

Honey business offers scope for earning some revenue



Discarding a job that fetches a monthly income of more than a lakh of rupees a month and taking up a hobby as a full time profession needs some courage. That was what Mr. Rousseau Brito a young man from Madurai did three years ago.

He resigned his job as a sailor and decided to take the plunge as an organic and honey bee farmer with his sister Mrs. Josephine and face the uncertainties that infest agriculture.

Inspiring model

According to Dr. K. Ramasamy, Vice Chancellor, Tamil Nadu Agriculture University, Coimbatore, “qualified people like Mr. Brito serve to inspire other young persons who are unemployed to taking up agriculture or related vocations. To abandon a well paying and secure job and take up something like farming proves his interest and conviction in this line.”

Both Mr. Brito and his sister are well known people at the Agriculture college in Madurai, TNAU and to several farmers and agriculture related entrepreneurs in the region.

They have been conducting hundreds of training programmes in the last several years to interested people who desire to try their hands in this line.

Popularly referred to as then kaara amma (honey bee lady) in Tamil, Josephine's tryst with honey bees started some years back when she attended a training programme. Today she maintains nearly 3,000 bee boxes and offers suggestions in persons or over phone from other keepers.

"I first started it out of interest and today it has become my business and passion," she says.

Ms. Josephine personally supervises and packages the 30 varieties of honey at her processing unit near her farm.

The honey is marketed under the brand name of Vibis and has created quite a demand in different pockets of Tamil Nadu and in other states.

Thirty flavours

You name the flavour and she has it in her godown. Be it jamun, ginger, garlic, sunflower, citrus, figs or even drumstick flavour, Ms. Josephine sees to it that the needs of her customers are met.

"The demand for the product is so great that we find it difficult to meet orders today," says her brother Mr. Brito.

The product is packed in different containers of 100gms, 250 gms, 500gms and 1kg to suit the needs of the consumers.

Authored two books

Till date Ms. Josephine has trained over 30,000 people in Tamil Nadu and has penned two books on rearing bees.

Being a woman entrepreneur and successfully carrying on her business has inspired many other village women to take up this line.

"Agriculture work has always been viewed as a male bastion and I am happy as a woman I am able to be a guiding force to other women," says Mrs. Josephine

Unlike farming bee keeping is not labour intensive, according to her. “ Actual beekeeping barely needs two people. Because the bees themselves work to produce the honey, and we don't need to do much.”

They are able to produce more than nine tonnes of honey a month under their brand name and the product price is easy on the pocket. Rs. 80 for 250 grams. “And we are able to make a decent profit,” says Ruso.

Both the brother and sister have been able to convert several farmers and unemployed youth and housewives into entrepreneurs.

Business expansion

Regarding plans for business expansion Mr. Ruso says, “ we do have a desire to export to foreign countries but for that our honey production needs to be increased to more than 10-12 tonnes a year.

“This is quite difficult but I am positive to succeed in years to come. In Mumbai a private company is asking us to supply more than 10 tonnes of jamun honey, but sourcing the honey proves daunting because jamun flower only for some weeks in a year.”

They also have plans to introduce franchisees in different parts of the state for marketing their produce.

Mrs. Josephine also supplies boxes and machineries to farmers in 11 districts, mostly for government schemes under the National Horticulture Mission.

She has been conferred with the best entrepreneur award from Tamil Nadu Agricultural University, Coimbatore (2010), best women entrepreneur from Women Empowerment Forum and best organic bee keeper award from Lions Club of Erode district.

To speak to Ms. Josephine dial mobile:9865555047 and Ruso mobile: 96264-71727 email: thairuso@gmail.com, website: www.ecoclub.in

Strategies to control thrips in groundnut

In the recent past, thrips menace has drastically increased on groundnut crops grown all over Tamil Nadu.

Thrips are small insects and they appear on groundnut crop both in vegetative and flowering stage.

Female lays 60-70 single eggs into young tissues of the plant. The nymphal and pupal periods last 5 days each.

The adults are pale cream in colour. They are soft bodied and have highly fringed wings.

Unique feeding

The thrips desap the plant with their unique feeding apparatus and also transmit the deadly bud necrosis virus that impedes plant growth.

Nymphs and adults tear the surface of the leaflets and suck the oozing sap resulting in white patches appearing on the lower surface of the leaves and distortion of young leaflets.

The injury results in development of dull yellowish-green patches of the upper leaf surface and brown coloured (necrotic) areas on the lower surface.

Severe infestations cause bronzed appearance of leaf with curling and stunting of plants. High temperature with low rainfall favours multiplication and transmits groundnut bud necrosis virus.

Management methods

Uproot and destroy severely infected plants. Remove the alternative host plants.

Mulching would check the damage during the early stage of the plant.

Setting up of blue sticky traps at rate of 12 per hectare in the field will check the thrips population.

Apply safe chemical insecticides at recommended doses only if the population crosses 10 thrips per plant.

Application of ecofriendly pesticides viz., neem oil or pungam oil at 2ml/ha will be very effective.

Spraying of fipronil 5 per cent SC at 1.500-2.000ml/ha or thiacloprid 21.7 per cent SC 125ml/ha or thiamethoxam 25 per cent WG at 40g/ha or dimethoate 30 EC at 2 ml per litre of water at 25, 45 and 60 days after sowing will protect the crop from thrips menace.

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Plan to double milk production by 2015

The State government, through the Department of Animal Husbandry and Pala Pragati Kendras being established by the self-help groups (SHG), has formulated a strategy under the Milk Mission to enhance production from its present level of 298.01 lakh litres per day to 496.31 lakh litres per day, and also the per capita availability of milk from 269 grams per person to 426 grams per person per day.

It is planning to increase the population of high-yielding milch animals to nearly 1.04 crore, apart from enhancing milch animal productivity from 3.39 lakh litres to 4.78 lakh litres per day. The availability of pasteurised milk would also shoot up to 109.73 lakh litres per day.

The government plans to achieve this in phases by 2015 by establishing Pala Pragati Kendras (mini-milk dairies) throughout the State at the rate of four to five in each village involving self-help women groups.

BMCU

The government's strategy is to involve women for successfully ushering in a white revolution. In all, 5,000 gram panchayats located within 10-km radius of Bulk Milk Cooling Units (BMCU) are being selected.

A mini-dairy consists of eight murrah buffaloes and 8 cross bred cows. The animals will be purchased in two batches.

The second batch of animals will be purchased 4-6 months after purchase of first batch of animals to ensure continuous milk production and income.

Mini-dairies

Apart from milk production in the private sector, the government's plan is to set up 700 mini-dairies in the State and about 140 dairies in the district by the year 2015.

Each dairy unit is being established in a two-acre land and each member of the Joint Liability Group (JLG) is expected to earn an income of Rs.2,500 to Rs.3,000 per month.

The Pala Pragathi Kendras are run by JLGs, which are carved out of the SHG groups in a village.

Women interested in the enterprise can emerge as a JLB for the express purpose of establishing mini-dairies in the villages.

The District Rural Development Agency (DRDA) and the Department of Animal Husbandry are giving special training to members of SHGs to handle the huge upcoming milk revolution in the State.

Joint Director of Animal Husbandry V. Venkateswara Rao told *The Hindu* that the mini-dairies apart, family-based dairies having cows and buffaloes would also contribute to the milk revolution, as every family that owns cows and buffaloes supply milk to the milk collection centres.

Minister promises loans to tenant farmers

Minister for Information Technology and district in-charge Minister Ponnala Laxmaiah has expressed his ire against the district officials in general and the Joint Director (Agriculture) in particular for their alleged lethargy in discharging their duties and not providing the action taken report (ATR) at the District Review Committee (DRC) meeting.

Chairing the DRC meeting, which was held at Collectorate conference hall here on Wednesday after a gap of over two years, Mr.Laxmaiah found fault with Joint Director (Agriculture) Prasad for not providing the ATR reports to the legislators in the meeting. "It is highly objectionable", he stated, and called upon the officials to change their attitude.

Expressing concern over the bankers for not coming forward to extend financial assistance to the tenant farmers in the district, he called upon the district officials to take up a pilot project of extending bank loans to the tenant farmers in coordination with women Self help group members in the villages to ensure that the tenant farmers repay their loans promptly and win over the confidence of bankers.

Raising the issue during discussion of agriculture sector, TRS Sircilla legislator K.Taraka Rama Rao alleged that the bankers have failed to provide loans to the tenant farmers in spite of issuance of identity cards. Contrary to the claims made by the Chief Minister on extending financial assistance to the tenant farmers, he said, the bankers were not following the government orders and harassing the tenant farmers by denying loans.

At this stage, Minister for Civil Supplies D.Sridhar Babu said that the government had introduced new scheme to benefit the tenant farmers and there would be some initial teething problems and appealed to the legislators to cooperate. He also stressed on the need to change the attitude of bankers towards tenant farmers.

TRS leader in the Assembly Etala Rajender said that the government had betrayed the tenant farmers by promising loans from the banks.

TDP legislator L.Ramana said that no bankers were coming forward to extend financial assistance to the tenant farmer without mortgage of the property. He said that the government should give guarantee to the bankers so that they would extend loans to the tenant farmers. Flaying the authorities for not assessing the damages caused to the cotton crop in the recent rains, the legislators also sought minimum support price of Rs.6,000 per quintal to cotton against the existing Rs.3,900 per quintal.

The meeting also discussed about the prevailing power cuts to the agriculture and domestic sector. Government whip Arepalli Mohan, Legislators Suddala Devaiah, K.Vidaysagar Rao,

G.Kamalakar, K.Eshwar, S.Satyanarayana, MLCs N.Laxman Rao and Bhanu Prasad Rao also participated.

140 paddy procurement centres for East Godavari

As the yield from the standing kharif crop of paddy is expected to reach the market from the second week of November, the East Godavari district administration has made arrangements to set up 140 paddy procurement centres all over the district to ensure payment of minimum support price to farmers.

The State government fixed the price at Rs.1,280 per quintal for Grade-A variety and Rs. 1,250 for the common variety. In the case of 75 kg bag, the price for Grade-A variety is Rs. 960 and for the common variety Rs.937.5.

Maintenance of the paddy procurement centres has been entrusted to primary agriculture cooperative societies, Rythu Mitra groups, Indira Kranthi groups and the Civil Supplies department.

Of the 140 paddy procurement centres, 55 will be set up in Amalapuram division, 23 in Peddapuram, 30 in Rajahmundry, 26 in Kakinada and the remaining six centres in the Rampachodavaram revenue division. In addition to representatives of the maintenance agency, panchayat secretary, quality testing personnel and subordinate staff will be posted at each centre. Farmers can bring their samples to know the grade and they can also get advice from technical staff on the steps to be taken to improve the quality.

Arrangements are being made to make payments within three working days in the form of cheques to farmers who sell their produce to the paddy procurement centres.

The stocks will be diverted to rice mills for custom milling.

The paddy procurement centres will remain open from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. on all days.

ID crops the best bet, western delta ryots told

TDP alleges raw deal to farmers of the region



On the offensive: TDP district president Prathipati Pulla Rao addressing farmers and party workers during the protest against release of inadequate quantity of water to KWD in Guntur on Wednesday.—Photo: T. Vijaya Kumar

Collector S. Suresh Kumar has suggested to farmers to grow Irrigated Dry (ID) crops during the rabi season instead of paddy in the Krishna Western Delta (KWD) and under the Nagarjuna Sagar project due to difficulty in ensuring enough water supply.

The KWD is at present receiving 3,500 cusecs. It is set to be scaled up by 500 cusecs in the next couple of days and a further 500 cusecs later.

Of the maximum 7,500 cusecs that could be released to the Nagarjuna Sagar ayacut, 4,000 cusecs is being supplied and the balance would be made available a few days later.

Farmers would therefore do well to give priority to growing ID crops, particularly maize and black gram, which will fetch substantive returns.

There are issues such as water not reaching the tail-end areas and some places along the branch canals, and they are planned to be sorted out by building up the level at the Prakasam Barrage, Mr. Suresh Kumar said in a press conference held on Wednesday.

Demonstration

Earlier in the morning, TDP leaders Prathipati Pulla Rao, Dhulipalla Narendra Kumar, Nakka Ananda Babu, Kommalapati Sridhar, Yerapatineni Srinivasa Rao, Nannapaneni Raja Kumari,

and Alapati Rajendra Prasad staged a demonstration in front of the Collector's office protesting against the injustice allegedly meted to farmers of this region in releasing water from the Srisaïlam and Nagarjuna Sagar dams.

They expressed regret that the government turned a blind eye to the plight of farmers in the KWD and alleged that water was being illegally diverted from the Srisaïlam dam, which was exclusively meant for power generation.

Cotton farmers stage walkout

The district administration seems to distance itself further from farmers, as was evident from the proceedings at a meeting organised here on Wednesday to solve the issue of price and moisture content in cotton.

Angry farmers accused Collector A. Ashok, who was chairing the meeting, of colluding with private traders as he firmly argued in favour of use of moisture meter in determining the price.

Shouting slogans against the Collector, farmers and their leaders boycotted the meeting to which Revenue and Marketing officials besides, traders and cotton commission agents were also invited. The farmers were basically objecting to the Collector not listening to their plea that there should be no deductions in the price of cotton owing to beyond permissible limits of moisture content, which is a natural phenomenon in freshly picked cotton.

The farmers were already upset as Mr. Ashok arrived about one-and-a-half hour late for the meeting. No sooner the proceedings began, the Collector strongly told the farmers that the price would be decided as per given regulations with regard to moisture content.

The Collector read out from a document that moisture content was permissible up to 8 per cent only and price would be deducted as per regulation for moisture content up to 12 per cent. Even the CCI was barred from purchase of cotton with moisture content beyond 12 per cent, he added.

At this juncture the farmers noisily accused Mr. Ashok of presenting one-sided arguments. This was followed by their walkout from the meeting.

TDP demands enhanced MSP for cotton

The Telugu Desam Party (TDP) on Wednesday demanded that Chief Minister N. Kiran Kumar Reddy lobby with the Union government for the enhancement of Minimum Support Price (MSP) for cotton.

"Alternately, the government should give bonus to cotton farmers to offset the losses incurred due to unremunerative price," demanded Gone Hanmanth Rao, the Adilabad district unit president.

The demand came in view of the Chief Minister criticising the TDP during his Indiramma Baata for its failure to protect paddy farmers under its rule. Mr. Hanmanth Rao countered it, saying it was the TDP which had purchased paddy at enhanced rates in 2003-2004 despite a burden of Rs. 1,060 crore on the exchequer.

The senior TDP leader wanted Mr. Kiran Kumar Reddy to set his house in order before criticising the opposition party.

"Are the woebegone cotton farmers not visible to the Chief Minister," he questioned, when he spoke to 'The Hindu'.

Fisheries Department to launch caged aquaculture



Pilot project: Technicians from the Central Inland Fisheries Research Institute, Bangalore, giving the finishing touches to an aquaculture cage on the banks of the Pookode lake in Wayanad.–

Photo: E.M. Manoj

The Fisheries Department is gearing up to launch caged aquaculture in freshwater bodies, a first-time attempt in the State, to tap the vast potential of the inland water sources in the hilly district. A demonstration unit with the technical advice from the Central Inland Fisheries

Research Institute (CIFRI), Bangalore, would be launched at the Pookode Lake shore on Thursday to sensitise the farmers to scope of the project.

“We are planning to standardise a methodology to table size fish production,” M. Feroz Khan, Scientist-in-charge, CIFRI, Bangalore, who is supervising the project, told *The Hindu* over phone. Caged aquaculture in the fresh water bodies in Karnataka and Tamil Nadu had proved profitable, Mr. Feroz Khan said.

Caged aquaculture had a vast potential in the district as the innumerable water bodies including lakes, ponds, streams and rivers as well as the vast reservoirs of the Karapuzha and Banasura dams could be utilised for the purpose with a nominal investment, B.K. Sudheer Kishan, Assistant Director-in-charge, Fisheries Department, said. According to him, an aquaculture cage unit could be constructed at a cost of Rs.12,500 .The major components of an aquaculture cage include a few pieces of bamboo poles, to make the frame of the cage; four plastic drums, to float the unit on the water surface; and a nylon net. Close to1,080 fingerlings (50 numbers per cubic metre) could be stored in the cage. Cage culture techniques have been also utilised as a means for raising fingerlings for stocking the open waters, Mr. Feroz Khan said. It is a cost- effective method of fish farming as the farmers could feed, evaluate the growth of the fish, and harvest without any difficulty. Total harvesting and swift or immediate return of investment, less mortality rate, less manpower requirement, better control of fish population, efficient control of fish competitors and predators and minimum supervision are the added advantages of the cage aquaculture, he added.

Dal Tech Expo to showcase latest technology in food processing

The Gulbarga Dal Millers’ Association and the District Industries Centre (DIC) will host the ‘Dal Tech Expo’ to showcase the latest technology in food processing on Saturday.

President of the association Shivasharanappa C. Nigudagi told presspersons here on Wednesday that leading manufacturers of food processing machinery will take part in it. Companies that would exhibit products include Dewons and ATS international from South Korea, and Buhler, a multinational company which was the second leading food processing machinery manufacturing firm in the world. Besides, leading Indian companies would also participate, he said.

Mr. Nigudagi said there were more than 250 dal mills in Gulbarga. The district, which is known as the 'dal bowl' of South India, contributed 27 per cent of the total production of red gram in the country.

A majority of these dal mills adopted old technology for processing of red gram, he said.

The objective behind organising the expo was to encourage the mills to use modern technology to improve the quality of the dal processed. Mr. Nigudagi said the government had sanctioned a toor park which would come up on 300 acres on the outskirts of the city.

A sum of Rs. 25 crore had been sanctioned for it, he said.

To a question, Mr. Nigudagi said the association had decided to form a consortium of the dal mill owners and introduce 1 kg to 10 kg packets of dal to be sold in the retail market.

Progress of farmers' social security scheme reviewed



Better execution: Collector R. Selvaraj chairing a meeting to review the farmers' social security scheme in Tirunelveli.

District Collector R. Selvaraj chaired a meeting held at the Collectorate on Tuesday to review the progress made in implementing Farmers' Social Security Scheme and also to examine the feasibility of effectively executing the scheme in the district.

Addressing the meeting, Dr. Selvaraj said small and marginal farmers between the age of 18 and 65 and owning 2.50 acres of wetland or 5 acres of dry land can avail the benefits for themselves and for their family members.

The land can either be used for agricultural purpose or a portion of it can be used for grazing, dairy, poultry, animal husbandry, fish farming etc.

Real beneficiaries

“Since the scheme carries a range of benefits for the farmers and their family members, all real beneficiaries should be brought under this scheme,” Dr. Selvaraj said.

The Collector also reviewed the ongoing anti-dengue operations and also the implementation of Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme in the district.

Declare Nagapattinam district disaster-hit, demand farmers

They slam failure to foresee intensity of monsoon

With cyclone Neelam all set to brush the coastline and tail-end areas of delta already submerged by the fortnight-long rains, farmers here have called for declaring Nagapattinam as disaster-hit.

The demand along with renewal of seed and fertilizer subsidy to take up fresh sowing all over again was put forth at the farmers’ grievance meeting here on Tuesday. For Kaveri Danapalam, Cauvery Farmers Protection Association, it was a ‘policy deficit’ that failed to foresee the intensity of the monsoons, which was an annual phenomenon.

Despite farmers conveying to the government that release of Mettur water should be made by September first week, the government chose to release water on September 17.

This was done on the premise that water reserve in the reservoir should not deplete by the end of the season. However, the reservoir would be replenished by the monsoons, and if cultivation had been taken up early, 25-day old crops would not be facing the prospect of decay, Mr. Danapalan said.

The Public Works Department drew flak for not deploying personnel on the fields to deal with clogged and malfunctioning regulators. According to farmers, the functioning of PWD officials especially on the Vennar division left much to be desired.

Farmers were unanimous in calling for renewed subsidy for fertilizers and seeds to take up direct sowing, as the directly sown fields were submerged in the rains.

According to Gobi Ganesan of Mayiladuthurai, the administration should provide for short-term variety seeds such as Kulla ponni to facilitate cultivation by February. This would also help thaladi pulses to be taken up thereafter.

Crop loans issued by cooperative societies and commercial banks was way below the mandated Rs.15,000 per acre, said Alexander of Mayiladuthurai. Further, the subsidy promised for community nurseries were yet to be disbursed. Timely disbursement of subsidies as announced by the government would enable farmers to take up farming activities without hiccups, he added.

Sustained grievances raised on encroachments and alleged inefficiency of the PWD forced the Collector T.Munusamy to direct officials to take the help of police in removing encroachments on drainage channels and water bodies.

Steps being taken to maintain minimum price of turmeric

The Turmeric Farmers' Association of India is taking various steps to maintain minimum price of turmeric," association president P.K. Deivasigamani told *The Hindu* on Tuesday. He said that close to 10,000 turmeric farmers are expected to participate in a dharna in front of the Parliament in New Delhi on December 10 and 11.

"The demonstration is aimed at getting the Union Government's attention to fulfil the various demands of turmeric farmers across the country, which includes forming a separate board for turmeric on par with the boards for other commodities such as tea, coffee and coconut, to establish a turmeric production and marketing research centre and to fund mechanisation of turmeric farms. Other important demands of the association to the Government are to put an end to online trading of turmeric and stop import of the commodity from Vietnam, China and Cambodia to maintain minimum price of turmeric in India," the association president noted.

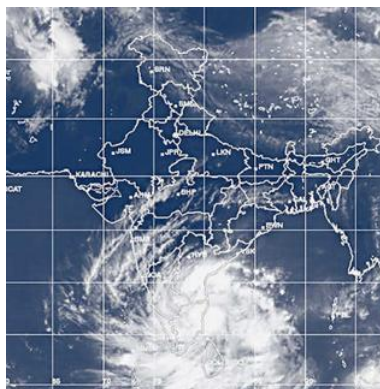
About inability to maintain turmeric price after the association announced minimum price for a quintal at Rs. 9,000 in Tamil Nadu, Mr. Deivasigamani said that they were in the process of organising farmers to achieve the goal. "With 15 lakh turmeric farmers in the country, organising

them is not an easy task. Some farmers sold turmeric at a lesser price as they had to meet immediate and unavoidable expenses. We are forming village-level turmeric farmers' committees. Work is also underway to make the association strong like the National Egg Coordination Committee – the poultry farmers' body that fixes the wholesale price of egg. About three decades ago, the NECC announced the price of egg for the first time but it took three years for them to establish their price," he observed.

He said that the association is making arrangements for establishing turmeric storage facilities across Tamil Nadu, where farmers can preserve turmeric and sell it when the market price is good. "Nationalised banks are ready to give Produce Pledge Loan – 60 to 70 per cent of the value of the produce – to the farmers and this will be instrumental in helping farmers realise better prices for their produce," he said.

After a discussion with farmer's representatives from Andhra Pradesh in Erode on Monday, to announce base price of turmeric in that State, he said that the association announced the price of a quintal at Rs. 10,000 in Pune on October 15. "The same price will be announced at Nizamabad (Andhra Pradesh) on November 12. It is Rs. 1,000 more than the price announced in Tamil Nadu as buyers have to travel 900 more km to reach the markets to buy turmeric. The difference in price is like the difference in egg rate announced by NECC in various places across the country due to various reasons," Mr. Deivasigamani added.

weather



The columns show maximum and minimum temperature in Celsius, rainfall during last 24 hours (tr-trace) and total rainfall in mm since 1st October.

Rainfall

Weather was dry over the region.

TEMPERATURES :

MAXIMUM : The maximum temperature changed little over the region. They were below normal in Haryana and Jammu and Kashmir, above normal in Uttarakhand and normal over rest of the region. The highest maximum temperature in the region was 36.0°C recorded at Phalodi (Rajasthan).

MINIMUM: The minimum temperature changed little over the region. They were appreciably below normal in east Uttar Pradesh and normal over rest of the region. The lowest minimum temperature in the plains was 11.2°C recorded at Amritsar (Punjab).

FORECAST VALID UNTIL THE MORNING OF 2nd NOVEMBER 2012: Weather will be mainly dry over the region.

FORECAST FOR DELHI AND NEIGHBOURHOOD VALID UNTIL THE MORNING OF 2nd NOVEMBER 2012: Mainly clear sky. Shallow fog in the morning.

Fertilizers stocked at cooperative societies

Adequate quantity of fertilizers has been stocked at cooperative societies in the district. In a press release issued Wednesday, M. Pazhanivelu, Joint Registrar of Cooperative Societies, said farmers could get their requirement of urea for the current samba season at primary cooperative thrift and credit societies.

Rules for the issue of fertiliser have been simplified and farmers need not submit any certificate for their pre-requisite verification of 'chitta' or 'adangal', he said. The cooperative department has set up a monitoring cell for ensuring availability of fertilizer and complex. Farmers can contact District Registrar of Cooperatives, Pudukottai by dialling 98943-04311, in Aranthagi by dialling 99949-32744 or Dummy's central office 90477-53397 for aid.

Streamline job guarantee scheme

Farmers bodies have made an appeal to the Union and State Governments to allot funds and schedule works carried out under the 100 days employment guarantee scheme of the Mahatma

Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Programme (NREGP) in a manner that will not affect agricultural activities.

Major setback

“Agriculture suffered a major setback when many farm labourers took up NREGP works and did not turn up for work in the fields. Due to this reason farmers’ bodies made repeated representations to the State and Union Governments to employ those employed under NREGS to work as farm labourers in the fields, but this was in vain.

“The Government should come forward to modify NREGP work allotment schedule to benefit farmers, support agriculture and farm labourers as well. This can be done by avoiding allotment of works under NREGP during the sowing and harvesting period,” State General Secretary of the Tamizhaga Vivasayigal Sangam (TVS) K. Sundaram suggested.

“NREGP workers are available for 265 days in a year and streamlining work allotted to them to favour agricultural activities will also help them get more income in a year by working as farm labourers in the rainy season – like how they worked before the scheme was implemented a few years ago,” he added.

“The peak of agricultural activity takes place in the monsoon – from September to February. Labour shortage in these months made cultivation of essential food crops like paddy, sugarcane, tapioca, groundnut and fodder crops like sorghum and maize difficult. This is because farm labourers who work under NREGP are not ready to work in those days when they are not allotted work under the scheme.

Wages

Fund allotted as wage for the 100 days (as promised in the job guarantee scheme) could be allotted from March to August – when agriculture is not too active – and enable workers get government wages in that season,” State Technical Secretary of the Consortium of Indian Farmers Association (CIFA), G. Ajeethan told *The Hindu* .

De-worming campaign for cattle on November 3

The Department of Animal Husbandry will be conducting a Reproductive Health Camp and De-worming Campaign throughout Tamil Nadu on November 3 as part of its efforts to provide post-purchase care to cows, goats or sheep that had been distributed under the free distribution of milch cows and goats/ sheep scheme.

According to a press release, the government launched the free distribution of cattle scheme on September 15, 2011 in order to uplift the economic status of the poor women folk of Tamil Nadu.

Distributed

Under this scheme, four goats/ sheep were distributed each to one lakh beneficiaries in 31 districts and 12,000 milch cows to 12,000 beneficiaries in 21 districts during 2011-12.

Krishnagiri district had completed the entire target of distribution of 14,228 goats and 350 cows to the beneficiaries during the said year.

Prizes were also given for the best maintained cows and goats/ sheep on April 13 and 14 this year.

Health camp

The Chief Minister had also stressed on the post purchase care of the cows and the department has decided to conduct the reproductive health camp and mass de-worming campaign in order to benefit the cows/ goats/ sheep distributed under the scheme throughout the State, on the orders of the Chief Minister, with the objective of facilitating sustained milk production from milch cows and increasing the weight gain in goats/ sheep provided under the scheme.

The Collector said besides the beneficiaries of the free distribution scheme, other farmers could also avail themselves of the benefits of the health camp and de-worming campaign by getting their animals checked and de-wormed and ensure good health. The de-worming camp will be inaugurated at Agasipalli village, according to the release.

Hindustan Times

TODAY FARM NEWS

01.11.2012 A.M

Weather

Chennai

Chennai - INDIA

Today's Weather



Cloudy

Thursday, Nov 1

Max Min

30.9° | 23.0°

Rain: 0

Humidity: 79

Wind: normal

Sunrise: 06:02

Sunset: 05:41

Barometer: 1004

Tomorrow's Forecast



Cloudy

Friday, Nov 2

Max Min

26° | 23°

Extended Forecast for a week

Saturday
Nov 3



28° | 24°

Cloudy

Sunday
Nov 4



33° | 25°

Overcast

Monday
Nov 5



33° | 25°

Overcast

Tuesday
Nov 6



33° | 25°

Sunny

Wednesday
Nov 7



33° | 25°

Cloudy

Airport Weather

Delhi

Delhi

Rain: 0

Sunrise: 06:33

Humidity: 94

Sunset: 05:35

Wind: normal

Barometer: 1014



THE HINDU Business Line

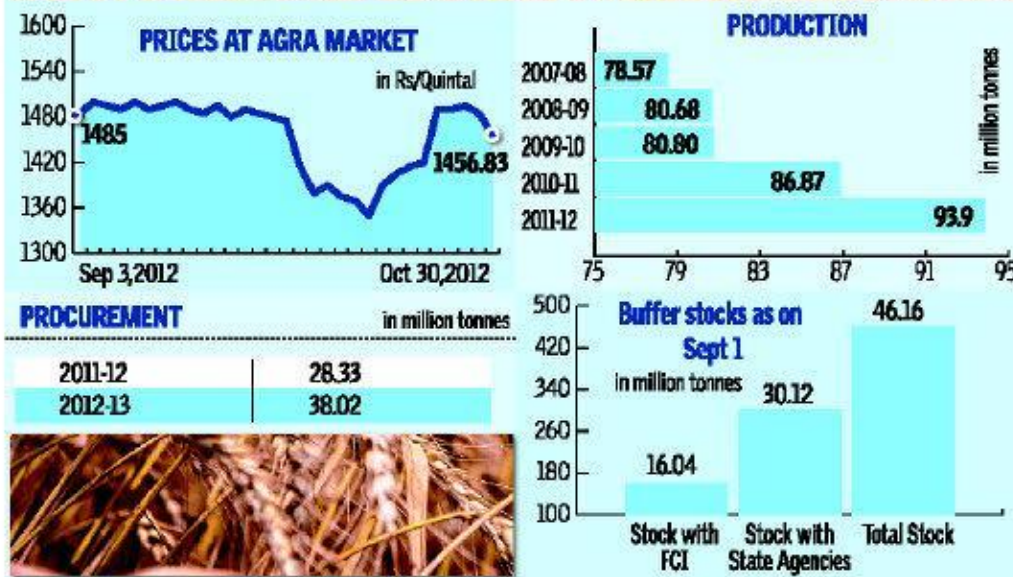
TODAY FARM NEWS

31.10.2012 P.M

01.11.2012 A.M

1th nov 2012 P.M

Fungal disease poses hurdle in Iran buying Indian wheat



But Teheran may buy 6 million tonnes spread over 3 years

New Delhi, Oct 31:

Iran may import Indian wheat after a long hiatus even as quality aspects remain a thorny issue.

Talks between the two nations, which have been going on for the past 11 months, are in advanced stages to tie up a deal on wheat.

Quality issue

But the quality issue over the presence of a fungal disease 'Karnal bunt' in the Indian grain has come in the way. Karnal bunt is a fungal disease that affects wheat and lowers yield.

A high-level delegation from Iran consisting of officials from General Trading Corporation (the Indian equivalent of State Trading Corporation) and quarantine department are currently in New Delhi discussing the modalities.

"They (Iran) want zero tolerance to Karnal bunt," sources said.

The Iranian quarantine officials held discussions with their Indian counterparts.

basmati rice imports

Sources said Iran is looking to enter into a long-term deal with India to import about six million tonnes spread over three years.

Incidentally, the West Asian nation is the largest buyer of Indian basmati rice and imported over one million tonnes in 2011-12 accounting for over a third of India's exports.

Iran had stopped importing Indian wheat since mid-1990s over the presence of Karnal bunt.

The West Asian nation has now turned to India for wheat imports to meet its requirement as global supplies dwindle on drought hurting crops in the US, Russia and Ukraine.

The global interest in Indian wheat is on the rise over shortfall in supplies. Malaysia had recently expressed interest to buy wheat from India on a long-term basis through diplomatic channel.

India, which produced 93.9 million tonnes of wheat for 2011-12 season that ended in June is presently sitting on a stock pile of over 40 mt.

As of October 1, the Central pool stocks stood at 43.15 mt more than three times the buffer and strategic reserve requirement of 14 mt.

Wheat exports from India have crossed three mt, bulk of which is from the private trade.

The Government agencies have contracted about one million tonnes for exports and have actually shipped about five lakh tonnes so far.

Bulk of the Indian exports so far have been destined to the Far Eastern nations such as Korea, Taiwan and neighbouring countries such as Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and Yemen among others.

Spot rubber rules flat

Physical rubber prices finished almost steady on Wednesday. The market lost its direction and remained neutral in major counters following an almost similar trend in domestic futures on the National Multi Commodity Exchange. The overall sentiments were mixed as ISNR 20 and latex lost marginally on buyer resistance during late trading hours.

Sheet rubber finished unchanged at Rs 177 a kg, according to traders. The grade weakened to Rs 176.50 (177) a kg at Kottayam and Kochi as reported by the Rubber Board.

In futures, Nov contracts slipped to Rs 177.39 (177.92), Dec Rs 178.79 (179.77), Jan Rs 181 (182.20) and Feb Rs 183 (183.76) a kg; March and April stayed inactive on the NMCE.

Spot rates were (Rs/kg): RSS-4: 177 (177); RSS-5: 173 (173); ungraded: 166 (166); ISNR 20: 161 (162) and latex 60 per cent: 118 (119).

Bird flu outbreak leaves poultry exporters in fever



At a time when the poultry trade is recovering from the losses caused by seasonal uncertainties on the domestic front and looking at tapping newer export markets, the outbreak of avian influenza or bird flu in Bangalore has made farmers and exporters jittery in Namakkal, the country's eggland.

"Though poultry farms here have not been affected, the fear is that overseas buyers will not be location-specific while banning the products. They will stay away from our shipments until the OIE (World Organisation for Animal Health) declares the zone avian flu-free," said P. Selvaraj, Chairman, National Egg Coordination Committee (NECC), Namakkal zone.

Exporters are looking at Afghanistan, Algeria as potential markets and only a month ago, Oman resumed imports of Indian poultry products and so far 55 containers (2.5 crore eggs) had been exported.

If they impose a ban again, it will become a problem for the export market that has just started looking up.

On the domestic front, Kerala - a major market for TN's shell egg and broiler trade - has banned the import of poultry and related products from Tamil Nadu causing a double whammy for the trade here. An NECC spokesperson said that nearly 15 trucks were held at Valayar checkpost and were denied permission to enter Kerala.

"The industry usually reaps benefits during November-January after all the austerities get over and Kerala, being a major market, the ban could result in 1.05 crore eggs piling up," he said.

This also likely to result in a cut in prices, he cautioned.

The trade has represented to the State Government and the Union Government to urge Kerala to lift the ban.

Nearly 3,481 turkeys had succumbed to the H5N1 virus at the Government-run Central Poultry Development and Organisation (CPDO) poultry farm at Hesaraghatta in Bangalore. The CPDO also houses chicken, emu and duck units, which have been declared safe by the authorities.

An Animal Husbandry Department official in Bangalore said that so far 19,000 birds have been culled and they will maintain a 90-day quarantine.

“After 90 days, we will begin re-flocking and send samples to the laboratory just to confirm that the disease is completely wiped out. Till then, exports may take a hit.”

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Coonoor tea auction volume drops

A volume of 13.23 lakh kg has been catalogued for Sale No: 44 of Coonoor Tea Trade Association auctions to be held on Thursday and Friday when the market opens for November auctions, reveals our analysis of brokers' listing.

It is as about 34,000 kg lower than last week's offer and 3.45 lakh kg than the offer this time last year.

Of the 13.23 lakh kg on offer, 9.70 lakh kg belongs to the leaf grades and 3.53 lakh kg to the dust grades.

As much as 12.50 lakh kg belongs to CTC variety and only 0.73 lakh kg, orthodox variety.

The proportion of orthodox teas continues to be low in both the leaf and dust grades. In the leaf counter, only 0.47 lakh kg belongs to orthodox while 9.23 lakh kg, CTC. Among the dusts, only 0.26 lakh kg belongs to orthodox while 3.27 lakh kg, CTC.

Fresh tea accounts for 12.02 lakh kg. As much as 1.21 lakh kg comprises teas which had remained unsold in previous auctions.

Last week, in the leaf tea auction, Hindustan Unilever Ltd bought good medium varieties. Tata Global Beverages Ltd was selective. Duncans Tea Ltd and Godfrey Philips India Ltd did not operate. There were some enquiries from exporters for medium and plainer varieties, especially for cleaner blacker grades.

In the dust tea auction, HUL and Tata Global bought good medium varieties. Godfrey Philips was selective. Indcoserve showed interest on medium smaller grades. Exporters preferred medium and plainer varieties. Internal buyers were fairly active.

Reports of higher output cool pepper

Pepper prices fell on Wednesday on reports of increased output this year. Reports emanated from the International Pepper Community that began in Sri Lanka on Wednesday. The output in 2012 has been projected at 3.36 lakh tonnes while production next year has been estimated at 3.16 lakh tonnes. However, the final figures will be known only after two days, market sources attending the meet in Colombo told *Business Line*.

Influenced by the reports, the futures market was floored towards the close of trading. All active contracts ended much below the previous day closing. Buyers from the domestic market moved away from the declining market.

"Till Diwali, we may have to see pre-diwali fireworks," a trader said. On the spot, 25 tonnes of farm grade pepper arrived and were traded between Rs 408 and Rs 417 a kg, depending on the quality, grade and area of production, they said. Investors holding long position were liquidating their November position and there was switching over to nearby positions. There was appeared to be selling also as is evident from the fall in the open interest, they said. November contracts on the NCDEX decreased by Rs 1,325 a quintal to Rs 42,970 a quintal. December and February contracts fell by Rs 1,310 and Rs 1,165 respectively to Rs 42,430 and Rs 37,825.

Total turnover increased by 225 tonnes to 2,370 tonnes. Total open interest dropped by 180 tonnes to 9,007 tonnes.

Spot prices fell in tandem with futures by Rs 800 to Rs 40,100 (ungarbled) and Rs 41,600 (garbled) a quintal. Indian parity in the international market has come down to \$8,150 a tonne (f.o.b) Europe and \$8,350 (f.o.b) US but "still remained at very far away", they said.

Mixed trend in Kochi tea sale

A mixed trend persisted for almost all varieties of tea at the Kochi tea auction last week. The quantity on offer in the CTC dust category was 8,95,000 kg.

The market was irregular and lower by Rs 2-5 and sometimes more. However, few select best and popular marks witnessed a less drop in price. Bottom of the market also witnessed a similar trend.

The quantity on offer in the orthodox dust grades was 6,500 kg. The market for primary grades remained steady, while others were irregular and lower. Bulk of the offerings was absorbed by exporters.

In the best CTC dusts, PD varieties quoted the prices of Rs 91-103, RD grades fetched Rs 94-105, SRD varieties stood at Rs 97-106 while SFD grades ruled at Rs 98-112.

The leaf sales witnessed a good demand and the quantity on offer in the orthodox grades was 166,000 kg. All varieties of Nilgiri were fully firm and sometimes dearer following quality. Others were irregular.

Medium well made clean, Black TFBOP, TFP, TGBOP were steady to firm and sometimes lower. Corresponding whole leaf moved up by Rs 5-10. Medium brokens were irregular and tended to ease.

The quantity on offer in CTC grades was 1,24,500 kg. The market for brokens was irregular and lower by Rs 2-3 and sometimes more. Fannings were firm to dearer. In the dust category, Kodanad SFD fetched the best prices of Rs 125 followed by Pasuparai SFD at Rs 117. In the leaf grades, Chamraj Green Tea FOP quoted the best prices of Rs 316 followed by Pascoes Hyson Green tea at Rs 277.

CCEA to consider wheat MSP hike on Thursday

The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) is likely to approve tomorrow a proposal to raise the minimum support price (MSP) of wheat by Rs 115 per quintal to Rs 1,400 for the next year starting April 2013.

“The CCEA is scheduled to meet tomorrow. There are two items on the agenda including the MSP of rabi crops,” sources privy to the development said.

As against the recommendation of the Commission for Agricultural Costs and Prices (CACCP) which had suggested no hike, the Agriculture Ministry has proposed an increase in the wheat MSP by Rs 115 per quintal to Rs 1,400 for 2013-14 marketing year, as against the Rs 1285 per quintal this year.

The CACP, which advises the government on pricing policy for major farm produce, had recommended freezing of wheat MSP at last year's level.

Citing reasons for proposing a hike in wheat MSP, the Agriculture Ministry said the price of diesel has been raised by Rs 5 per litre after the CACP submitted its report. Hence, the increase in MSP is required to compensate farmers, sources said.

The ministry also feels that the MSP proposed by CACP are generally lower than those suggested by states. Freezing of wheat MSP proposed by the CACP may not give positive signal to the farming community, sources added.

Besides wheat, the ministry has also recommended increase in MSP of other rabi crops - barley, gram, masur, mustard seed and safflower.

The Agriculture Ministry has recommended raising the support price of gram and masur to Rs 3,200 per quintal each for 2013-14 to reduce the country's dependence on import of pulses. This year, MSP of gram and masur stood at Rs 2,900 per quintal, respectively.

Similarly, the ministry has suggested increasing the support price of mustard seed to Rs 3,000 per quintal from Rs 2,500 per quintal and safflower to Rs 2,800 per quintal from Rs 2,500 per quintal in the review period.

It has proposed raising the MSP of barley to Rs 1100 per quintal for 2013-14 from Rs 980 per quintal this year, sources added.

Due to better support price and good monsoon, the country had harvested a record 93.90 million tonnes of wheat this year. The Agriculture Ministry hopes to achieve new record production this year as well.

Sugar futures open marginally higher at Rs 3,375/quintal



Sugar futures on the National Commodity and Derivatives Exchange Ltd (NCDEX) opened marginally higher at Rs 3,375 a quintal on Wednesday against the previous close of Rs 3,374.

November contract made a high of Rs 3,389 and low of Rs 3,365. It was down marginally at Rs 3,371 at 1.30 pm.

The possibility of traders booking profit after a gain of three per cent in the last one week has restricted the sharp run-up in prices. Revival of demand during the festival season has supported prices at lower levels.

The Government is also considering tweaking the duty structure depending on the progress of crushing in the next three months. It may hike the import duty on white sugar and reduce the duty on raw sugar imports.

Crushing has started across Maharashtra and is expected to commence soon in UP too. The area under sugarcane is estimated at 52.88 lakh hectares for 2012-13 crop season, up from 50.99 lakh ha in the same period a year ago.

According to the first advance estimates by the Agriculture Ministry, sugarcane output is pegged at 335.3 mt, down six per cent compared with 357.6 mt last year.

Despite higher acreage, sugar production is estimated lower at 24 mt, down 2 mt compared to the current year.

Sugar futures may recover as demand is expected to emerge at lower levels. However, higher quota is seen offsetting the festive season demand which might cap sharp gains.

REC oversupply depresses prices to floor

Oversupply of renewable energy certificates resulted in low volume of sales and depressed prices in the REC trading for the month of October, which took place today.

Against a total of 10,12,660 non-solar RECs offered for sale, only 2,22,700 got sold, and that too, at the floor price of Rs 1,500 a certificate on both the power exchanges—IEX and PXIL.

The traded volume was lower than September's 2,64,446.

(RECs are generation-based 'certificates' awarded (electronically, in demat form) to those who generate electricity from renewable sources such as wind, biomass, hydro and solar, if they opt not to sell the electricity at a preferentially higher tariff. These certificates are trade-able on the exchanges and are bought by 'obligated entities', who are either specified consumers or electricity distribution companies. These obligated entities may either required to purchase a certain quantum of either green power or RECs. Trading happens on the last Wednesday of each month. Within the obligation, there is a small slice carved out for solar-RECs, or RECs from solar power generators.)

When the trading began, 15,06,233 RECs had been issued and were available for sale. Since 2,22,700 were traded, the market today has around 13 lakh RECs. "Unless significant demand gets generated over last few quarter, the prices may remain subdued," says Vishal Pandya, Director, REConnect, a consultancy that operates in the REC area.

The 'solar RECs' story was somewhat better. As many as 2,964 solar RECs were put up for sale, of which 1,971 got cleared. On IEX, 820 solar RECs were sold for Rs 12,680 apiece. On PXIL, 971 were sold for Rs 12,500. The floor price for solar RECs is Rs 9,300.

The firm price in Solar RECs is an indication that even with low-enforcement scenario, market is high on price due to supply side constrained, says Vishal Pandya.

For the first time in the 18-odd months of trading, PXIL has gained some market share. Till last month, IEX's share used to be well over 90 per cent. In today's trading, IEX got 59.4 per cent of the market, and PXIL the other 40.6 per cent.

Turmeric regains colour as N. India begins buying



Fresh upcountry orders, that were eluding the Erode turmeric trade for the past several weeks, have begun to trickle in today.

“Turmeric exporters received some fresh orders from Bihar, Chhattisgarh and Uttar Pradesh for Diwali. So exporters were happy and started buying. Prices are stable for the past few days and sales increased,” said R.K.V. Ravishankar, Erode Turmeric Merchants Association President.

He said for the past one month, prices were almost steady with small fluctuations but the sale was very poor. Now exporters have started buying the yellow spice.

He ruled out the possibilities of increase in price and said prices will remain stable for another 15 days.

Farmers brought limited stocks due to heavy rain in rural areas. Due to arrival of 54 bags of super fine variety turmeric, the price was at Rs 6,017, up Rs 300 more than Tuesday’s price.

Similarly, for the first time, a very low arrival of 146 bags was recorded at the Regulated Marketing Committee and all the bags were sold for an increased price of Rs 100 a quintal.

At the Erode Turmeric Merchants Association sales yard, the finger variety was sold at Rs 4,034-5,249 a quintal, the root variety Rs 3,695-4,695 .

Salem Hybrid Crop: The finger variety was sold at Rs 5,190-5,811 and the root variety Rs 5,121-5,371. Of the arrival of 820 bags, 280 found takers.

At the Regulated marketing Committee, the finger variety was sold at Rs 4,819-5,669; the root variety Rs 4,389-4,774 . All the 146 bags were sold.

At the Erode Cooperative Marketing Society, the finger variety fetched Rs 4,889-5,816; the root variety Rs 4,189-4,846. Of the 294 bags arrived, 290 found takers.

At the Gobichettipalayam Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Society, the finger variety was sold at Rs 5,316-6,019; the root variety Rs 5,867-5,991. All the 229 bags were sold.

Pulses go off the boil on rising soya arrivals



Rise in selling pressure and weak buying support have dragged prices of majority of pulses and pulse seeds in Indore mandis for the past few days.

Moreover, with a rise in arrival of soyabean in local mandis, traders in local mandis are laying more focus on its trading by releasing existing stock of pulse seeds with them.

With trading focus shifting to soybean, demand in pulses and pulse seeds have declined, leading to bearish sentiment in pulses, said a pulse trader Prakash Vora.

Tur (Maharashtra) declined by Rs 50 to Rs 4,250 a quintal on weak demand, so was tur (Madhya Pradesh) which slipped to Rs 3,300-3,400.

About a fortnight ago, tur (Maharashtra) prices had gone as high as Rs 4,700 a quintal.

However, since then there has been a continuous decline in its prices on weak buying support.

Tur dal (full) was stable at Rs 6,400-6,500, tur dal (sawa no.) at Rs 5,900-6,000, while tur dal (marka) ruled at Rs 7,100-7,200.

Weak demand and rise in selling pressure pulled down moong prices in local mandis by about Rs 200 to Rs 5,300-5,400.

Moong (medium) was stable at Rs 4,800-5,000.

Moong dal was unchanged with moong dal (medium) being quoted at Rs 6,300-6,400, moong dal (bold) at Rs 6,900-7,000, while moong dal (mongar) ruled at Rs 7,200-7,500 .

Sugar may gain on delay in cane crushing



Sugar prices on the Vashi market showed a mixed trend on Wednesday. Prices in spot ruled steady on routine demand – supply while at naka level it improved by Rs 5 for M grade and declined by Rs 10-15 for S grade.

Mill tender rates rose by Rs 10-15 on higher festival demand and firm futures markets. The sentiment remained steady in spot and firm at upper level, said traders.

Jagdish Rawal of B.Bhogilal and co, told *Business Line* “Sentiment was steady in physical market due to month-end eased demand but undertone of the market was firm as retail and bulk demand for sugar could be higher next few days ahead of Diwali festival. Market is already witnessing fresh demand from sweet makers. ” But delay in new crushing season in the State and expected lower production in 2012-13 will support the price. In Vashi spot market, arrivals continued at 70-72 truck loads (each of 100 bags) and local dispatches were about 68-70 truck loads.

On Tuesday evening, 20-22 mills offered tenders and sold 68,000-70,000 bags (each of 100 kgs) to the local traders in the range of Rs 3,370-3,420 (Rs 3,350-3,410) for S-grade and Rs 3,450 - 3,540 (Rs 3,430-3,520) for M-grade.

Bombay Sugar Merchants Association's spot rates: S-grade Rs 3,492-3,561 (Rs 3,492-3,561) and M-grade Rs 3,552-3,701 (Rs 3,550- 3,701). **Naka delivery rates:** S-grade Rs 3,440-3,480 (Rs 3,450-3,500) and M-grade Rs 3,500-3,650 (Rs 3,500-3,650).

Higher input costs make poultry feed dearer



With prices of soyameal and other key ingredients ruling higher, prices of poultry feed products went up on Wednesday.

Higher input cost led feed prices upwards, said Aditya Mishra, a market expert. Dearer soyameal and bajra mainly pushed feed prices up, he added. Market may witness some alteration after Diwali.

Soyameal prices went by Rs 20 and quoted at Rs 2,970 a quintal. Bajra prices increased by Rs 50 and sold at Rs 1,210 a quintal; maize ruled at Rs 1,430, Rs 10 down from previous level, while DCP went down by Re 1 and went for Rs 36 a kg. Rice bran oil quoted at Rs 57 a litre.

Feed Prices: After ruling flat for almost two weeks, prices of poultry feed products went up by Rs 25-30 for a 30-kg and 50-kg bag, on Wednesday.

Broiler concentrates feed went up by Rs 25 and quoted at Rs 1,885 for a 50-kg bag while Broiler Starter Mash was at Rs 1,430 – up Rs 30 from previous level.

Prices of “Broiler pre-starter concentrate 30 per cent” increased by Rs 25 and sold at Rs 1,625 for a 30-kg bag while layer concentrate quoted at Rs 1,430 for a 50-kg bag, Rs 30 up from previous level.

Pre-lay mash quoted at Rs 1,005 while broiler finisher sold at Rs 1,400 for a 50-kg bag.

Poultry Products: Meanwhile, increased supplies pulled egg, broiler and chick prices down on Wednesday. Egg eased marginally by 7 paise and sold to Rs 3.10, broiler quoted at Rs 52 a kg, Rs 12 down from previous level.

Similarly, chick went further down by Rs 8 and went for Rs 11.

Cotton oil heats up on tight supplies

Cotton refined oil inched up by Rs 2 to Rs 700 for 10 kg in the edible oils market on Wednesday taking a total rise of Rs 85 in the last 25 days. Lower arrivals of new cotton crop and expectation of lower production this year pushed up price higher.

Groundnut, soyabean and sunflower oil ruled steady. Rapeseed/mustard oil and palmolein oil declined by Rs 5 and Rs 2 each on eased physical demand and weak futures. The volume was negligible but traders were optimistic about fresh demand from next week ahead of Diwali, said leading broker.

Shailesh Kataria of Riddhi Brokers said: "At the domestic level, physical demand is expected to rise ahead of Diwali. Local pipeline is empty and local refineries are offering commodity for forward delivery so with the improvement in festival demand and tight supply, prices may see steady rise coming days. Malaysian palm oil is pressurised by higher inventory but for indigenous edible oils lower kharif output and less than expected arrivals will support the price in the coming days."

In Saurashtra – Rajkot, groundnut oil *Telia* tin ruled steady at Rs 1,760 and loose 10 kgs increased by Rs 10 to Rs 1,155 on higher demand.

In Mumbai market, due lack of demand and weak futures market volume remain isolated during the days. About 150-200 tonnes of palmolein were resale traded in the range of Rs 520 ex-JNPT. Towards the day's close, Liberty was quoting palmolein at Rs 526-529 and super palmolein Rs 586 for delivery up to Dec 10, soya refined oil Rs 678. Ruchi quoted palmolein at Rs 525 for Dec 15, super palmolein Rs 586. Soyabean refined oil was Rs 675 and sunflower refined oil Rs 725. Allana's rate for super palmolein was Rs 582 for ready and weekly delivery.

On the National Commodities and Derivatives Exchange, soyabean refined oil November futures declined by Rs 1.40 to Rs 686.35, December Rs 684.80 (Rs 683.90) and January at Rs 687.05 (Rs 686.75).

Profit booking crushes castorseed



After making sharp gains on the back of good industrial demand last week, castorseed futures was up 1.41 per cent as market participants booked the profit.

With this, demand in spot was slightly declined due to high price. Spot market in Gujarat was closed for Sardar Patel Jayanti.

On the National Commodity and Derivatives Exchange (NCDEX) castorseed November contract declined by 1.41 per cent or Rs 52 to Rs 3,635 a quintal, with an open interest of 52,310 lots.

December delivery was down by Rs 49 to Rs 3,715 with an open interest of 84,170 lots.

On the Rajkot Commodity Exchange (RCX), castor December contract decreased Rs 52 to Rs 3,777.

Due to holiday, hardly 3,000-4,000 bags of castor arrived in Gujarat and price was quoted Rs 680-700 for 20 kg.

Despite area under castor seed declined this kharif season, industry experts expect supplies to be normal on high carryover stock.

According to industry sources, farmers already have a carryover stock of about 4 lakh tonnes, which is expected to offset the possible decline in production this year.

The total area sown under castor seed was 1.18 million hectares, which is 11.8 per cent less than last year's, SEA noted in its estimates.

According to the latest SEA data, India's total castor meal exports during April-September were reported at 214,000 tonnes, up 39 per cent from the same period last year.

Business Standard

TODAY FARM NEWS

01.11.2012 A.M

Slump looms over Punjab cotton growers

Despite a shortfall of 15% in arrival, cotton prices in the state have lowered

Vijay C Roy / Chandigarh November 1, 2012, 0:39 IST

The global economic slowdown has cast its shadow over cotton procurement in Punjab. Despite witnessing a shortfall of 15 per cent in arrival, prices of cotton in different mandis of the state are hovering between Rs2,500 and Rs4,500 a quintal against the minimum support price (MSP) of Rs3,600 a quintal.



Last year, prices were ruling around Rs2,600 to Rs4,555 a quintal against Rs2,800 a quintal MSP — more or less same compared with this year.

According to the state government data, as on October 24, 2012, overall 628,000 quintals (125,000 bales) of cotton were procured from different mandis of the state by private traders and the Cotton Corporation of India (CCI) in the current procurement season, compared with 737,000 quintals (147,000 bales) during the corresponding period last year. At present, the procurement in Punjab is dominated by private traders, as they procured 629,000 quintals while CCI managed to procure only 3,060 quintals.

Speaking to Business Standard, Punjab Cotton factories & Ginner's association President, Bhagwan Bansal said, "There is a weak demand of cotton in international market because of weak global economies. Even countries like China have stopped buying cotton. Ginner and millers are not doing aggressive buying owing to delayed payments from clients."

Besides, high taxes on cotton in Punjab is acting as deterrent to the farmers, as they go to neighboring states to sell their produce. Taxes in neighboring Rajasthan and Haryana were lower than Punjab, which encouraged farmers to sell their produce in these states, Bansal said.

Punjab levies a total of about 16.40 per cent tax on cotton under various heads compared to 10.50 per cent levied by Haryana, 9.60 per cent by Rajasthan, eight per cent by Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra and 7.50 per cent by Gujarat. So, no exporter prefers to buy Punjab cotton.

CCI participation in procurement process, Bansal says, is tepid at present and suggest more involvement of the body in the process to ensure better remunerative for farmers.

Drought-like conditions, shortage of canal water supply have cast their shadow on cotton area in Punjab. According to data, total area under cotton cultivation in Punjab stands at 495,000 hectares this season and the total estimated production is 1.85 million bales (1 bale=170 kg).

Last year the total area under cotton was 515,000 hectares while total production was 1.68 million bales.

Freeze sugarcane prices at 2011-12 level'

Virendra Singh Rawat / New Delhi/ Lucknow November 1, 2012, 0:44 IST

Sugar mills on Wednesday urged the Uttar Pradesh government to retain state cane prices at the last year's level. The industry claimed any increase in cane prices by way of state advised price (SAP) for the 2012-13 crushing season would seriously impair their paying capacity.

Last year, SAP stood at Rs240 a quintal and Rs250 a quintal for common and early maturing cane varieties, respectively. The industry reiterated its stand at the state sugarcane fixation committee meeting here, chaired by the chief secretary. Farmers and sugarcane research institutes representations were also present.

Farmers maintained the cane input cost had increased to about Rs230 a quintal for 2012-13 crushing season against Rs187/quintal last year.



THE TIMES OF INDIA

TODAY FARM NEWS

01.11.2012 A.M

Farmers rue excess rain as samba crop inundated

TRICHY: Delta farmers have been put to a lot of hardship this year. First, they cried for water from [Mettur dam](#), and now that the northeast monsoon has set in, they are praying for the rains to go away as they fear that the samba seedlings will rot.

As Kuruvai cultivation was unsuccessful in the delta districts of Thanjavur, Tiruvarur, Nagapattinam and Trichy due to water scarcity, expectations had grown among farmers for a successful samba cultivation. But their hopes vanished owing to the delay in release of water from Karnataka. Many farmers began samba cultivation nearly a month later after Karnataka released water following the Supreme Court order. However, the water from Karnataka gradually reduced. At this juncture, the northeast monsoon came in during mid-October. Since then, intermittent rains have occurred in delta districts. Though it infused the fresh hope that the rain would help samba cultivation even if Karnataka failed to release water, there was not continuous rain. However, for the past two days, the delta district received moderate rainfall by way of monsoon as well as the deep depression in the Bay of Bengal.

Even though the rain was considered a gift for samba cultivation, farmers felt it had played spoilsport.

R Sugumaran, district president of Tamilaga Vivasayigal Sangam, said "Around 1,000 acres of nurseries for samba cultivation were inundated with rainwater over the past two days in Thanjavur district. We commenced samba cultivation just 25 days back. Hence, the seedlings in the nurseries have not grown to the level of withstanding such rain. But the rainwater stagnating in the nurseries could damage the seedlings if the water does not drain by tomorrow. If rain continues for the next two days, the seedlings will rot. We have already spent a lot of money on seedlings."

Likewise, S Shanmuganathan, Nagapattinam district president of the Confederation of [Indian Farmers Association](#) (CIFA), said, "The rains this season have not helped samba cultivation. In Tiruvarur and Nagapattinam, farmers go in for direct sowing. Since Kuruvai was not fruitful, we had expectations from samba. But once again we got disappointed as the directly sown samba plants are on the verge of rotting. The water would have easily drained if the public works department (PWD) had de-silted the irrigation canals."

"In Perambalur district, lakes had been deepened and strengthened before the rains and hence the rainwater could not be stored," said P Viswanathan, state president of the Tamil Nadu Pond and River Water Irrigation Farmers Association.

Tariq pledges support for Bihar's agricultural growth

PATNA: Newly-appointed Union minister of state for agriculture [Tariq Anwar](#) was given a rousing welcome here on his first visit to his home state after taking oath on Sunday last. At the [NCP](#) office, band parties played music and crackers were burst as party men overtopped him with garlands.

Anwar said his ministry will extend all cooperation to Bihar and seriously consider its requests and suggestions. "Treat me as a representative of Bihar," said Anwar, who is the only face of Bihar in the UPA-2. For the development of the state, he added, there should not be any politics and he would be always ready to do his bit without any political consideration. Commenting on Bihar's Agri Road Map, Anwar said agriculture was the only industry in the state and all steps should be taken on a priority basis to give a boost to it.

A number of party leaders, workers and well-wishers from different districts crammed the NCP office located on Beerchand Patel Path in the afternoon. Anwar was accorded a reception where people lined up to garland him. Apart from NCP workers, a number of Congressmen also arrived to congratulate him.

Later talking to media, Anwar reiterated his stand that Bihar needed special package for its all-round development. He said the Adhikar rally called by CM [Nitish Kumar](#) to press for grant of special category status to the state was only a 'political stunt' and the state would gain nothing. "Special status is no solution but special package can lead to changes. Nitish Kumar was an important minister in the [NDA](#) government but he never raised his voice for either special status

or the package the NDA government at the Centre had promised at the time of bifurcation of Bihar," he alleged.

Stating that the frequency of his visit to Bihar will increase, Anwar said he would make a courtesy call on Nitish Kumar on Thursday. The CM had phoned in to congratulate him, he added.

Replying to a query, he criticized the 'mean-minded' politicians and parties of Maharashtra like [Shiv Sena](#), MNS and Thackerays for inciting Maratha feelings against the north Indian people. But at the same time, Anwar praised the NCP chief and his boss at Krishi Bhavan, [Sharad Pawar](#), and said he sent to Rajya Sabha two persons from outside Maharashtra and made a Bihari the minister of state.

On the comments of Gujarat CM [Narendra Modi](#) about junior Union minister Shashi Tharoor's wife Sunanda, Anwar said Modi was a responsible person but made very cheap remarks. Similarly, the remarks of [BJP](#) leader Mukhtar Abbas Naqvi were also in bad taste, he added. About the charges levelled by [Arvind Kejriwal](#) against different politicians, he said he did not want to give any importance to him.

Nilam hits cotton ryots

GUNTUR: Cotton farmers became the worst sufferers of [Nilam](#) cyclone as the continued torrential rain added to their woes.

Already, the merchants are offering a pittance to the cotton stocks citing high moisture percentage and farmers feared that the traders would deceive them further after the present rains. While the Centre fixed the minimum support price (MSP) at Rs.3900 per quintal, the farmers were hardly getting around Rs.2600 per quintal. Despite the Cotton Corporation of India (CCI) entering into the market by opening purchase centres in many places in the state, the farmers were being duped by the traders as [CCI](#) was rejecting the stocks on the grounds of high moisture. CCI is saying that it could pick up the stock at Rs.3900 per quintal if the moisture is below eight per cent. "Between 8-12 per cent, we will reduce Rs.29 per each percentage increase and we cannot purchase the stocks with more than 12 per cent moisture," said CCI

GM SK Panigrahi. With many of the farmers being illiterate and are not aware of moisture measures, the CCI simply try to refuse the stocks only to help the waiting private merchants and brokers.

According to sources, the private players pay huge amounts to the CCI officials for rejecting the stocks with high quality. Noticing the farmers' troubles, the district collector S Suresh Kumar convened a meeting with the CCI officials on Wednesday and directed them to pick up maximum stocks from the farmers. Agriculture joint director Sridhar said that the cotton was cultivated in nearly 2 lakh hectares in the district and production was likely to touch a record of 30 lakh bales. "However, the rains prompted by Nilam is likely to damage the quality of the cotton resulting in further crisis for the farmers," admitted a senior agriculture official. He said that flower in the final stage of ripening was likely to fall off in some cases and quality of the produce would get affected in other cases.

Farmers seek higher state advised price for sugarcane

LUCKNOW: Cane farmers and sugar millers in Uttar Pradesh inched closer to a state advised price (SAP) for [sugarcane](#) on Wednesday after the final meeting between the stakeholders and the state government.

During the second meeting to fix the SAP for the 2012-13 season, farmer groups persisted with their demands for fixing SAP higher than Rs 300. Saying their input costs ranged between Rs 250 in western UP and Rs 287 in eastern and central parts of the state, the farmers' claims were backed by inputs from government institutes -- Sugarcane Research Farm in Shahjahanpur, Sardar Patel University of Agriculture, Meerut and Indian Institute of Sugarcane Research, Lucknow, each submitting input costs ranging between Rs 228 and Rs 234 per quintal.

Arguing that SAP should be higher than Rs 300, Sudhir Panwar of Kisan Jagriti Manch said last year SAP was 9.2% of the prevailing sugar prices.

This year, with sugar prices pegged between Rs 3,400 and Rs 3,800 per quintal and unlikely to dip, the SAP should be Rs 312.80 considering the prevailing sugar prices. On Wednesday, farmers also requested the state government to declare the state advised price soon to allow

mills to begin crushing soon. State representatives of the Indian Sugar Mill Association, Shyamlal Gupta, however, opposed any changes or increase in sugarcane prices from last year's Rs 250 per quintal because of the losses incurred by sugar mills during the previous season. Farmer groups, however, argued that this year, the sugarcane acreage in UP increased by 7%, so they should be allowed the same profits like last year.