

Published: May 8, 2012 00:00 IST | Updated: May 8, 2012 05:39 IST

Afghan officials complete training at TNAU

Staff Reporter

Five officers from the Plant Protection and Quarantine Department, Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock, Afghanistan, completed a four-month training programme at Tamil Nadu Agricultural University.

The participants attended an international training programme on “Plant Pest and Disease Diagnosis” to implement the same in their country. The training programme was the second of its kind, and was held under the aegis of GRM International Limited, Australia.

It will be followed up with online classes for two months. The trainees were introduced to subjects related to plant pathology, entomology, nematology, weed science and seed certification, molecular detection of pathogens, bio-control of pests, weeds and diseases.

At the valediction, P. Subbian, Registrar, TNAU, said the training project was obtained by the university through global tender.

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Soil type, climate must for organic farming

Staff Reporter

NABARD presents results of a three-year project

A workshop on organic farming was organised recently by the National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) at the Arul Anandar College here in which the findings of a three-year project on the sector was presented.

Under Farm Innovation Promotion Fund (FIPF), NABARD had commissioned a project on the efficacy of organic farming methods on certain crops through an organic farmer, S. Mannar Mannan from the Model Integrated Organic Farm and Training Centre.

R. Shankar Narayan, NABARD Assistant General Manager, said that the objective was to guide farmers on the appropriate methods of organic farming and “hand hold” them towards organic certification and thereby ensure recognition for their efforts.

Delivering the inaugural address, he said that the project's aim was to facilitate a conscious shift towards organic methods of cultivation by imparting a series of trainings and demonstrations.

Farmer should be armed with all the data such as input cost vis-à-vis returns before he embarks on organic farming for particular crops.

Agronomy studies

The project also took up agronomy studies and field trials of selected popular crops in order to document the efficacy or otherwise of organic methods on these crops. Another variable taken up for closer look was the verification of effectiveness of commonly used organic inputs.

The study, he said, concluded that the soil type was a critical variable for deciding on the crop and desired productivity and as such, farmers should get their soil tested to find out the appropriate crop.

Mr. Shankar Narayan also released a booklet containing the findings of the project and handed over the first copy to Dr. C. Udaya Kumar, in-charge of KVK, Gandhigram University, Dindigul. Over 12 training programmes were held on various related topics during the current project.

The project proponent, Mr. Mannar Mannan, explained that the research was done with a farmer's perspective of organic farming and the dependability of income from organic farming.

S. Mayalagu, a soil scientist who independently analysed the findings, was of the view that results from organic farming varied with soil type and climate. Dr. Maruthamalai Murugan another independent expert who studied the findings also felt that farmers should move towards soil-based farming so that maximum returns can be ensured.

The workshop was attended by over 60 farmers including practicing organic farmers.

Xavier Vedam, Principal, Arul Anandar College also addressed the gathering.

Published: May 8, 2012 00:00 IST | Updated: May 8, 2012 05:36 IST

Farmer felicitated for achieving high productivity

A farmer from Kulamangalam village has been recognized by 'Mahindra Sammidhi' of Mahindra and Mahindra Limited for breaking established stereotypes and being instrumental in driving sustainable and scalable innovative farming technologies and making a positive impact on the agricultural community.

Madurai Productivity Council had organized a meeting recently to felicitate V. Krishnan, the agriculturist for achieving high productivity in paddy production by implementing new methods. Mr. Krishnan received the national award from Sharad Pawar, Union Minister of Agriculture and Food Processing.

Mr. Krishnan, during the felicitation held in Madurai, said that by implementing this new technology he was able to increase productivity of paddy by about 60 per cent and his cost reduction was to an extent of 40 per cent which included reduction of manpower. He also said that he is prepared to guide fellow farmers to achieve this.

The felicitation meeting was chaired by S. Rajagopal, president of the Council and G. Subramanian, programme committee chairman proposed a vote of thanks.

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Experts discuss ways to curb pests in coconut farms

Staff Reporter



A way out: R. Chandramohan, Head, Division of Crop Protection, Central Plantation Crops Research Institute, addresses an interface programme on the institute premises in Kasaragod on Monday.

Farmers, government officials and scientists discussed steps to prevent incidence of pests and diseases in coconut and areca nut farms during an interface programme at the Central Plantation Crops Research Institute (CPCRI) here on Monday.

The programme was part of a proposed comprehensive scheme on pest and disease management in coconut and areca nut farms. It is to be implemented by the State Agriculture department.

Delivering the keynote address, R. Chandramohan, Head of the Division of Crop Protection at the CPCRI, stressed on the importance of prophylactic measures to prevent incidence of pests and diseases in coconut and areca nut cultivation.

Scientists from the CPCRI and Kerala Agriculture University (KAU) made presentations on specific topics before beginning discussions on how to curb incidence and spread of pests and diseases in the farms.

P. C. Balakrishnan, Director of Coconut Mission, KAU, Muralidharan, K. B. Hebbar, Anitha Karun, Ravi Bhat, P. Subramanian, K. Subhakaran and A. C. Mathew, scientists from the CPCRI, also made presentations during the programme.

C. Thampan, Senior Scientist, welcomed the participants, and M. R. Narayanan Kutty, Deputy Director of Agriculture (RATTC), proposed the vote of thanks.

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'Need for self-sufficiency in vegetables'

Staff Reporter

Chief Minister Oommen Chandy said here on Monday that it is a pity that Kerala has to depend on other States for vegetables.

In his address after launching the Vegetable Initiative for Peri Urban Clusters at the Ernakulam Maharajas College here, Mr. Chandy said that Malayalis had won appreciation for their hard work and commitment while pursuing various jobs abroad. "But we are not able to reciprocate those traits in our State," he said.

Stating that Kerala also depends on other States for poultry and milk, the Chief Minister said that the State should become self-sufficient in production of vegetables. The Union government is supportive of the various schemes proposed by the State to boost internal production, he said.

Mr. Chandy said that the vegetable initiative for peri urban clusters will help in producing pesticide-free vegetables in the State. "We should take up this project as a challenge and deliver results," he said.

Several organisations in the city, including the Vegetable and Fruit Promotion Council Keralam (VFPCK) and the District Agri-Horticulture Mission are part of the new drive to spread the cultivation of vegetables on terraces.

The government had sanctioned Rs. 2 crore towards the first phase of the programme, which aims to help 12,500 families set up terrace gardens. A total of 2, 50,000 seedlings will be distributed. In the second phase, one lakh families will be brought under the programme. The programme is being financially backed by the national-level Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana.

Specially designed UV stabilised bags have been chosen for growing vegetables on terrace gardens. The bags, with planted seedlings, will be reached to the homes of the beneficiaries.

The chosen families will be given a 50 per cent subsidy. A single unit will be allowed in each of the homes.

The subsidy is being met by the State Horticultural Mission.

The district administration, Better Kochi Response Group, Ernakulam District Residents' Association Apex Council and Residents' Apex Council Ernakulam are among the others involved in launching the new drive.

The programme organisers said a handbook on cultivation of vegetables, prepared by the Horticultural Mission, will be distributed free of cost. Besides, selected members of residents' associations will be given training in vegetable cultivation. Respective agricultural officers and specially trained volunteers will help out in making the programme a success.

Those wishing to get a vegetable garden unit on their terrace tops should submit their applications to their respective residents' associations along with the payment of Rs. 800 towards the subsidised cost of the unit.

For details contact: Agri-Horti Culture Society: 0484-2362738; Better Kochi Response Group: 9895404108.

Chandy launches initiative in vegetable cultivation

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Viniculture is no sour grapes for this farmer

Staff Reporter

It is the third time Saramma's vine is producing grapes this year



Green thumbSaramma Mathew in her kitchen garden which has yielded a rewarding harvest this season.— Photo: by Special Arrangement

Growing grapes in Kerala may not be the easiest of tasks, especially for a farmer who has spent most of her life tending to rice paddy, vegetable plantations and tapioca gardens.

What makes the achievement doubly sweet is that the farmer in question, Saramma Mathew from Mulanthuruthy, never expected it to happen so dramatically. It is the third time the vine is producing grapes this year, she told *The Hindu*. And, it has flowered for the fourth time, she said with a lot of enthusiasm in her voice, as she described the rewarding though modest yield of rose grapes. There were 15 to 20 bunches, she said.

People in the village were aware that Ms. Mathew had green thumbs and could grow anything she wanted to. But grapes have beaten all odds, including her age.

She said that she planted the grape vine without knowing what it actually was four years ago. The first flowering, in the third year, gave some hint of what was to come. However, this year has been a year of surprises, she said and attributed the fruits to the grace of God. Ms. Mathew is an enthusiastic farmer, who still wades into her 30-cent paddy field and takes care of her

vegetable garden without help from anybody else, her children having moved out after their marriages.

She has also been the centre of attention for cultivating cabbage and cauliflower and encouraging her neighbours to do so. An official of the department of agriculture said that the rose grapes were grown without the use of pesticides or any synthetic fertilizer.

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- *She has been the centre of attention for cultivating cabbage and cauliflower*
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Published: May 8, 2012 08:45 IST | Updated: May 8, 2012 08:45 IST

Soil type and climate essential for organic farming

Staff Reporter



File Photo An organic farm at Kundrakudi Adheenam Mutt at Kundrakudi in Sivaganga district.

Results of a three-year project on organic farming presented during the workshop

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Agronomy studies taken up

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Farmers' grievance day meet

: The farmers' grievance day meet for this month will be conducted at Tenkasi Panchayat Union Office at 10.30 a.m. on May 18.

According to Collector R. Selvaraj, the district administration has proposed to conduct the farmers' grievance day meet at other important towns of the district such as Tenkasi and Ambasamudram also apart from organising it in the district headquarters with the objective of encouraging the participation of more agriculturists in the meet.

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Temperature dips, but veggie prices soar

K. Lakshmi

After a few gruelling days when the mercury level crossed the 40 degree-mark, Chennai finally had a respite from the soaring temperatures, on Monday.

This is set to continue for two more days. Residents in many localities of the city, including Thiruvanmiyur, Nungambakkam and Adyar, said they enjoyed a breezy morning, which was a welcome relief after the sweltering past week. An overcast sky for the most part of the day, led to a sharp dip in the day temperature. While the maximum temperature in Nungambakkam was 35.4 degree Celsius, Meenambakkam recorded 37.2 degree Celsius.

Officials of the Meteorological department said the increased cloud cover on Monday, had weakened the westerly wind that brings in hot air. Easterlies, which were responsible for the cool breeze, had set in as early as 7 a.m., bringing down the temperature. A weak cyclonic circulation over the Bay of Bengal is also cited as one of the reasons for the change in weather. Residents can expect the next two days to remain relatively cool.

However, the contrasting weather in the city and in neighbouring states over the past few days has influenced a further hike in vegetable prices. Traders at the Koyambedu vegetable market, the wholesale hub of produce, said the rains and a dip in crop yields in other states such as Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh had led to an escalation in vegetable prices by a minimum of Rs. 4 a kg.

While beans cost Rs. 70 a kg in the wholesale market, potatoes and carrots cost Rs. 16 a kg and Rs. 28 a kg respectively. Drumsticks and beetroots also cost more.

M. Susheela, a resident of Korattur, said: "I was shocked when I checked the price list of vegetables at a nearby retail store. I did not buy the expensive vegetables such as beans that cost Rs. 80 a kg, and carrots priced at Rs. 50 a kg. Even potatoes that are usually priced around Rs. 15 cost Rs.22 a kg." Onions are perhaps one of the few vegetables that have had stable prices over the past few days.

Beans cost Rs. 70 a kg and potatoes and carrots cost Rs. 16 a kg and Rs. 28 a kg respectively

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Farmers take away tractors seized by bank

Special Correspondent

Recovery measures taken by the Kattumannarkoil branch of State Bank of India have been met with stiff resistance from a section of farmers. Recovery agents of the bank had seized at least a dozen tractors from farmers for not repaying loans on schedule. However, about 50 farmers led by K.V. Elangeeran, president of the Vettuvaikkal, Naraikkal Eri Paasana Vivasayigal Sangam, went to LEP Nagar where the seized tractors were kept and drove them away.

Mr Elangeeran told this correspondent that unmindful of the hardships suffered by the farmers on account of cyclones "Nisha" and "Thane" in the consecutive years, the bank was insisting that they repay loans on time.

Even though the farmers had offered to make part payments, the bank was insisting that they ought to clear at least 50 per cent of the loan, along with interest, to avert penal action.

Mr. Elangeeran said that when farmers' representatives met branch manager K.Panneerselvam and apprised him of the problems faced by them, the latter told them tersely that as per bank rules he had to initiate penal measures and if they had any grievance in this regard, they should seek redress from the regional manager of the SBI.

The regional manager, in turn, told the farmers that only when they repay 50 per cent of the outstanding amount, the bank would abstain from taking any adverse action. Mr. Elangeeran also said that the bank had appointed private persons as recovery agents, who were unsympathetic to farmers. Therefore, the aggrieved farmers had to take "release the seized tractors." When contacted, Mr. Panneerselvam said that some years ago, a loan mela was

organised in the region and loans ranging from Rs. 4 lakh to Rs. 5 lakh were given to at least 75 farmers to buy tractors.

Owing to non-repayment of loans for years, the outstanding amount for each farmer touched Rs. 8 lakh. Because of non-realisation of loans, non-performing assets of the bank had grown. Hence, as per the direction issued by senior officials, the recovery agents had seized the tractors. Some of the recovery agents had called him up saying that a group of farmers had entered LEP Nagar and were about to take away the tractors and hence, they sought police protection. The recovery agents had, therefore, decided to lodge a police complaint, Mr. Panneerselvam said. Regional Manager of SBI M. Veerapandain said a police complaint had been lodged.

HASSAN, May 8, 2012

Farmers stage dharna against high price of seed potato

The Karnataka Rajya Raitha Sangha staged a dharna outside the Deputy Commissioner's office here on Monday in protest against the district administration's alleged inability to fix an affordable price for seed potato. It was led by Kodihalli Chandrashekhar. The protesters formed a human chain at N.R Circle before staging the dharna. They claimed that the cost of bringing seed potato from Punjab to Hassan would be around Rs. 350 a quintal. The administration should have fixed the price at Rs. 650 a quintal, after including transportation charges and commission to mediators. However, the price quoted by merchants was Rs. 1,400 a quintal. Meanwhile, the farmers locked the door of the Deputy Commissioner's chamber here as officials did not receive their memorandum for a long time.

HASSAN, May 8, 2012

Government urged to set up farmer-friendly markets

Karnataka Rajya Raitha Sangha holds Mysore division-level convention in Hassan



Making a point:K.S. Puttannaiah speaking at the Mysore division-level convention of the KRRS in Hassan on Monday.— Photo: Prakash Hassan

Karnataka Rajya Raitha Sangha senior leader K.S. Puttannaiah has said that the State government was yet to take any step to stop the practice of farmers paying commission to mediators at Agricultural Produce Marketing Committee yards.

“We had asked the Chief Minister to relieve us from the burden of paying a 10 per cent commission on our earnings to mediators at APMC yards. But the issue was not addressed in the budget,” he said, after inaugurating the Mysore divisional-level convention of the KRRS and the Hasiru Sene here on Monday.

Demand

“Farmers cannot directly sell their produce to buyers in APMC yards. Raitha Sante, the market yard for small and marginal farmers, is a failure. The government should set up farmer-friendly markets,” he said.

Mr. Puttannaiah said farmers had been losing a part of their earnings as commission to mediators. Mediators at the APMC yard in Maddur in Mandya district collected Rs. 30 crore as commission last year, he claimed.

Mr. Puttannaiah said successive governments had never thought of providing a scientific price for agriculture produce. “Though we have renowned economists in the seats of power, the country is yet to address the problems of our agrarian economy,” he said.

Governments blamed

“Governments are yet to give due credit to farmers' hard labour on the field. IAS officers, whose job is limited to paper work, get a huge salary, while farmers, who toil in the fields get peanuts. Even farmers have not understood the value of the hard work they are putting in,” he said.

Martyrs' Day

Badagalapura Nagendra, general secretary, KRRS, said the sangha would observe Martyr's Day Bangalore on July 21.

KRRS president Chamarasa Mali Patil and honorary president Somaguddu Rangaswamy were present.

• *'Farmers forced to pay commission to mediators'*

• *Raitha Santhe is a failure: Puttannaiah*

hindustantimes

Tue, 08 May 2012

weather

Delhi - INDIA

Today's Weather



Partly Cloudy

Tuesday, May 8

Max Min
39.8° | 24.6°

Rain: 00 mm in 24hrs

Humidity: 40%

Wind: Normal

Sunrise: 7:14

Sunset: 17:48

Barometer: 1005

Tomorrow's Forecast



Sunny

Wednesday, May 9

Max Min
43° | 27°

Extended Forecast for a week

Thursday May 10	Friday May 11	Saturday May 12	Sunday May 13	Monday May 14
43° 28° Rainy	44° 29° Partly Cloudy	44° 29° Partly Cloudy	44° 31° Rainy	44° 29° Rainy

7 MAY, 2012, 05.26PM IST, PTI

Farm items comprised 12% of total trade in futures in FY'12

NEW DELHI: Trade in agri commodities was around Rs 22 lakh crore last fiscal and was 12.12 per cent of the total trade in all the commodity exchanges in the country, Parliament was informed today.

In a written reply to the Rajya Sabha, Food Minister K V Thomas said the total volume of farm items traded in the 2011- 12 fiscal was 4,942.09 lakh tonnes, which was 35.23 per cent of the volume of all commodities traded at the exchanges.

"The percentage share of agricultural commodities traded in futures market in all the national and regional exchanges was 35.23 per cent of the total volume and 12.12 per cent of the total value of trade in the year 2011-12," Thomas said.

Presently, 27 agri commodities are actively traded in futures commodity markets, he added.

On the issue of rising prices of some commodities, the minister attributed it to demand-supply mismatch.

"It is observed that some of the agricultural commodities have exhibited considerable price rise during the past 2 years, April 2010 to March 2012, such as chana, guar gum, guar seed, potato, rapeseed, mustard seed and mentha oil basically due to demand supply mismatch," Thomas said.

To another query on relation between price rise and futures trading, the minister said that futures trading gives only advance and aggregated information of the likely price scenario of a particular commodity at future date.

Thomas, quoting from the Reserve Bank of India's annual report (2009-10), said "...commodity prices in India seem to be influenced more by other drivers of price changes, particularly demand-supply gap in specific commodities, the degree of dependence on imports and

international price movements in these commodities."

To a separate query, the minister said that government is not considering to ban futures trading in any agricultural commodity, as futures trading is a mechanism for price discovery and price risk management.

In another query, Thomas said the commodity market regulator Forward Markets Commission (FMC) has found instances of financial irregularities in a national commodity exchange.

Without naming the exchange, he said "FMC, the regulator of futures market under the provisions of the Forward Contracts (Regulation) Act, 1952 has conducted investigations into complaints received in a national exchange and has found financial irregularities."

Thomas added that an inquiry into a complaint on tax evasion is also underway.

On the issue of the action taken by the government, he said that they have received a report on the malpractices and the subsequent investigation.

"...however the matter is sub-judice as the alleged individual has moved the court," Thomas added.



Govt admits mismatch between procurement, storage of grains

Agencies Posted online: Mon May 07 2012, 15:13 hrs

New Delhi : Amid vociferous protests by the Opposition on the plight of farmers due to lack of storage for record production of foodgrains, Government today admitted a mismatch between procurement and storage and said efforts were on to ease pressure on godowns by encouraging exports and providing foodgrain to MNREGA workers as part of wages.

Making a brief statement on the farmers' plight in the Lok Sabha during Zero Hour, Finance Minister Pranab Mukherjee admitted a "mismatch" as godowns lacked storage space when there had been a "record production" of rice and wheat. He said that earlier 30-40 per cent of the total production of foodgrain used to be purchased by the government and the rest taken care of by the market. But in the last 2-3 years, due to high minimum support price, procurement had become the primary responsibility of central and state governments and their agencies, he said.

Referring to the shortage of jute bags to store foodgrain, he said to augment their availability, the government was trying to import them, even as two lakh MT of storage capacity has been added. While plastic bags had been banned, the government was following international norms for packaging of sugar, wheat and rice stored in biodegradable jute bags, he said.

Besides providing several tax and other concessions to create more storage capacity, exports were being encouraged and the Rural Development Ministry was working on providing foodgrain to MNREGA workers as part of their wages. State governments have to be involved in this, he said. Mukherjee's remarks followed a 10-minute adjournment of Lok Sabha proceedings after members of NDA, Left, RJD and SP created a furore over farmers' plight, saying foodgrains were rotting and getting destroyed in rains due to lack of storage at a time of record wheat and rice output.

Business Standard

Tuesday, May 08, 2012

Higher summer groundnut output in Gujarat: IOPEPC

Vimukt Dave / Kolkata/ Rajkot May 8, 2012, 0:57 IST

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.

The IOPEPC conducted a survey in various parts of Gujarat during April 28, 2012 and May 3, 2012 with assistance from Dantivada Agriculture University (DAU). The survey showed that

groundnut sowing in Gujarat has increased to 187,000 hectares in 2012 from 115,000 hectares in 2011.

"The insight in to the quality of groundnut and sesame seed is considered to be of immense importance from the export perspective as the exporters can plan their effective export strategy considering the quality of groundnut and sesame seed being harvested and the requirement of importing countries. Therefore, in order to assess the area under cultivation, yield, productivity and quality of groundnut and sesame seed, the council conducts crop survey in all major oilseeds cultivating states during both the season i.e. kharif and rabi. Since Gujarat happens to be one of the key producer states of groundnut and sesame seed in India during rabi season, the council conducted crop survey in this state," said Rajesh Bheda, chairman, IOPEPC.

Groundnut price is ruling higher by almost Rs 300-350 per 20 kg in the range of Rs 1100-1150 per 20 kg. Due to higher export from the India, groundnut prices have shown an increasing trend during this year. As per the IOPEPC data, India exported about 600,000 tonnes of groundnut during 2011-12.

Commenting on the rising export of groundnut Bheda said, "Groundnut exports from India have increased tremendously mainly because of Chinese demand. It will continue this year too and we are hoping good export demand in summer groundnut also."

However some of the traders were not agree with the IOPEPC estimate and opposed the survey method.

According to some traders, summer groundnut production may not be more than 300,000 tonnes this year.

Good returns during the season has prompted farmers to take up more groundnut crop this year. According to IOPEPC, sesame production also is estimated to be higher by over 10 per cent.

IOPEPC has estimated around 52,200 tonnes of sesame production this summer, up from 47,500 tonnes in last year.

As per Gujarat Agriculture Department data, summer sesame was sown on 54,600 hectares in 2012. But according to IOPEPC survey, summer sesame was sown on about 43,000 hectares area which is 20 per cent less than the government data.

Farm items comprise of 12% of total trades in futures in FY12

Presently, 27 agricultural commodities are actively traded in futures commodity markets

Press Trust of India / New Delhi May 07, 2012, 16:47 IST

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THE HINDU Business Line

Pepper declines

G. K. Nair

Kochi, May 7:

The pepper market on Monday witnessed a decline after remaining highly volatile as usual and witnessed some circular trading. All the active contracts dropped marginally.

There was good liquidation and additional buying by those who were having commitments/requirements as the May delivery prices ruled below the spot prices.

Liquidation is mainly attributed to the new measures imposed by the Regulator, market sources told *Business Line*.

May contract on the NCDEX decreased by Rs 105 to the last traded price (LTP) of Rs 37,350 a quintal. June and July contracts declined by Rs215 and Rs265 respectively to the LTP of Rs 37,900 and Rs 38,475 a quintal.

Turnover

Total turnover increased by 1,396 tonnes to 2,457 tonnes. Total open interest declined by 27 tonnes to close at 5,539 tonnes.

May open interest fell by 253 tonnes to 3,339 tonnes. June and July open interest increased by 213 tonnes and 8 tonnes respectively to 2,024 tonnes and 140 tonnes.

Spot prices remained unchanged at previous levels of Rs36.800 (ungarbled) and Rs38,300 (MG 1) a quintal. There was no selling pressure on the physical market. Arrivals continued to remain thin, they said.

Rice steams up on export prospects

Our Correspondent



Karnal, May 7:

Rice prices have begun to rally again on prospects another two million tonnes of the foodgrain being exported in the next 2-3 months

According to Mr Jatin Kumar, an exporter, prospects look bright following good overseas demand.

The sentiment led to some buying emerging in the market. Prices of a few aromatic rice varieties rose. Other aromatic and non-basmati varieties ruled flat. Aromatic rice prices gained by Rs 100-300 a quintal.

Mr Amit Chandna, proprietor of Hanuman Rice Trading Company, said that overseas demand and trade enquiries pushed prices up. The market has seen some good rallies over the last few weeks and the sentiment is still positive, he said.

Of the total rice exported by India so far, around 4.5 million tonnes was non-basmati rice and 2.5 million tonnes basmati.

In the physical market, Pusa-1121 (steam) went up by Rs 200 and quoted at Rs 6,850-7,000 a quintal while Pusa-1121 (sela) sold at Rs 5,500-5,800 a quintal, up Rs 300.

Pure basmati (raw) quoted at Rs 5,500 a quintal while pure basmati (sela) sold at Rs 4,800 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 improved by Rs 100 and sold at Rs 4,800-5,200 a quintal. PR-14 (steam) sold at Rs 2,400-2,700 a quintal while Sugandha (steam) was trading at Rs 3,900-4,100 a quintal.

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

Permal (raw) sold at Rs 2,000-2,230 a quintal, Permal (sela) at Rs 2,100-2,370 a quintal, PR-11 (sela) sold at Rs 2,400-2,640 while PR-11 (steam) was trading at Rs 2,800-3,050 a quintal.

Cardamom market gains on buying support



Kochi, May 7:

The cardamom market gained last week with the prices moving up marginally on buying support from exporters and upcountry dealers at auctions held in Kerala and Tamil Nadu.

Trade sources in Bodinayakannur, the main hub of the cardamom trade in the country, told *Business Line* that good colour first quality cardamom was fetching moderate prices while arrivals at present were of mixed quality materials.

Good colour 8 mm bold cardamom was fetching prices up to Rs 1,300 a kg. According to them, the market has shown a positive trend last week and Ramzan buying is expected to push up the market further in the coming days, they claimed. An estimated 25-30 tonnes were bought by exporters, while demand from the domestic market was slowly picking up. There was a squeeze in arrivals following closing of the season's harvesting.

Meanwhile, the growing areas have received good rains, but it came very late and consequently, the next crop is expected by late August /early September, the growers claimed. They are anticipating that the prices would move up given the long-lean period, according to trade sources. Individual auction average was by and large hovering around Rs 730 a kg. However, it shot up to Rs 830.84 on May 4 auction conducted by the MAS Enterprises.

Arrivals at the KCPMC auction in Sunday stood at 60 tonnes and almost the entire quantity was sold out. The maximum price was at Rs 1,100.50 and the minimum was at Rs 304. Auction average was at Rs 731.18, Mr P.C. Punnoose, General Manager, CPMC, told *Business Line*. He felt the market hadn't yet picked up to the level the growers were anticipating. There is seem to be some sluggishness in the retail marketing centres, he said.

Total arrivals during the current season from August 1, 2011 up to May 6, 2012 were at 16,940 tonnes and the sales at 16,360 tonnes as against about 9,500 tonnes of arrivals and around 9,220 tonnes of sales in the same period last year.

Weighted average price as on May 6, 2012 was at around Rs 616 a kg against Rs 1,082 on the same date last year, according to market sources.

Prices of graded varieties continued its downward trend today also. Their prices in Kumily in rupees per Kg were: AGEB 1,140- 1,160; AGB 975 – 1,000; AGS 800- 820 and AGS 1: 700 - 730.

Open market prices of graded varieties in Bodinayakannur in rupees per kg were: AGEB Rs 1,120 -1,130; AGB Rs 970-990; AGS Rs 760 - 780 and AGS 1: Rs 680 -700.

Alternatives crush soya, its products

Our Correspondent



Indore, May 7:

Soyabean oil prices continued to drop as buyers have found other alternatives to it.

According to Mr Mukesh Purohit, a trader, buyers have found alternatives in cotton and palm oil. This reined in soyabean oil prices on Monday with the global trend, too, casting its shadow.

A drop in demand for soyameal or soya deoiled cake also lead to the bearish trend.

The sluggish trend is likely to continue till a parity in soyabean oil is achieved with cotton oil. Soyabean refined oil was quoted Rs 15 lower at Rs 710-15 for 10 kg. Similarly, soya solvent declined to Rs 678-80 for 10 kg (down Rs 20). In the past one week, soya oil has declined by Rs 20-25 for 10 kg.

Soya oil futures improved marginally on improved CBOT projections with the May contract for soya refined on the NBOT closing Rs 0.40 higher at Rs 750.50 for 10 kg, while the June contract closed Rs 0.90 lower at Rs 758.30.

On the NCDEX also, soya oil May contract closed higher at Rs 751.90, while the June contract closed at Rs 758.90 (down Rs 1.10).

With 50,000 bags of soyabean arriving at various mandis in Madhya Pradesh, soyabean declined to Rs 3,460-3,550 a quintal.

In Indore, soyabean ruled at Rs 3,400-3,570 a quintal Soyabean's plant deliveries dropped by Rs 25 to Rs 3,525-3,600 a quintal. Soyabean futures closed lower with May and June contracts closing at Rs 3,535 and Rs 3,590, respectively.

According to a soyabean trader, further trend in soyabean will be influenced by the weekly plantation report that the US Agriculture Department issue on Tuesday.

Soyameal at Kandla port was quoted at Rs 29,500 a tonne.

Turmeric market agog with talk of NAFED buy

Our Correspondent



Erode, May 7:

Speculation that the National Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Federation (NAFED) is likely to buy huge quantities of turmeric was rife in Erode markets on Monday. However, it did not help lift prices that are currently ruling lower.

According to Mr Rajamanickam, a dealer, upcountry buying is totally lacking. This led to stockists being dominant in purchases.

Stockists, aiming to hold on to the produce on a long-term basis, were helped in the cause with prices dropping by Rs 200 a quintal.

Mr R.K.V. Ravishankar, President, Erode Turmeric Merchants Association told *Business Line*: “Prices of finger and root varieties increased by Rs 100 a quintal on Monday in the Nizamabad market, as traders received information that NAFED will buy a huge quantity. In Erode, prices decreased by Rs 200 a quintal for want of upcountry demand.”

Mr Rajamanickam said that stockists purchased 60 per cent of the arrivals.

On Monday, 17,000-odd bags arrived for sale.

Mr Chinnasamy, a grower from Kodumudi area, said that he and other farmers were hoping that the State Government will begin procuring at least one-third of the turmeric they have produced at a minimum support price. Mr Rajamanickkam said that in villages over 70 lakh bags are being kept by farmers. Some stockists are buying directly from farmers.

Mr Chinnasamy said, "We are selling turmeric to stockists and others at Rs 100 a quintal lower than the market rate, as we save on freight and commissions Also, we are getting cash on the spot." Exporters said that they received virtually no orders from North India They now expect orders in July. An exporter said that they are getting very negligible orders from Delhi and Kolkata, but only quality hybrid varieties are preferred.

On Monday, even the hybrid Salem crop fetched Rs 300 a quintal, due to quality issues.

At the Erode Turmeric Merchants Association Sales yard, the finger variety fetched Rs 2,236-3,506 a quintal and the root variety Rs 2,306-3,304 .

Salem Crop: The finger variety was sold at Rs 2,914-3,741 and the root variety Rs 2,889-3,605 a quintal. Totally, 1,103 bags were sold as against the arrival of 2,011.

At the Regulated Marketing Committee, the finger variety was sold at Rs 3,239 -3,761 and the root variety Rs 3,189-3,559.

Of 1,433 bags that arrived, 1,405 were sold. At the Erode Cooperative Marketing Society, the finger variety was sold at Rs 3,109-3,836 and the root variety Rs 3,069-3,479. All the 1,435 bags kept for sales were sold.

Local demand keeps sugar steady



Mumbai, May 7:

Sugar prices shot up by Rs 10-20 a quintal in the Vashi market on Monday tracking firm sentiment. Mill tender rates improved by Rs 15-20 on fresh demand from local stockists and enquiry from Kolkata–West Bengal side for rail rake purchases. Naka rates increase by Rs 10-40 on eased selling pressure. Moral was firm, said wholesalers.

Mr. Harakhchand Vora of Kavita Trading Co told *Business Line*, “Fresh purchase inquiry from Kolkata–West Bengal side and improved buying by local stockists in the beginning of the month on higher retail demand pushed up the over all sentiment. Upper level mills were not very keen to sell at lower rates as they expect that summer days will lead to higher demand.”

“In beginning of the month, local demand also showed improvement. Bulk consumers were also active at upper level. Sugar futures market showed upward trend after the announcement of unrestricted sugar exports from India last week” he said.

Analyst said despite higher productions this year, the market has stabilised at the present level considering higher production cost. Continuous weakness in Indian currency against US dollar (from Rs 49.50 a dollar in first week of March to Rs 53.50 now) has made it easier for Indian exports. Negative effect of decline of \$80 in international sugar price in the last two months has thus eased significantly. Strong US dollar is a positive factor for Indian sugar exports. Brazil's new crop is expected to arrive in June hence India has a chance to export maximum before the Brazilian sugar enters the world markets.

In the world market on Friday August -12 futures closed higher at \$566.10 (\$559.80) and October-12 futures closed at \$560.30 (\$555.70) per tonnes. In the Vashi market arrivals were about 54-55 truck loads and local dispatches were about 52–53 truck loads. On Saturday evening about 8–10 mills offered tenders and sold about 68,000–70,000 bags in the range of Rs 2,780-2,890 (Rs 2,770-2,870) for S-grade and Rs 2,890-2,970 (Rs 2,870-2,950) for M-grade.

Bombay Sugar Merchants Association's spot rates: S-grade Rs 2,922-2,982 (Rs 2,912-2,982) and M-grade Rs 3,002-3,151 (Rs 3,012-3,151). Naka delivery rates: S-grade Rs 2,920 -2,940 (Rs 2,880-2,920) and M-grade Rs 2,980-3,050 (Rs 2,970-3,050).

Bid to evolve framework to tackle farm sector issues

Hyderabad, May 7:

Agricultural agencies and the Centre for Good Governance have taken up the task of formulating a framework to help farmers meet challenges posed by climatic changes.

The focus of a workshop hosted here today has been to evolve a model to help farmers withstand the challenges through an effective mechanism to tackle them by formulating a framework.

The Centre for Good Governance, Central Research Institute for Dryland Agriculture (CRIDA) and Acharya NG Ranga Agriculture University deliberated these issues at a National Workshop on “Changing Farmer's Risk – Farm-viability centric Agriculture and Allied Sector Interventions.”

The workshop was organised in the backdrop of the farmers exposed to many risk factors such as climate change, frequent natural disasters, uncertainties in yields and prices etc.

The delegates reflected on management of issues involved in climate-related-risks, agriculture credit and insurance and technology risks. They covered production and marketing risks and the availability of various farm inputs such as seeds.

Tea firms want Govt to source for Ooty Tea from Nilgiris

P.S. Sundar



Coonoor, May 7:

Small-scale tea firms of the Nilgiris have appealed to Tamil Nadu Government to procure all its requirements for its Ooty Tea brand marketed through the apex body of co-operative tea factories, Indcoserve, from the district's small-scale sector itself.

“Although the Government has named this brand ‘Ooty Tea’, it is a misnomer because substantial volumes of Assam tea are blended with Nilgiri tea. Even now, tenders have been floated to purchase 700 tonnes of Assam tea,” Mr H. Thiagarajan, President, Nilgiris Small Tea Growers' Association, told *Business Line*.

“We have informed the Government that there is no need to blend Ooty Tea with Assam tea when the Nilgiri-based small-scale sector can supply any grade or quality tea required for the purpose. The Indcoserve has fixed the landed cost in Coonoor at Rs 115 a kg. As the auction average in North India itself is around Rs 115, only low-quality Assam tea can be bought at this landed cost,” he said.

“The Indcoserve had procured teas from our factories in the past. We can supply all grades at reasonable price. This will boost the returns to the nearly 65,000 small growers in the Nilgiris,” Mr Ramesh Bhojarajan, President, Nilgiris Bought-Leaf Tea Manufacturers' Association, said.

Rice exports to gather steam on weak rupee

Vishwanath Kulkarni



New Delhi, May 7:

The weakening rupee has made Indian rice more competitive globally and exporters feel that such a trend would help them expand markets. “The exports have been good so far. The currency depreciation has made Indian rice more competitive,” said Mr Vijay Setia, President of All India Rice Exporters Association. However, the weak currency is not a good sign in the long run. Since the beginning of the current financial year, the rupee has depreciated 5.5 per cent against the dollar. Since June 2011 till date, the rupee depreciation is about 19 per cent against the dollar.

Aggressive shipment

The Government re-opened exports of non-basmati varieties in September last after a gap of almost four years on rising stocks. Aggressive shipment by exporters helped India emerge as

the largest exporter. However, the country is yet to regain its markets in some countries of Africa from rivals Thailand and Vietnam.

“With prediction of normal monsoons, we hope the export momentum will be sustained this year too,” Mr Setia said, without commenting on volumes.

Total shipments during 2011-12, including of the basmati variety, are estimated at around 6.75 million tonnes. This includes 2.5 million tonnes of basmati rice and non-basmati shipments accounting for the rest.

Inconsistent policies

The reputation of India being an unreliable supplier in the global market, largely on account of the Government's inconsistent export policy, is hurting the country's prospects. The rush to ship rice after resumption of exports in September last has hurt the pricing to an extent.

“Indian rice is getting at least \$100 a tonne less compared with our competitors. We need a better marketing plan,” Mr Setia said. Indian non-basmati rice is being exported at \$350-450 a tonne.

Non-basmati from South India is mainly exported to all major African countries. The superior non-basmati varieties from North India are mainly exported to Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain and Yemen, he said.

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