said. He pointed out that production of older birds was about 70 per cent to 80 per cent while that of young layer birds was about 90 per cent to 95 per cent.

“The average daily egg production in Namakkal zone is around 320 lakh eggs and it has now come down to about 290 to 300 lakh eggs, but is still more than production during the same period in the yesteryears”, Mr. Nallathambi added. He said that moderate summer showers in the recent days helped the industry as mercury levels came down and facilitated normal feed intake resulting in increased production.

NECC Namakkal Zone chairman Dr. P. Selvaraj told this paper that there has not been any proven trace of VVND in this region. "Egg rates have climbed from Rs. 2.20 to Rs. 2.45 in about two weeks due to demand for the commodity in the market and due to rise in price in other NECC zones", he added.

He clarified that the price hike was not triggered by any sharp production dip caused by VVND. "Our real concern is the 'Agni Nakshatram' – hottest spell of summer – that is expected to begin on May 4 and last till May 28, as feed intake of birds will reduce further and reflect with dip in production", the chairman said.

Pointing out at the increase in cull bird prices by Rs. 5 a kg on Tuesday, he said that it was due to increase in chicken consumption. "Tourism picks up in this season wherein chicken and egg are in high demand as its consumption increases", he added. NECC sources said that price of egg could be increased on Thursday.

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1.5 lakh people visit Kangayam cattle mela

Staff Reporter

The 2012-edition of Kannapuram Kangayam cattle mela, being held every year for the last nine centuries, came to a close in the district.

This year's event, held from April 23 to May 2, had featured around 15,000 genetically-pure bred Kangayam cattle and was visited by 1.5 lakh farmers, and dignitaries from abroad and from other States.

A pair of Myilai oxen of Kangayam breed was sold for a whopping Rs. 1.82 lakh during the mela, which is been organised both to display and sell pure breed of Kangayam cattle. "This is more than the maximum price fetched for an oxen pair last year," said Karthikeya Sivasenaapathy, managing trustee of Senaapathy Kangayam Cattle Research Foundation.

The Foundation conducted an ethno-veterinary training for livestock keepers who visited the mela and disseminated the benefits of rearing Kangayam cattle, on the sidelines of the main fair.

Farmers up in arms over shortage of cotton seeds

Staff Correspondent

Farmers who had been waiting since Tuesday night to get a particular brand of cotton seeds from seed dealers became restive on Wednesday morning when the dealers put up 'no stock' boards. They staged a dharna outside the seed shops and blocked roads near Mahaveera Circle at Mandipet.

Tension prevailed when the farmers tried to forcibly close the shops for not stocking the seeds. Superintendent of Police Labhu Ram pacified the farmers and assured them that he would impress upon the Deputy Commissioner to convene a meeting of farmers, seed dealers and agricultural officers, to sort out the issue.

The farmers urged Mr. Ram to direct the dealers to issue the Kanaka-7315 variety of cotton seeds to them. When Mr. Ram asked the dealers why they had stopped selling the seeds, the dealers said they had distributed whatever stock they had received from the company. After hearing both sides, Mr. Ram told the farmers and dealers to come to the Deputy Commissioner's office to discuss the issue.

Meeting

Later, at the special meeting, Joint Director of Agriculture Gollar said orders had been placed for 80,000 packets of Kanaka seeds, but the company had supplied only 5,000 packets. He said the dealers had distributed the packets to farmers on first come, first served basis, and agreed that hundreds of farmers from different places had been deprived of seeds.

Huchavanahalli Manjunath of the Davangere district unit of the Karnataka Rajya Raitha Sangha said cotton would be grown on 1,70,000 acres, and noted that 1,70,000 packets of Kanaka seeds were required. Farmers could get high yield with the Kanaka variety, which required less labour to harvest, he said.

He said the Agriculture Department had failed to provide the required quantity of seeds to farmers and urged the Deputy Commissioner to ensure that all farmers got Kanaka seeds immediately.

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Fruits mela

A three-day “Malnad Fruits Mela” will be held here at the Totgars Kalyan Mantap from May 11 under the auspices of Kadamba organic and marketing trust, Western Ghats Task Force, Department of Forest, Department of Horticulture, NABARD Biodiversity Board, and Horticulture University, Bagalkot, said a release on Wednesday. A discussion on the value addition to fruits like jackfruit, plantain, kokum, mango, and cashew nut will be held.

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Remunerative price for paddy, turmeric sought

Staff Reporter

The all party leaders who visited the agriculture marketyard here on Wednesday demanded the Government ensure remunerative price to turmeric and paddy as the farmers invested thousands of rupees per acre, but were not getting even investment after the harvest.

If the government failed to take immediate action to provide minimum support price to agriculture produce the farm sector would be in deep crisis, they said after interaction with farmers at the marketyard. They said that the farmer was at cross road today waiting for the support from any quarter.

The leaders led by the CPI former MLA K. Ramakrishna later met the Joint Collector K. Harshavardhan and had a discussion on the MSP issue. Swadeshi Jagaran Manch secretary K. Narsimha Naidu and Sai Reddy were in the delegation.

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Centre urged to bail out tobacco farmers

Staff Reporter

Market intervention by board need of the hour, they say

Concerned over dull market condition, tobacco growers in Prakasam district on Wednesday urged the Centre to direct the Tobacco Board to immediately intervene and create buoyancy in the market.

Visiting the Ongole II auction platform, Telugu Rythu State president K Balaram Krishnamurthy told reporters "the Tobacco Board is flush with funds in the wake of collection of penalties from peasants in the past due to more productivity under favourable weather condition".

The Centre which got Rs. 15,500 crore by way of excise duty every year and a foreign exchange income of over Rs. 4,300 crore, had a responsibility to bail out farmers who were in dire straits, he added.

All India Kisan Sabha State secretary Ravula Venkaiah said "it is not just tobacco growers, growers of cotton, chillies, paddy and other crops are not getting remunerative price for their produce. The need of the hour is combined stirs by all farmers for a fair deal for them".

"When farmers are in trouble due to adverse market condition coupled with unseasonal rains, the Union Commerce Ministry should ask the Tobacco Board to step in", Telugu Rythu district president K Venkaiah said.

Virginia Tobacco Growers' Welfare Association honorary president T. Ranga Rao, also former Tobacco Board member and president Ch. Sessaiah said "the growers have realised that they cannot get justice without resorting to stirs. We will involve farmers cutting across party lines for a massive stir".

Association secretary M Bangaru Babu, also former Tobacco Board member, said the Centre had revenue only from the Tobacco Board year after year. In contrast, the Centre was providing funds to other commodity boards for their existence.

Farmers were able to market only 30 million kg of tobacco in 47 trading sessions so far from the authorised crop size of 163.43 million kg and the average price realised was only Rs. 102.66 a kg, Andhra Pradesh Rythu Sangam district Assistant Secretary D Gopinath said.

The average price realised by farmers for bright grade was Rs. 107.08 per kg, medium grade Rs. 93.65 per kg, and low grade Rs. 66.11, AIKS district secretary K.V.V. Prasad said, adding there had been a fall of Rs. 20 per kg at a time when all farm input costs had gone up manifold.

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- *Tobacco growers threaten to launch agitation demanding fair deal*
 - *Ryots are able to market only 30 million kg of tobacco in 47 trading sessions*
-

'Every grain of wheat will be purchased from farmers'

Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chauhan has said that every single grain of wheat will be purchased from the farmers in the State under the wheat procurement process.

The farmers should maintain calm without getting misled by any wrong propaganda, the Chief Minister said adding that the remaining farmers will be registered within three days and the wheat would be purchased from them.

Mr. Chauhan said this while addressing the commissioners and collectors through videoconferencing at the Mantralaya here.

He asked the officials to assure the farmers that their produce will be purchased at all cost.

Mr. Chauhan said that wheat purchase on minimum support price is a massive task and added that the process was upset due to inadequate supply of gunny bags recently but there is no shortage.

There should be no doubts among the farmers regarding availability of gunny bags, the Chief Minister said and pointed out that should rest assured of procurement on minimum support price.

He said that remaining farmers should be registered by May 3 and not a single one should be left out.

Mr. Chauhan asked the commissioners and collectors to rationalise the distribution of bags. The gunny bags available with the purchase centres reporting the lesser procurement, should be dispatched to centres reporting excessive purchase.

The Chief Minister said that the bonus on minimum support price is for the genuine farmers. Middlemen should not be allowed to take advantage of this at any cost.

Mr. Chauhan asked the collectors to make arrangements for lifting the procured wheat simultaneously with the procurement and farmers should get payment without delay.

He said that Madhya Pradesh occupies top position in the country for procuring massive quantity of wheat on minimum support price.

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Court directive to frame guidelines on pesticides

Staff Reporter

The Delhi High Court has directed a six-member committee of experts to frame guidelines to deal with the presence of pesticides' residue in vegetable and fruits across the country by August 17.

A Division Bench of the Court comprising Justice S. K. Kaul and Justice Rajiv Shakti passed the direction while hearing a petition in the matter *suo motu* on the basis of a media report alleging presence of pesticide residue in fruits and vegetables in the Capital.

The committee has been set up by the Union Government. Headed by agriculture scientist Sarita Bhalla, Food Safety & Standards Authority of India director Dhir Singh, scientist N.K. Sharma, Delhi Government's food analyst S. M. Bhardwaj, Vipin Bhatnagar, an official of the Union Ministry of Agriculture & Processing Industries, and advocate V.K. Rao are the other members of the committee.

Besides these members, the Court also allowed inclusion of the name of Sandhya Kulshreshtha, an Assistant Director-General, Directorate-General of Health Services of the Union Government, in the committee as a non-government expert in the field so that she could get feedback from the public on the issue to the attention of the committee.

The report quoting a study on use of banned pesticides by the farmers conducted said that the amount of pesticides used in India is as much as 750 times the European standards. Out of five internationally banned pesticides, four were found to be common in vegetables and fruits, the report said .

These pesticides caused headache and affect fertility and can damage kidney and liver, the report said. *Four out of five banned pesticides found to be in use*

ANGALORE, May 3, 2012

'Farmer did not have farm loan in his name'

In response to a report, "Farmers in Sira reeling under drought for three years", published in these columns on April 9, Deputy Commissioner of Tumkur district writes that Thippeswamy, a

farmer, who committed suicide on October 17, 2011, could not be given compensation because “he did not have any agricultural loan in his name and there were no records to substantiate it.”

Compensation

Meanwhile, the family of Chikkalingaiah of Govindanahalli village, who committed suicide on October 23, 2011, was given a compensation of Rs. 1 lakh, a sum that his son Puttaraju said was inadequate to settle the loans. Citing a Government Order, the Deputy Commissioner has said that “the amount of compensation that can be paid is Rs. 1 lakh only.”

hindustantimes

■ Thu,03 May 2012

weather

INDIAN CITIES

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Today's Weather



Clear

Thursday, May 3

Max Min

37.7° | 20.5°

Rain: 0 mm in 24hrs

Humidity: 41%

Wind: Normal

Sunrise: 7:14

Sunset: 17:48

Barometer: 1005

Tomorrow's Forecast



Sunny

Friday, May 4

Max Min

38° | 22°

Extended Forecast for a week

Saturday May 5	Sunday May 6	Monday May 7	Tuesday May 8	Wednesday May 9

38° | 22°

39° | 21°

41° | 23°

43° | 26°

41° | 23°

Sunny

Sunny

Sunny

Partly Cloudy

Sunny

THE ECONOMIC TIMES

2 MAY, 2012, 05.30PM IST, PTI

Chilli exports fall 17% in Apr-Jan FY12 on quality concern

NEW DELHI: Chilli exports declined by about 17 per cent in volume terms to 1.69 lakh tonnes during April- January, 2011-12, due to stringent quality specifications imposed by importers.

However, in value terms, the exports jumped 26 per cent to Rs 1,604 crore in April-January, 2011-12 over the same period of 2010-11, Minister of State for Commerce Jyotiraditya Scindia told the Rajya Sabha in a written reply.

The country had exported 2.05 lakh tonnes of chilli worth Rs 1,276 crore in April-January period of 2010-11 fiscal.

"The reason for decline in quantity of export of chilli is mainly the stringent quality specifications imposed by the importing countries," the minister said.

Malaysia, Sri Lanka, the US and the UAE are major importers of Indian chilli.

"To avoid rejection and increase chilli exports, the Spices Board is implementing mandatory pre-shipment sampling for detection of Sudan dye, aflatoxin and other toxic elements," Scindia said.

The board is also conducting training programmes for growers in the states, including Andhra Pradesh, to reduce the level of aflatoxin from various level of harvesting and processing, he said.

Aflatoxins often occur in crops in the field prior to harvest.

The US, South Africa and other European countries have imposed stringent norms for permitted levels of aflatoxins and other toxic elements in spice products.

India exported about 4.36 lakh tonnes of spices worth Rs 7,849.47 cr

2 MAY, 2012, 04.58PM IST, REUTERS

Sugar flat as traders await decision on exports

MUMBAI: Sugar futures were flat as most traders were holding positions waiting for the government's decision on sugar exports.

"We are waiting for the government decision on sugar exports and most traders are holding positions for that," said Mukesh Kuvadia, secretary, Bombay Sugar Merchants Association.

A meeting of ministers on exports of sugar and other farm products will be held on Wednesday.

Though demand has improved in spot market it is still lower than previous year while production is higher, Kuvadia said.

India produced 25.1 million tonnes of sugar between October and April, up 11 percent from the year-ago period, a sugar producers' body said in a statement on Wednesday.

India is expected to produce a total 26 million tonnes in the 12 months from Oct. 1, 2011 - about 4 million tonnes higher than its annual demand.

At 4 p.m., the Key sugar May contract on the National Commodity and Derivatives Exchange (NCDEX) was marginally down at 2,861 rupees per 100 kg.

In the Kolhapur spot market in top producing Maharashtra state, sugar fell 7 rupees to 2,807 rupees per 100 kg.

The government has already allowed 2 million tonnes of sugar to be exported in two separate

tranches in the marketing year to September 2012. India's sugar production is expected to outpace domestic demand 2012/13.



Sowing dreams, reaping destiny

THURSDAY, 03 MAY 2012 00:25

STAFF REPORTER | BHOPAL

A youth in Gohad of Bhind district, Narayan Singh Batham changed his life by cultivating vegetables. A farm labourer earlier, he now owns his own land and a house realising the dreams of his father.

He has also written a new chapter in the horticulture profession by dint of his hard work and self-confidence.

When Narayan Singh failed to get a job after studying upto Class X, he started growing wheat on his fallow land. But in the absence of irrigation facility, he could take a limited yield of wheat.

Under such circumstances, he was forced to work as a farm labourer in others' fields. Sometimes, he had to go without food when not engaged in labour.

During these days of hardship, Narayan Singh contacted the Horticulture Department. The department provided him with sprinkler for irrigation, equipment to sprinkle medicines, vermi compost, medicines and other resources and also guided him on the technique of growing vegetables. With new technique, hard work and self-confidence, Narayan Singh grew crops of chilli and brinjal. He transacted business of Rs one lakh in the first attempt itself.

It was as if a miracle had happened following cultivation of vegetables with government assistance. Nowadays, Narayan Singh is growing brinjals, chillies, cucumbers, onion, garlic, gourds, coriander, parsnips, cauliflowers, cabbages, peas, ladyfingers, melon etc and earning minimum Rs 10 lakh per annum. He grows crops of wheat, gram and mustard separately. Besides, he provides employment to 2,500 labourers on an average annually. The hands that once used to seek work are now providing employment to others.

By constructing a grand house and purchasing a tractor on the strength of income generated by growing vegetables, Narayan Singh has fulfilled the dreams of his father. He has also arranged the marriage of his younger brother. He laid an underground pipeline from the dam and also purchased two motor pumps. He also purchased 1.5 bighas of land. He is expanding his business not only in Bhind, but also outside the district.

Business Standard

Thursday, May 03, 2012

Sugar exports freed, onion floor removed

BS Reporter / New Delhi May 03, 2012, 0:53 IST

In a major step towards removing the curb on exporting farm products, a high-level meeting chaired by the prime minister today decided to free the export of sugar for the current season and abolish the export floor price for onions for two months.

However, traders said the decision on sugar was delayed since international prices were at record lows, with the new Brazilian crop expected by June. In fact, raw sugar futures fell to the lowest in one year at 20.60 cents a pound on New York's commodity exchange, after the move.

Domestic sugar mills are not hopeful of selling more than 1-1.5 million tonnes of sugar abroad, as international prices have dropped.

The meeting also decided to constitute a panel under the chairmanship of Prime Minister's Economic Advisory Council Chairman C Rangarajan to offload more foodgrains through the Public Distribution System and exports.

"The high-level meeting on farm exports today decided to remove all curbs on the export of sugar by putting it under open general licences and abolish the export floor price for onion," said a senior official who participated in the meeting.

The decision on sugar assumes importance, as mills have almost Rs 10,000 crore of dues to farmers. The directive would be applicable on the one million tonnes of sugar, exports of which were held up in the absence of a clear direction from the government. "In other words, sugar mills won't need to come to the ministry for permission to export," the official added. However, the department would reserve the right to impose a cap on sugar exports in case abnormal quantities are shipped.

Cotton exporters await Chinese quota decision

Komal Amit Gera / Chandigarh May 03, 2012, 0:14 IST

While the Union government has lifted the restriction on cotton export, those intending to do so have many things to factor into such a decision.

Among the most viable export destinations are China, Bangladesh and Pakistan. China is yet to announce its import quota for cotton; it may happen this month. China is also the largest buyer of Indian cotton.

According to Rakesh Rathi, an exporter and president of the North India Cotton Association: "An exporter can earn close to Rs 1,500 to Rs 2,000 a candy (356 kg) at the prevailing price in the international market. But there are many hiccups."

After the ban lifting announcement, cotton futures on the New York-based ICE Futures dropped 1.9 per cent in two days to 89.5 cents a pound. Inconsistency in the government's export policy has marred the country's image as an exporter. "Unlike domestic spinning mills which buy even two weeks before the stock is exhausted, international buyers plan ahead, with three to four months of advance purchase," said Rathi. "So, we may not get immediate orders. Due to policy flip-flops, global buyers are apprehensive of trading with India."

Indian cotton is picked up at a discounted price due to the unstable export policy. Some exporters say they have to negotiate at a lower price because they could not develop long-term relations with buyers due to this ad hoc government policy. Dhiren Shah, president of Cotton Association of India, said the industry was hoping this was the final take on exports. "Let free market conditions prevail," he added. Exporters may have to resort to instruments, such as hedging, to overcome the volatility in the exchange rate, he added.

According to available estimates, ginnerers, traders and exporters together hold a stock of 3.5 million bales. With 80 per cent of the crop already in the market as of April-end, exports may put the domestic spinning industry in jeopardy. Millers presently lack working capital to stock on supply.

Cotton sowing is likely to be delayed this year, with wheat harvesting stretched as a fallout of the April showers. Hence, the cotton crop of 2012-13 is expected to arrive in mid-October, instead of mid-September. However, the issue of whether or to what extent there will be a shortage is unclear, as exporters are not sure how many buyers would come forward.

Pepper spurts 1.1% on fall in output

The rise in pepper prices at futures trade is attributed to reports of a fall in its output this year amid rise in spot demand

Press Trust of India / New Delhi May 02, 2012, 13:29 IST



Pepper prices spurted by Rs 410 to Rs 37,270 per quintal in futures trade today after participants created speculative positions following reports of a fall in output this year.

At the National Commodity and Derivatives Exchange, the May contract surged by Rs 410, or 1.11%, to Rs 37,270 per quintal, with an open interest of 4,433 lots.

The June contract spurted by Rs 400, or 1.07%, to Rs 37,950 per quintal in 1,388 lots.

Analysts attributed rise in pepper prices at futures trade to reports of a fall in its output this year amid rise in spot demand.

Slack demand crushes castor



Rajkot, May 2:

Castor seed price slid in spot as well as in futures on Wednesday following lower demand.

On the National Commodity and Derivatives Exchange (NCDEX) castorseed May contract declined Rs 9 to Rs 3,379 a quintal, with an open interest of 17,580 lots. NCDEX June contract, too, was down Rs 11 to Rs 3,436 for a quintal, with an open interest of 12,560 lots.

At Rajkot Commodity Exchange (RCX) castor seed June contract moved down Rs 10 to Rs 3,410 for 100 kg. RCX spot castor price decreased by Rs 45 to Rs 3,145 a quintal.

About 80,000-90,000 bags of castor seed arrived in Gujarat quoting Rs 600-655 for 20 kg.

Around 17,000-18,000 bags arrived in Saurashtra region at Rs 600-639.

Arrivals have also come down in the past few days from over 1,30,000 bags to 1,10,000 bags in Gujarat.

Pure basmati drops on slack purchases



Karnal, May 2:

The rice market witnessed a mixed trend on Wednesday. Pure basmati varieties witnessed some correction, while all other aromatic and non-basmati rice varieties managed to maintain their previous levels.

Slack buying pulled pure basmati prices down, said Mr Tara Chand Sharma, Proprietor of Tara Chand and Sons. Traders expect that rice prices may continue to rule around current levels in this week and may witness some alteration in the next week, he added.

In the physical market, pure basmati (raw) went down by Rs 200 and quoted at Rs 5,500 a quintal, while pure basmati (sela) sold at Rs 4,800 a quintal, Rs 300 down from previous level.

Pusa-1121 (steam) went for Rs 6,300-6,500 a quintal, while Pusa-1121 (sela) sold at Rs 5,100-5,300 a quintal.

For the brokens of Pusa-1121, Tibar sold at Rs 3,600-3,800, Dubar was at Rs 2,900-3,000, while Mongra was trading at Rs 2,200-2,400 a quintal.

Duplicate basmati sold at Rs 4,800-5,000 a quintal. PR-14 (steam) sold at Rs 2,400-2,700 a quintal, and Sugandha (steam) was trading at Rs 3,900-4,100 a quintal.

Sharbati (steam) sold at Rs 3,800 a quintal and Sharbati (sela) was at Rs 3,750 a quintal.

Permal (raw) sold at Rs 2,000-2,250 a quintal, Permal (sela) Rs 2,100-2,300 a quintal; PR-11 (sela) Rs 2,400-2,600 and PR-11 (steam) Rs 2,800-3,000 a quintal.

Sliding rupee heats up palmolein

Our Correspondent



Mumbai, May 2:

A mixed trend was witnessed in imported edible oils on Wednesday with palmolein rising by Rs 2 for 10 kg and soya refined oil dropping by Rs 2 on cues from foreign market. Indigenous oils such as groundnut oil rose by Rs 5 and cotton oil increased by Re 1 on firm reports from producing centres. Sunflower oil and rapeseed oil remained unchanged in absence of fresh demand. Malaysian crude palm oil futures were off lows on mild buying interest amid higher Chicago soya oil futures in the morning; but later closed lower. The downside was limited, though, due to tight global supplies and strong palm oil export demand. A leading broker said that the rupee's drop to a four-month low buoyed buying sentiment among stockists resulting in higher volume in palmolein compared with the last two days. Sources said that stockists came up with fresh orders for near-term delivery. They covered nearly 600-700 tonnes of palmolein for delivery on May 10 in the range of Rs 658-660 from a leading refinery. Another 250-300 tonnes were traded in resale at Rs 660-661 for ready delivery. In Arrivals of the summer groundnut have begun in Saurashtra at a slower pace. They are expected to rise sharply in coming days.

Liberty quoted palmolein at Rs 668-669, Soyabean refined oil Rs 740 and Sunflower refined oil at Rs 745. Ruchi quoted palmolein at Rs 662 for May 10 delivery, soya refined oil at Rs 733 and sunflower refined oil at Rs 738. Allana's rate for palmolein was Rs 668 for May 15-31 delivery. Bunge quoted palmolein at Rs 664 for May 20 delivery.

Resellers offered palmolein at Rs 660-661. Saurashtra – Rajkot groundnut oil ruled unchanged at Rs 1,985 (Rs 1,985) for *Telia* tin and Rs 1,300 (Rs 1300) for loose - 10kg.

Malaysia's crude palm oil contracts closed lower at MYR 3,463 a tonne (MYR 3,474) for June, at MYR 3,452 (MYR 3,471) for July and at MYR 3,438 (MYR 3,444) for August. **The Bombay Commodity Exchange spot rates were (Rs/10 kg):** groundnut oil 1,260 (1,255), soya refined oil 728 (730), sunflower exp. ref. 670 (670), sunflower ref. 740 (740), rapeseed ref. oil 820 (820), rapeseed expeller ref. 790 (790) cotton ref. oil 705 (704) and palmolein 662 (660).

Corporates stay away from coconut oil market

V. Sajeev Kumar



Kochi, May 3:

Prices of coconut oil continue to rule steady in Kerala markets. Prices ruled at Rs 63 a kg against last week's Rs 64.

Mr Prakash B.Rao, Vice President of the Coconut Oil Merchant Association (COMA), attributed the decline in prices to corporates staying away from markets. He said that corporate buying was almost nil in the last couple of days as most of them have sufficient stock.

This, coupled with the non availability of empty tankers for the movement of coconut oil to north Indian markets, resulted in lower demand. He said that the north Indian buyers are adopting a “wait and watch” approach and are seen entering the market only when prices dip further.

They have already built enough stocks in anticipation of copra procurement by Government agencies at the minimum support price. However, this has not yet commenced, he said, adding that higher arrivals from producing areas have also resulted in the bearish trend.

Prices of coconut oil in Tamil Nadu ruled at Rs 61 a kg this week.

Prices of edible oil such as palm oil and palm kernel oil, substitutes for coconut oil, are still ruling on the higher side. Prices were more or less at the same level of Rs 65 and Rs 72 a kg respectively, this week.

The arrival of both these edible oils to the Indian market is low and this has resulted in sustaining the prices compared with last week, he said.

Referring to copra, he said that prices were ruling at Rs 4,300 a quintal in Kerala and Rs 4,200 in Tamil Nadu.

According to Mr Thalath Mahamood, President, COMA, the coconut oil market will find support at the current level as other edible oils are relatively costly. This is the peak season for coconut in Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu and Kerala. However, supplies are likely to decline with the arrival of monsoon by the end of this month, he said.

Marginal retail offtake perks up sugar

Our Correspondent



Mumbai, May 2:

Sugar prices in the spot market witnessed a marginal increase on improved retail demand on Wednesday. On the spot, the S-grade rose by Rs 4-6 a quintal and M-grade by Rs 10 for fine variety. Naka and mill tender rates were unchanged as the market was closed for holiday on Tuesday. Arrivals and dispatches in the market were higher but at the beginning of the month, routine improvement in local demand kept price trend under check. In the international markets,

expectations of additional supply from India kept prices under pressure for the fourth consecutive day.

In the last one week, sugar futures have dropped by more than \$15 a tonne. Domestic producers are facing inventory glut due to higher production and absence of upcountry bulk buying for long. For them, domestic sale is the only way out to ease stock pressure. Hence, supply is ample, said sources.

A wholesaler said that as sugar prices in other States are at a par with Maharashtra's parity especially in southern States, there were no takers for Maharashtra sugar. In the Vashi market arrivals were 54-55 truckloads and local dispatches were 53-54 truckloads. Tuesday being a holiday there were no mill tenders. Some 5-7 mills were offering tenders till Wednesday afternoon, but the response was poor. Mill tender rates were Rs 2,770-2,880 (Rs 2,770-2,890) for S-grade and Rs 2,860-2,950 (Rs 2,880-2,970) for M-grade.

The Bombay Sugar Merchants Association's spot rates: S-grade Rs 2,912-2,962 (Rs 2,910-2,956) and M-grade Rs 3,002-3,121 (Rs 3,002-3,111).

Naka delivery rates: S-grade Rs 2,860-2,910 (Rs 2,860-2,910) and M-grade Rs 2,960-3,060 (Rs 2,960-3,060).

Report of US ban on clove-flavoured cigarettes hits spice's price

G.K. Nair



Kochi, May 2:

The cloves market appeared to head towards a crash following reports of ban on sales of clove-flavoured cigarettes by the US, which may lead to a sharp fall in its demand at a time when the crop in Indonesia is said to be a bumper one.

Meanwhile, the WTO Appellate Body on a formal petition filed by the Indonesian authorities against the US decision to the WTO in April 2010, decided on April 4 that “the US Law banning the sale of clove-flavoured cigarette to discourage children from smoking was unfair to Indonesia because menthol cigarette can still be sold in the US.”

WTO's Dispute Settlement Body ruled in September last year that “Indonesia's claim about the discriminatory nature of the law was true and that, therefore, the US had breached international trade rules, especially the Technical Barrier to Trade (TBT) Agreement, by favouring locally made menthol cigarettes.”

Even though Indonesia has won the case against the US, export of its cigarettes might face a threat from the fact that “many countries have signed the Framework Convention for Tobacco Control under the WHO supervision,” an overseas report said. Add to this Brazil is also reported to have banned cigar sales.

Indonesia's export of cigarettes valued at \$284 million in 2009, \$357 million in 2010 and around \$400 million in 2011. Therefore, the ban would affect the offtake of cloves by the Indonesian cigar industry which is already claimed to be holding stocks for two years.

Adding fuel to fire the world's major cloves producing country has a bumper crop with an estimated production of over 80,000 tonnes this year. Similarly, crop in other origins are also said to be normal or above normal. As a result, the trade fears of a huge surplus this year leading to a potential sharp fall in the prices.

According to upcountry trade sources, there has been panic selling in Madagascar as Comoros new crop has started arriving at the market.

Madagascar exporters were reportedly selling at \$9,000 a tonne currently while Comoros is expected to open at \$6,000-7,000 a tonne as the poor growers there may not wait, they claimed.

It is a cyclical factor that the cloves crop will be good in every third year and “we have experienced it several times in the past,” they said.

For the past couple of years the growers were getting good prices and any fall in it now to below remunerative levels would have a serious impact on the next crop, growers in Nagercoil told *Business Line*. The cost of inputs also increased correspondingly following the rise in prices, they added.

Indian consumption is estimated at 12,000-15,000 tonnes and the country is a major consumer of cloves and as the normal indigenous production is estimated at somewhere between 1,500-2,000 tonnes, India continues to remain a net importer.

Prices in the domestic markets currently are Rs 611 a kg for Colombo, Rs 711 for Zanzibar, and Rs 675 a kg for Madagascar,. "There are only sellers and buyers are not in sight," Bangalore based a dealer told *Business Line*.

"If the present trend continues, the market will plummet to below Rs 500 a kg levels soon," they claimed.

Last year this time markets were at \$21,000-25,000 a tonne following failure of the Indonesian crop and against this the market at present is at around \$9,000 a tonne with indications to fall further to \$6,000-7,000 a tonne, the trade said.

Every grain of wheat will be purchased from farmers, assures Chouhan

Press Trust of India



Mr Shivraj Singh Chouhan

Bhopal, May 2:

The Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister, Mr Shivraj Singh Chouhan, said that every single grain of wheat would be purchased from the farmers in the State under the wheat procurement process.

The farmers should remain calm without getting misled by rumours, the Chief Minister said adding that the remaining farmers will be registered by May 3 and the wheat would be purchased from them.

Mr Chouhan said this while addressing commissioners and collectors through video-conferencing at Mantralaya here last evening.

He asked the officials to assure the farmers that their produce will be purchased at all costs.

Mr Chouhan said that wheat purchase at minimum support price was a massive task and added that the process was disrupted due to inadequate supply of gunny bags recently.

There should be no doubts among the farmers regarding availability of gunny bags, the Chief Minister said.

Mr Chouhan asked the commissioners and collectors to rationalise the distribution of bags. Gunny bags available with the purchase centres reporting procurement in lesser quantity should be dispatched to centres reporting excess purchase.

The Chief Minister said that the bonus on minimum support price is for the genuine farmers. Middlemen should not be allowed to take advantage of this at any cost.

Maharashtra to give subsidy to dairies producing milk powder

Our Bureau

Mumbai, May 2:

The State Government has decided to give subsidy to cooperative dairies that convert their surplus milk to milk powder.

The State Cabinet on Wednesday cleared a proposal to give a subsidy of Rs 2 on every litre of milk having fat content of more than 8.5 per cent.

The subsidy will help the dairy industry that has been hit by excess production and complete ban on export of milk powder. In Maharashtra the dairy industry is primarily managed by cooperative societies, which are controlled by farmers.

Due to the export ban, all the 11 powder making plants have stopped production since last two months and they are carrying a huge inventory.

A board member of a leading cooperative dairy said that due to excess supply the dairies were procuring milk from farmers at Rs 15 a litre as against Rs 19 last year.

Before the ban, about 20 lakh litres of milk used to be procured for milk powder. The dairies don't have enough space to store the milk, the member said.

"Ever since the ban came into force, the industry has been seeking a subsidy but only after long negotiations that our demand has been finally met.

If the State Government had accepted our demand, when the ban came into force, milk wastage could have been curtailed," the member said.

Agri futures jump on move to cut penalty on delivery default

Suresh P. Iyengar



Mumbai, May 2:

Chana (gram) and jeera (cumin) futures rose by the maximum permitted level on Wednesday. The four per cent jump in these counters followed market regulator Forward Markets Commission's move to cut the penalty for default in delivery.

The cut in penalty is the first positive news for traders after a spate of harsh measures taken by the market regulator to rein in speculation in the agricultural commodity futures. Last month, the market regulator banned trading in guarseed and guar gum after their prices rallied sharply.

Stiff margins were imposed on commodities such as pepper, chana, soya bean and mustard seed. The open interest was cut in most agriculture commodities.

“The Commission has decided to review the penalty structure on delivery defaults by a seller in compulsory delivery contracts,” said an FMC circular.

Based on the views received from exchanges and market participants, the Commission has decided to reduce the penalty on delivery default by a seller in respect of rape/mustard seed, chana and pepper in compulsory delivery, it said.

The new penalty structure may be made applicable to contracts expiring from this month onwards. The commission will review its directive after four months, depending on market developments.

Mr Sushil Sinha, Country Head, Karvy Commodities, said the cut in penalty boosted investor confidence after a series of rumours that the Government is planning to ban more agriculture commodities.

UPPER CIRCUIT

Near month futures contract of chana and jeera increased to Rs 3,874 (Rs 3,833) a quintal and Rs 12,847 (Rs 12,352) a quintal on Wednesday. These two commodities hit the upper circuit on the NCDEX.

A highly export-oriented commodity, pepper gained one per cent to close at Rs 37,300 (Rs 36,860) a quintal after hitting a day's high of Rs 37,470. However, a fall in mentha oil and few other commodities pulled down the NCDEX turnover marginally to Rs 6,552 crore on Wednesday against Rs 6,596 crore recorded on Monday.

Farm costs panel moots higher MSP for pulses, oilseeds

PTI



New Delhi, May 2:

To encourage production of pulses and oilseeds, the Commission for Agricultural Costs and Prices (CACP) has suggested an increase of up to Rs 1,000 per quintal in their minimum support price for this year's kharif season.

CACP, which advises the government on pricing policy for major farm produce, has recommended an MSP of Rs 4,500 per quintal for green gram (moong), Rs 4,300 per quintal for black mapte (urad) and Rs 4,000 per quintal for tur for the 2012-13 kharif season starting June, an official said.

Last year, support price of moong, urad and tur was Rs 3,500 per quintal, Rs 3,300 per quintal and Rs 3,200 per quintal respectively.

The CACP recommendations will be soon placed before Cabinet for final approval.

“Pulses, being short in supply, need special attention. The support prices recommended are near to their C2 cost, that includes all actual expenses in cash and kind incurred in production by actual owner plus rent paid for leased land, among others,” the official said. India imports pulses to meet the domestic production shortfall of 3-4 million tonnes. Pulses output stagnated at around 15 million tonnes for some time, but crossed 17 million tonnes in the last two years, due to hike in support price. Kharif sowing begins with the start of the South-West monsoon in June, and harvesting starts from October. CACP has also suggested MSP of groundnut at Rs 3,700 per quintal, sesamum seed at Rs 4,200 per quintal, soyabean at Rs 2,200 per quintal and sunflower seed at Rs 3,700 per quintal for forthcoming kharif season. Last year, the support price of groundnut was fixed at Rs 2,700 per quintal, sesamum at Rs 3,400 per quintal, soyabean at Rs 1,650 per quintal and sunflower seed at Rs 2,800 per quintal, respectively. The official said oilseeds farmers need to be given maximum incentives to reduce the country's dependence on imports, which is more than Rs 30,000 crore a year.

Given the excess supply of rice due to bumper crop last year, the CACP has recommended only 15.7 per cent jump in MSP of paddy at Rs 1,250 per quintal for 2012-13, as against Rs 1,080 per quintal last year. The Commission has suggested a 53 per cent increase in MSP of jowar at Rs 1,500 per quintal and 20 per cent jump in support price of maize and bajra each at Rs 1,175 per quintal, respectively, over the MSP last year. The support price of cotton has been suggested at Rs 3,600-3,900 per quintal for this year.

Labour woes affect jute sowing in North-East



Extracting the details

Sowing is yet to be completed in south Bengal that accounts for over 60 per cent of the country's total production

The Union Government recently announced a 31 per cent higher minimum support price for raw jute at Rs 2,200 a quintal

Acreage has remained constant at about nine lakh hectares over the last few years

Kolkata, May 2:

The sowing of jute is yet to pick up this season despite a higher minimum support price and favourable weather conditions.

Jute sowing starts in the last week of March and continues up to end May. Harvesting begins in end June or in the first week of July.

Labour crunch

According to senior officials in the jute industry, there has been a 10-15 per cent decline in sowing in north Bengal, Bihar and Assam on account of labour problems. Sowing is yet to be completed in south Bengal.

South Bengal districts of Murshidabad and Nadia account for over 60 per cent of the country's total jute sowing and production. "Non-availability of labour is one of the biggest issues confronting the industry and this is affecting sowing in these areas," a senior official said.

The production is likely to be either a tad lower or similar to last year. The production of raw jute was close to 110 lakh bales (1 bale – 180 kg) last year.

The Union Government recently announced a 31 per cent higher minimum support price for raw jute at Rs 2,200 a quintal (Rs 1,675 a quintal) for the TD-5 variety of jute ex-Assam for the 2012-13 crop year.

Area constant

Area under cultivation has remained constant at about nine lakh hectares over the last few years. Bengal accounts for almost 67 per cent of the total area under cultivation at 6 lakh hectare.

Of this , 4 lakh hectares lie in Murshidabad and Nadia, the senior official said. Hugli, Burdwan, Bankura, Howrah and Midnapore are some of the other jute producing districts of the State.

Balance sheet

The industry has a huge carryover stock of 30-35 lakh bales, coupled with an estimated production of 110 lakh bales, the total supply would be adequate to meet the country's total

demand which stands at about 105 lakh bales, said Mr Manish Poddar, Chairman, Indian Jute Mills' Association.

Mixed trend in spot rubber

Our Correspondent



Kottayam, May 2:

Spot rubber was mixed on Wednesday. The undercurrent was partially bullish as the market made marginal gains in selected counters. But the absence of quantity buyers and fresh enquiries from major consuming industries kept RSS 4 comparatively dull during the day.

Sheet rubber finished unchanged at Rs 196 a kg at Kottayam and Kochi, according to traders and the Rubber Board

In futures, the May series closed at Rs 193.65 (192.71), June at Rs 199.50 (199.20), July at Rs 203.69 (203.17), August at Rs 203.75 (202.50), September at Rs 203 (200) and October at Rs 199 (200.93) a kg on the National Multi Commodity Exchange (NMCE).

In the international market, natural rubber prices strengthened on Wednesday. TOCOM rubber futures rose to a three-week-high on early trades buoyed by upbeat industrial production data from the US.

RSS 3 (spot) increased to Rs 205.94 (204.23) a kg at Bangkok. The May futures inched up to ¥301 (Rs 198.42) from ¥300.9 during the day session but then slipped to ¥299 (Rs 197.02) in the night session on the Tokyo Commodity Exchange.

Spot rates were (Rs/kg): RSS-4: 196 (196); RSS-5: 194.50 (194); ungraded: 192 (192); ISNR 20: 194.50 (194) and latex 60 per cent: 124 (122.50).

Turmeric pales on lack of orders from N. India

Our Correspondent



Erode, May 2:

No exporter or trader responded to tenders for purchase of turmeric in Erode as they don't have orders from North India.

“The turmeric markets in Erode are being dominated by stockists and 55 per cent of the 18,000 bags of turmeric that arrived were purchased by them. No trader or exporter placed tenders, as there were no fresh orders from north Indian towns.

“Further, prices in Sangli and Nizamabad markets are Rs 500 a quintal lower than in the Erode markets. Though prices at Sangli and other places are not viable for turmeric farmers, they are selling as they require money for agricultural operations,” said Mr R. K.V. Ravishankar, President, Erode Turmeric Merchants Association.

On Wednesday, prices fell by Rs 100-150 a quintal.

According to Mr Ravishankar, turmeric production is high this year and a minimum of 80 lakh bags of turmeric (each bag weighing 85 kg) are expected to be produced. But sales, he said, will be lower.

He said that traders and exporters are expecting prices of turmeric to fall by Rs 300-400 a quintal next week. So they did have not purchase any stock.

Traders also said that last year at many places in Karnataka and in Tamil Nadu 's Dharmapuri, farmers have harvest a reasonable yield of over 25 quintals an acre.

However in Erode district, though the acreage has increased, the yield has dropped below 20 quintals an acre. So Karnataka farmers are ready to sell their produce at a lower price, whereas in Erode district the farmers are incurring loss.

The farmers expect prices to prevail at this level or increase only slightly in the next 15 days. And due to rain, the arrival of turmeric at the Regulated Marketing Committee was lower at 680 bags,.

At the Erode Turmeric Merchants Association Sales yard, the finger variety sold at Rs 2,326-3,391 a quintal, and the root variety at Rs 2,320-3,195.

Salem crop: The finger variety sold at Rs 3,499-4,009 and the root variety at Rs 3,118-3,295. Totally, 3,038 bags of turmeric arrived for sale, of which, 1,459 were sold.

At the Regulated Marketing Committee, the finger variety sold at Rs 3,123- 3,599 and the root variety, at Rs 3,069-3,299. Of arrival the 680 bags that arrived, 628 of them were sold.

At the Gobichettipalayam Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Society, the finger variety sold at Rs 2,886-3,606 and the root variety at Rs 2,539-3,389. All the 336 bags of turmeric that arrived for sale were sold.

At the Erode Cooperative Marketing Society, the finger variety fetched Rs 2,780-3,689 and the root variety Rs 2,575-3,299. All the 1,376 bags kept for sale were sold.

Sugar production up 11% at 25.1 mt in October-April



Most of the increase has been contributed by Uttar Pradesh, which has seen a rise of almost 1.1 mt at 6.95 mt this year so far.

New Delhi, May 2:

Sugar production has gone up by 11 per cent to 25.1 million tonnes during October-April, 2011-12, driven by higher output in Uttar Pradesh.

According to industry body ISMA, the country had produced about 22.6 mt in the same period last marketing year (October-September).

“Most of the increase has been contributed by Uttar Pradesh, which has seen a rise of almost 1.1 mt in sugar production at 6.95 mt this year so far,” the Indian Sugar Mills Association (ISMA) said in a statement today.

The output has risen by five lakh tonnes in Maharashtra, a major sugar producing state, at 8.83 mt. Production in Karnataka stood at 3.71 mt, in Tamil Nadu at 1.57 mt and in Andhra Pradesh at 1.11 mt.

Buoyed by higher output, the association is confident of meeting its production target of 26 mt for the ongoing sugar marketing season.

“ISMA is absolutely certain that its sugar production estimate of 26 mt projected way back in July 2011 will be achieved,” the association said.

The balance nine lakh tonnes would come largely from Tamil Nadu which is expected to still produce about 6.5 lakh tonnes between May and September in the current season, it said.

During last year, sugar mills in Tamil Nadu produced 6.9 lakh tonnes during May-September.

ISMA’s production estimate is, however, higher than the Government’s estimate of 25.2 mt for this year.