THE HINDU

TODAY FARM NEWS

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Chickoo moth management in sapota

Sapota, a native of Mexico, is grown widely in India for its fruit and milky latex which is the source of chicle used to make chewing gum.

Of the several pests infesting the tree, the sapota leaf webber (*Nephopteryx eugraphella*) commonly called as chickoo moth is a major one.

Damage symptoms

As the name indicates, the caterpillars of the moth spin web on the leaves and also feed on tender leaves and fruits throughout the year.

Presence of dry leaf clusters and dark brown patches on the leaves are clear symptoms of the infestation and can be easily spotted from a long distance.

The infestation leads to withering and drying of tree branches. The pest activity increases with appearance of new shoots and buds. A wide range of sapota varieties are susceptible to this pest.

The moth is grey in colour measuring around one centimetre in length. It lays eggs on leaves and buds of young shoots. Around 350 eggs are laid by a single female. The incubation period is around one week and after hatching the pink coloured caterpillars start feeding on green leaves by scrapping the chlorophyll content leaving behind a fine network of veins.

They also bore inside the flower buds and tender fruits which wither away and drop down.

The larvae can damage many fruit buds during its developmental period which lasts from 13 to 60 days according to environmental conditions. Pupal stage is completed in 8 to 29 days. There are eight to nine generations of this pest in a year.

Management

— Remove and destroy all the webbed leaves, shoots, buds and fruits along with larvae.

— Crowded and crossing branches should be pruned.

— Plant resistant varieties such as PKM 1 Sapota

— Erect light trap at one per hectare to monitor the activity of chickoo moth

— Spray two rounds of carbaryl 0.1 per cent, chlorpyriphos 0.05 per cent or quinalphos 0.05 per cent at 20 days interval after new shoot formation and fruit harvest.

(J.Jayaraj, Associate Professor and R.K. Murali Baskaran, Head, Department of Entomology ,Agricultural College and Research Institute, TNAU, Madurai - 625 104. phone: 0452- 2422956 Extn: 214)

Chawki rearing ensures a smooth transition from hatchlings to silk

Sericulture is part of the cultural heritage of Mysore district.

This is because the region's climatic factors aid abundant growth of mulberry trees that are the prime source of food for silkworms. Today the trees are being cultivated on more than 2,000 hectares in Mysore alone.

Several farmers in the region who rear silkworms generally purchase 10 day old worms (technically referred to as 2nd moult) from chawki rearing centres (CRCs) and rear them for the next 30 days in their homes.

“Usually farmers rearing silkworms construct a shed either behind their homes or in some adjacent open place near their dwelling. Maintaining good hygiene, temperature, humidity, and constant supply of tender and healthy mulberry leaves are some essential inputs for good growth of the worms,” says Dr Arun Balamatti, Programme Coordinator, Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK), Suttur, Mysore.

But avoiding pests and diseases infesting the young worms being reared in the farmers home itself becomes difficult and that is where chawki rearing houses step in.

The word ‘chawki’ refers to young silk worms reared from hatching to second moult stage. The quality of these worms forms the crux of successful silkworm rearing. It can be compared to growing crops in the nursery first before planting in the main field.

In the nursery, the young crops are taken care of by maintaining a low temperature, giving right nutrients etc so they grow well without getting infested with pests or diseases.

Similarly, the aim of chawki rearing is to produce good quality healthy worms for the farmers.

If the chawki worms are not reared properly, the later stages will result in crop losses. Hence, it is the most crucial period of silkworm rearing. “Despite this fact, there were hardly any CRCs operating in Mysore district till 2006. KVK Mysore introduced three chawki rearing centres in two districts, Mysore and Chamarajanagar, in 2008.

All the three CRCs have completed one year successful operation chawki rearing and supplying the worms to farmers. Two of the three CRS are being run by farmers’ SHGs, whereas the KVK is directly managing one CRC.

The three CRCs put together generated 2,520 man days of employment. With this kind of engagement in CRCs, each SHG member is able to earn between Rs. 1,000 to Rs.1,500 per month, which works out to a total of Rs. 1,26,000 a year,” explains Dr. Arun.

It may be noted here that this is an additional income for those involved in chawki rearing since it is only a part-time work for the members, involving about three hours of work a day. Further, it provides an incremental contribution to the silk industry through increased cocoon yield which is worth Rs.78,00,000.

This apart, the CRC as a seri-enterprise has witnessed innovations like uniform hatching, institutional innovations like participatory chawki management by farmers' SHGs (self help groups), and use of indigenous techniques in temperature and humidity management.

Inspired by the success of these three CRCs, an additional three CRCs have already started working in the same areas.

What is heartening is that in the traditional dry land sericulture areas like Kuderu in Chamarajanagar, where sericulture had almost disappeared due to poor monsoon and irrigation facilities, the enterprise is re-emerging.

"The success of CRCs is due to the firm conviction of the host institution, JSS Mahavidyapeetha, which believed that this was possible, and hence supported the initiative taken up by both the JSS and KVK as an additional effort under a special project," says Dr.Arun.

He explains: "For those who want some quick reference as what benefits a chawki can offer: It provides healthy worms, ensures better cocoon yield. Disease is significantly reduced, through black-boxing technique, and the CRCs ensure uniform hatching of eggs and saving rearing time for farmers thus reducing their overall production cost."

For more detailed information interested readers can contact Dr Arun Balamatti, Programme Coordinator, Krishi Vigyan Kendra, Suttur, Nanjangud taluk, Mysore-571129, email: jsskvk_1994@rediffmail.com, Phone: 08221-232218; Fax: 08221-232377; mobile: 09448832186.

Question Corner: Fruit colour

What is the process of fruit ripening and change of colours from green to yellow or orange?

ADIL PASHA

Mandya, Karnataka

Several major changes can take place as fruits ripen. Not all occur in every type of fruit, but taken collectively they characterize ripening processes. They include: (1) a rise in respiration rate; (2) production of ethylene; (3) flesh softening; (4) appearance of colour; (5) formation of volatiles with associated development of flavour.

Among these changes, formation of bright colour, which evolved to attract dispersal agents such as birds, browsing animals and primates, now becomes a particularly important visible indicator of maturity and ripeness. Pome fruit, stone fruit, tomatoes, mangoes and straw berries provide good examples where colour is a prime indicator of ripeness.

The non-greening of leaves is called senescence. As in leaf senescence, ripening in fruits also involves chlorophyll loss and an increase in production of yellow, orange, red or purple pigments. Yellow, orange or red pigmentation, as seen in oranges and tomatoes, arise from conversion of chloroplasts to chromoplasts. In higher plants, carotenoids which are found in chromoplasts and anthocyanins which are located in the vacuoles fulfill an important purpose as colorants of fruits.

For example the red colour of tomato (*Lycopersicon esculentum*) fruits is due to the carotenoid pigment lycopene, whose concentration increases dramatically during the ripening process. The deep yellow colour of mango fruits is due to the presence of beta carotene a common phytochemical within a group of 600 known carotenoids. Similarly the red colour development in apples and purple colour development in grapes are due to the formation of anthocyanin pigments in their skin. Sometimes both types of pigments can occur in the same fruit.

These pigments are formed as end products of two separate pathways during ripening. The phytoene pathway, which leads to the accumulation of yellow-orange carotenoids or red lycopene and the anthocyanin pathway which leads to the accumulation of anthocyanins in the vacuoles are these two pathways.

S. PALANIAPPAN

Editor, Research Journal of Biological Sciences, J.J. College of Arts and Science, Pudukkottai, Tamil Nadu

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Milma milk dearer by Rs.5

New prices to come into effect on Sunday

The price of milk from Milma has been hiked by Rs.5 a litre. New prices will come into effect on Sunday.

According to a statement issued by the chairman of the Kerala Cooperative Milk Marketing Federation P.T. Gopalakurup here on Wednesday, the price hike decision was taken in view of the cost escalation in milk production. Accordingly, 92 per cent of the hike—Rs.4.60 out of Rs.5—would go to dairy farmers while 20 paise (four per cent) would go to primary dairy cooperative societies and the remaining 20 paise would go to the distribution agent.

Though there were cost escalations in production due to the recent hikes in the prices of petrol and diesel and resultant rise in milk processing and distribution costs, Milma had decided not to take any profits from the hike in order to help dairy farmers to the maximum extent possible, Mr. Gopalakurup said in the statement.

The revised prices for a litre of the different varieties on offer from Milma would be (with existing prices in brackets)—double toned milk – Rs.32 (Rs.27); toned milk – Rs.33 (Rs.28);

homogenised toned milk – Rs.35 (Rs.30); homogenised Jersey milk – Rs.35 (Rs.30); Jersey milk (non-homogenised) – Rs.35 (Rs.30); Rich Plus milk - Rs.37 (Rs.32); and standardised milk – Rs.36 (Rs.31).

The revised price of skimmed milk curd for 500 gm packet would be Rs.20.

The chairman said that Packets with the old prices would be in circulation for a few more days until packets with the revised prices printed on them were made available.

Challenging times

Special Correspondent writes from Kochi: The dairy sector in the State had been going through challenging times ever since agriculture and associated segments lost the traditional importance in recent years. Milma, the government-backed cooperative milk marketing body, functioning under three separate regions in the State, has been finding it hard to maintain supply despite the fact that Kerala depends on neighbouring States to fulfil its requirement. Only about half of the 10.5 lakh litres of milk required by the State daily is produced within the State.

The Ernakulam Regional Cooperative Milk Producers' Union Limited, the regional wing of Milma, had been making losses a few years ago. It has turned the corner and is making profits now owing to a variety of measures adopted by the region, chairman of Milma's Ernakulam region M.T. Jayan said.

Any programme to increase production in the dairy sector would have to be focussed on the welfare of the farmer, he said.

A fortnight ago, the region had announced additional incentives to the farmers in the region. It included extra payment for the milk being procured during October. The initiative was considered the beginning of the new effort to establish a hike in the market price of milk.

Milma had based its course of action on a study conducted by it.

Infra projects should not fall foul of Forest Rights Act: K.C. Deo

Smita Gupta

Draft Cabinet note on NIB not sent to me, he says

Infrastructure projects that come up on forest land must comply with the Forest Rights Act (FRA), Union Tribal Affairs Minister Kishore Chandra Deo has said.

No land in a Fifth Schedule area should be handed over to any industry if it violated the Panchayat (Extension to Scheduled Areas) Act (PESA), Mr. Deo said, responding to a query whether he agreed with Environment and Forests Minister Jayanthi Natarajan's opposition to the proposed National Investment Board (NIB) that hopes to fast-forward clearances for large infrastructure projects.

Mr. Deo said that as the draft Cabinet note on NIB had not been sent to him, there was no question of him responding to it.

"But I am not against any proposal that facilitates fresh investment as long as the FRA and the PESA are not violated," he said adding that he had written to Ms. Natarajan a year ago, saying as much.

No infrastructure project was delayed "because of interference by my ministry." If he heard of any violation of these two key laws, he would raise them as it was his duty to do so. Indeed, most delays took place owing to non-compliance of FRA, Mr. Deo said.

The Tribal Affairs Ministry is the nodal ministry for the FRA and the Panchayat Affairs Ministry — which Mr. Deo also heads – is the nodal ministry for PESA.

The FRA, as Mr. Deo stressed, was one of the key legislations passed by the UPA government and in the last session of Parliament, fresh guidelines were issued to the Act.

Meanwhile, Ms. Natarajan's letter to Prime Minister Manmohan Singh has kicked up a storm in the party. It was expected that the NIB would come up before the Cabinet on Thursday. However, government sources said it was not listed on the agenda.

The Congress chose not to respond directly to what has all the appearances of a turf war. On Wednesday, its spokesperson Renuka Chowdhury chose to downplay the matter when asked a question on the subject.

"There is no tussle. This is a democratic process; we are not invited individually to come and talk in a Cabinet meeting. The agenda is always circulated and all Ministers are expected to express their opinion on any change or reform that we bring about in the Cabinet, which is a collective decision in policy making," she said.

Value-addition to indigenous millets advocated for widening market base

Special Correspondent

The market potential of millet-based products as an alternative for imported oats-based products was explained to a group of prospective women entrepreneurs at a recent seminar organised by Women Entrepreneurs' Association of Tamil Nadu (WEAT).

With the State government according importance for organic and eco-friendly products, and the Central government also providing impetus to agro-based and eco products, the venture to manufacture millet based products will be gainful, participants of the day-long seminar were told.

Jaganathan, a Dindigul-based entrepreneur manufacturing millet-based products, narrated how value-addition could expand market for indigenous products. He explained that flakes of cumbu, maize, and wheat, along with vegetables and masala could be used to make nutritious porridge. Instead of imported oats, advocated for control of diabetes and cholesterol, indigenous minor millets could serve as the best alternative.

He called for an awareness campaign to drive home benefits of products available in ‘ready to cook’ condition not only for diabetics, but also children, and the aged for enhancing resistance and immunity power. According to Geetha Chandran, District Secretary of WEAT, and N.Manimekalai, Professor, Department of Women’s Studies, Bharathidasan University, the association has been continuously creating awareness on such products as well as providing skill training, to open up entrepreneurial opportunity for trainees. Products manufactured indigenously with minor millets including cumbu, ragi, thinai, and samai, have a large market as they could also be exported, Dr. Manimekalai said. Presiding over, WEAT president M. Inbavalli said following skill training, participants were felicitated to prepare project reports for starting enterprises and linked to the State government’s Unemployed Youth Employment Generation Programme (UYEGP) that has an attractive subsidy component.

Ms. Inbavalli offered to facilitate bank linkages to prospective entrepreneurs by contacting 0431-4200040, 9600779081 or 9488785806.

Drop in cultivated area likely in Erode

Owing to poor rainfall, power cut

The total area of cultivation in Erode district is likely to witness a 20 to 30 percent drop this year following poor rainfall and long hours of power outage.

The farming community in the district cultivate crops in more than 2 lakh hectares of land. Paddy, sugarcane, banana, maize, turmeric, gingelly and groundnut are the major crops cultivated in the district.

The normal acreage under paddy is little over 40,000 hectares, while sugarcane is grown in about 35,000 hectares.

The normal acreage of turmeric is about 9,500 hectares.

“But this year, only about 7,000 hectares are brought under paddy. The area under turmeric, banana and many other crops also witnessed a significant fall. Water shortage is the main reason that has forced many farmers to reduce the area of cultivation,” sources in the agriculture department say.

The Bhavanisagar reservoir, which is the primary water source for more than 2.5 lakh acres of land in the district, has very little water.

Farmers also face problems in utilising the ground water due to the frequent disruptions in power supply. The long hours of power cut turned the situation from bad to worse.

Most parts of the district get just three hours of three-phase power supply. This has left the farmers with no option but to reduce the total area of cultivation, sources here say.

“Most of the farmers have abandoned the cultivation of water intensive crops such as paddy, banana and turmeric. Instead, they have taken up maize and other short-duration, less water-intensive crops. If the district receives good rainfall in the coming weeks, more farmers may go for maize and other short-duration crops,” a senior official here points out.

“Even if the district receives rain, farmers cannot risk by cultivating the entire area available for them due to the acute water and power shortage. If the government could ensure continuous power supply for at least eight hours in a day, it would help farmers with borewells to irrigate their lands,” says Lower Bhavani Farmers Association President S. Nallasamy.

“We agree that the government cannot do anything about the water shortage. But it can help us utilise the ground water effectively by ensuring power supply for eight hours without a interruption,” he adds.

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Parthenium, a threat to Blue Mountains

'Steps should be taken to weed it out at the earliest'

Parthenium plants at Kookalthorai,
near Kotagiri.– Photo: M. Sathyamoorthy

Generally considered to be a threat only in the warm or hot places, parthenium has of late become a major source of concern even in the Blue Mountains.

Lamenting that the growing threat from the wild growth was not being viewed with the seriousness it deserved either by the health authorities or environment activists, observers told *The Hindu* here on Wednesday that it was rapidly proliferating in many places including Kookalthorai, near Kotagiri, and near the Mudumalai Tiger Reserve.

Regretting that many were still not aware of the harm the plant can cause, Assistant Director of Horticulture, V. Ramsundar said that it would subject people with respiratory problems to considerable hardship and cause skin problems to those who come into contact with it.

Pointing out that until a few years ago it was found only in places like Katteri, Marapaalam, Kalhatty, Naduvattam, and Gudalur, he said that it was now spreading in the higher areas.

Since there were no signs of any organised efforts to rid the district of the problem farmers should step up their vigil.

They should ensure that it did not entered their fields or even their boundaries.

Though animals generally avoid the plant they would start feeding on it if other forms of vegetation become scarce.

Plastic pollution upsetting marine ecosystem, say experts

‘Marine litter affecting the livelihood of fishermen’

Plastic pollution in marine ecosystems is causing health hazards and economic loss, according to marine scientists.

The presence of plastic pollutants in seas and backwaters is upsetting the ecosystem and breeding grounds of a large number of economically important fish varieties, said V. Kripa, head of the Fishery Environment and Management Division of the Central Marine Fisheries Research Institute.

In her presentation at a symposium organised by the Kochi Corporation in association with Global Ocean, an NGO, here on Wednesday, Dr. Kripa said that the breeding habitats of fish varieties such as pearl spot, mullets and shrimps were hit by pollution. Pollutants also upset primary food production in waterbodies by preventing the entry of sunlight into water, thus affecting the productivity of the region. Littering in beaches is also impacting tourism, she said.

Marine litter was clogging gill nets, affecting the livelihood of artisanal fishermen. Refuse from land reached waterbodies during high tide, she noted.

Bijoy Nandan, associate professor of the Department of Marine Biology of the School of Marine Sciences, Cochin University of Science and Technology, suggested more studies on the micro-level impacts of pollution.

Though data is available on the macro-level impact of marine pollution, the micro-level impact is not much documented. There is a dearth of reliable scientific data regarding micro-level impact including toxicity in marine organisms, Dr. Nandan said.

Kochi Corporation would evolve programmes for addressing the plastic menace including the use of plastic carry bags, said T.K. Ashraf, chairman of the Health Standing Committee. The corporation had earlier asked students to collect plastic refuse from their houses as part of the drive against plastic. The support of the city residents is required for taking forward the drive against plastic that has been causing waterlogging. A large number of city drains are clogged by plastic bags, he said.

The ban on plastic carry bags below 40 microns has not yielded the desired results in the city.

The corporation will seek the support of traders for replacing plastic carry bags with bags made of eco-friendly materials like jute and cloth bags, he said.

Earlier, Hibi Eden, MLA, inaugurated the programme.

B. Bhadra, deputy mayor, Kochi Corporation, presided over the meeting.

Melanie Salmon of Global Ocean, K.C. Mohana Chandran, deputy manager, Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited, and Rajan Chedambath, secretary, Centre for Heritage Environment and Development of the Kochi Corporation, were among those who attended.

VAT refund for cardamom growers

Cardamom traders of Idukki district will receive their value-added tax (VAT) refund dues within a month, Finance Minister K.M. Mani has said.

In a press release, he said the VAT refund, under the existing rules, would usually take one year after the traders had participated in cardamom auction.

The rules were being changed to ensure the refund in the month immediately following the auction. Mr. Mani said the system of collecting in advance Central Sales Tax at two per cent from cardamom growers at the check-posts would be discontinued.

Panel to go into all aspects of endosulfan

J. Venkatesan

The Supreme Court has appointed an expert committee to go into all aspects of the ban on endosulfan and the disposal of the existing quantity of the pesticide.

The court has asked the Centre to spell out its stand on the manufacture and use of endosulfan in the country.

A Bench comprising Justice Swatanter Kumar and Justice Madan B. Lokur, hearing a writ petition filed by the Democratic Youth Federation of India on Tuesday, said the committee to be headed by the Director General of the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) would have the Member-Secretary of the Centre Pollution Control Board, two scientists, and the Joint Secretary of Plant Protection from the Agriculture Ministry on it.

The Bench asked the committee to submit its report in six weeks after undertaking a scientific study on the question whether the use of endosulfan would cause any serious health hazard to human beings and of its impact on environmental pollution. The panel would also recommend whether endosulfan should be permitted or to be banned completely in human interest.

Last year, the court had banned the manufacture and sale of endosulfan in the country.

The Bench faulted the Centre for not giving its views whether the ban should continue or not.

The Bench said, ‘‘You can’t leave everything to court and say court is exceeding its limit. Why don’t you [the Centre] take a clear stand? If we say ban, you say economic crisis, and if we don’t ban, then it is human crisis. Either way we are blamed.’’

The Bench said the committee would also estimate the cost of the existing stock of the pesticide that should be destroyed.

It posted the matter for further hearing on November 20.

PDS to include millets to tackle malnutrition’

Scheme to have ragi, bajra at Rs.1 a kg, wheat at Rs.2 a kg and rice at Rs.3 a kg.: M.S. Swaminathan

Despite efforts being made since independence, malnutrition burden is still high in the country and one way of tackling it is enlarging the food basket in the Public Distribution System through inclusion of nutritive millets, says M.S. Swaminathan, Chairman-emeritus, M.S. Swaminathan Research Foundation (MSSRF).

The Foundation has been working to promote farming systems for nutrition-rich food crops and livestock and preserve and popularise local and traditional varieties of cereals, millets cultivated by tribal people of Kolli Hills in Tamil Nadu and Jeypore tract in Odisha.

Enlarged food basket

The proposed National Food Security Bill being finalised has provisions to address malnutrition through enlarged food basket in the PDS, Prof. Swaminathan told *The Hindu* , on the sidelines of the COP-11 Satellite event on 'Biodiversity Management for Alleviating Poverty and Malnutrition' at the NIN here on Wednesday.

"The PDS will include all the millets like ragi, bajra at Rs.1 a kg, wheat at Rs.2 a kg and rice at Rs.3 a kg. The first 1,000 day cycle in the life of a child, ie from womb till it is two years old, is important to get healthy nutrition. A child with low birth weight tends to suffer from cognitive difficulties," he said.

The Food Security Bill for the first time recognised the role of woman in ensuring household food security and proposed that PDS card be given in the name of woman, he said.

Two reports

Prof. Swaminathan who heads the panel of experts on Food and Nutrition Security will be submitting two reports on 'Social Protection for Food Security' and 'Climate Change and Food Security' to the Global committee on World Food Security that will be meeting on October 15.

Earlier, speaking at the inaugural of 'Biodiversity management' organised by the MSSRF and National Institute of Nutrition, he said government to tackle malnutrition and poverty needed to marry agriculture with nutrition.

Focus on food security floor ie availability of food, access to food through social protection measures and absorption of food through better sanitation was equally important.

Governor for review of PDS

Special Correspondent

Governor E.S.L. Narasimhan, Chairman-Emeritus of MSSRF M.S. Swaminathan and NIN director Kalpagam Polasa at the National Institute of Nutrition in Hyderabad on Wednesday.-PHOTO: NAGARA GOPAL

With malnutrition still remaining a concern despite the supply of subsidised rice at Rs.1 a kg, is it time to revisit the Public Distribution System for including nutrition-rich millets instead of only 25 kg rice ?

This question was posed to policy makers and agricultural scientists by the Governor E.S.L.Narasimhan at a meet on 'Biodiversity Management for Alleviating Poverty and Malnutrition' held at the National Institute of Nutrition (NIN) here on Wednesday.

Despite major technological advances, poverty and malnutrition continued to be the serious concerns and should be tackled in a realistic manner. Lack of nutrients in diet needed to be addressed and for this, conservation of agricultural biodiversity was critical as modern practices were threatening the conventional wisdom of food, the Governor said. Creating markets for local crops and varieties would not only benefit farmers but also urban consumers.

Voicing the need for reviewing NREGA, Mr. Narasimhan said while the NREGA had been useful for assured income generation for the rural poor, the question remained how one would ensure that the money earned was not spent on liquor and other vices and the subsequent shirking of work.

"It is necessary to improve NREGA so that poor did not misuse the wages on liquor but spent it on nutritious food," he said.

The other challenges were increasing productivity while agricultural land was shrinking to make agriculture remunerative and arrest migration of poor from rural to urban areas. While migration could not be stopped, if agricultural incomes improved, rural youth would be better equipped with skills and education to find better livelihood in urban milieu, he said.

Shortage of godown space for food grains was another factor for farmers not getting remunerative price for their produce. “We are not short of paddy but due to lack of storage space, farmers find it difficult to sell their produce,” he said.

MNREGA, panacea for coffee plantations?

Nagesh Prabhu

The Hindu Extra hands needed: Shortage of quality labour has affected coffee plantations in the State. File photo: Sampath Kumar G.P.

Parliamentary panel recommends extending job scheme to overcome labour shortage

A Parliamentary Standing Committee on Commerce has recommended extension of the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MNREGA) to plantations to overcome labour shortage in the sector, particularly in Karnataka.

The 31-member panel, headed by Shanta Kumar, in its report titled ‘Performance of Plantation Sector – Tea and Coffee Industry’, suggested to the Union Commerce Ministry to extend the job scheme to coffee plantations to take up various works such as construction of water tanks, groundwater and soil management.

Coffee is a highly labour-intensive crop requiring about 400 man days per hectare per year for Arabica and 300 man days per hectare per year for Robusta.

The panel said, “There has been a serious shortage of workers in plantation areas due to employment opportunities generated by MNREGA and due to migration of workers to urban areas for better avenues. This has adversely affected the timely completion of certain critical operations, which is having an impact on production, productivity and quality of coffee.”

Shortage of labourers willing to work in the coffee estates and the poor quality of the workforce who are willing to work has also affected the plantation sector. The committee said the lackadaisical attitude of the growers towards labour welfare is also responsible for migration of labour from plantations.

In India, coffee is cultivated on about 4.1 lakh hectares, mainly confined to Karnataka (57 p.c.), Kerala (21 p.c.) and Tamil Nadu (8 p.c.), which form traditional coffee tracts. To a lesser extent, coffee is also grown in non-traditional areas like Andhra Pradesh and Odisha as well as the northeastern States.

To extend the job scheme to coffee plantations, the panel recommended to the Commerce Department to take up the matter with Union Ministry of Rural Development.

The former chairman of the Karnataka Planters’ Association, Marvin Rodrigues, told *The Hindu* that coffee estates have been facing severe shortage of labour. There was a need to undertake massive mechanisation to tackle labour problems.

“The committee is of the view that instead of withdrawing or suspending the MNREGA during harvesting season, it may rather be extended to works in coffee plantations.”

Tie up with IITs

The committee found that a majority of the machinery imported for the coffee industry is either exorbitantly priced or are not suited to local plantations. It suggested that the Coffee Board tie-up with IITs and other reputed institutions for development of indigenous technology for such machines.

The committee recommended that the department spruce up the functioning of the Central Coffee Research Institute (CCRI), Chikmagalur, and add dynamism to it through collaboration and exchange programmes, with reputed national and international research institutes/universities so that the coffee industry could gain from the best practices available in the field.

“The scientists of the CCRI have been put on lower pay scales in comparison to their counterparts working in other national research laboratories despite their similar/comparable qualifications, duties and nature of work,” it said.

Hindustan Times

TODAY FARM NEWS

11.10.2012 A.M

Weather

Chennai

Chennai - INDIA

Today's Weather

Partly Cloudy

Thursday, Oct 11

Max **Min**

35.5° | 25.9°

Rain: 0
Humidity: 70
Wind: normal

Sunrise: 05:58
Sunset: 05:51
Barometer: 1010

Tomorrow's Forecast

Partly Cloudy

Friday, Oct 12

Max **Min**

31° | 24°

Extended Forecast for a week

Saturday Oct 13	Sunday Oct 14	Monday Oct 15	Tuesday Oct 16	Wednesday Oct 17
29° | 26°	31° | 26°	32° | 25°	32° | 25°	31° | 24°
Rainy	Rainy	Rainy	Partly Cloudy	Rainy

Airport Weather

Delhi **Delhi**

Rain: 0
Humidity: 65
Wind: normal

Sunrise: 06:19
Sunset: 05:55
Barometer: 1013

THE HINDU Business Line

TODAY FARM NEWS

11.10.2012 A.M

10th oct 2012 P.M

Coonoor tea auction volume at 10-week high

A volume of 14.28 lakh kg has been catalogued for Sale No: 41 of Coonoor Tea Trade Association auctions to be held on Thursday and Friday, says an analysis of brokers' listing.

This is the highest offer in 10 weeks. It is as much as 1.25 lakh kg more than last week's offer and about 46,000 kg more than the offer this time last year.

Of the 14.28 lakh kg on offer, 10.99 lakh kg belongs to the leaf grades and 3.29 lakh kg to the dust grades.

As much as 13.58 lakh kg belongs to CTC variety and only 0.70 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 0.45 lakh kg belongs to orthodox while 10.54 lakh kg, CTC. Among the dusts, only 0.25 lakh kg belongs to orthodox while 3.04 lakh kg, CTC.

Fresh teas accounts for 11.66 lakh kg. As much as 2.62 lakh kg comprises teas which had remained unsold in previous auctions.

Last week, in the leaf tea auction, Hindustan Unilever Ltd (HUL) bought good medium varieties. Tata Global Beverages Ltd was selective. Duncans Tea Ltd showed interest for medium brokens. Godfrey Philips India Ltd. did not operate.

In the dust tea auction, HUL and Tata Global bought good medium varieties. Godfrey Philips was selective. Duncans Tea did not operate.

Last week, 69 marks of CTC teas got Rs 100 and more. Homedale Estate tea, auctioned by Global Tea Brokers, topped the CTC market when Mittal Tea Co bought it for Rs 156 a kg;

Vigneshwar Estate Rs 138; Deepika Supreme Rs 135; Hittakkal Estate Rs 134 and Blue Monte Speciality Rs 133.

Among orthodox teas from corporate sector, Chamraj got Rs 236; Highfield Estate Rs 194; Kairbetta Rs 167; Corsley and Havukal Rs 162 each and Kodanad Rs 153. In all, 29 marks got Rs 100 and more.

Rubber prices decline on weak demand

Physical rubber prices lost ground on Wednesday.

The absence of major consuming industries and the overall weakness in the domestic and international futures kept the sentiments visibly bearish during the day.

Moderate selling from dealers afraid of further fall in the commodity was also observed during initial trading hours.

Sheet rubber declined to Rs 190 at Kottayam and Kochi from Rs 192 and Rs 191 a kg respectively, according to traders and the Rubber Board.

Low key transactions

The transactions were at a low key.

In futures, the October series closed at Rs 192 (191.68), November at Rs 186.42 (186.57), December at Rs 185.50 (184.93), January at Rs 186.70 (186.25), February at Rs 188 (186.73) and March at Rs 189 (189.66) a kg on the National Multi Commodity Exchange.

The October futures slid to ¥262.3 (Rs 177.88) from ¥265.9 a kg during the day session and then to ¥262.2 (Rs 177.84) in the night session on the Tokyo Commodity Exchange. RSS 3 (spot) dropped to Rs 173.95 (174.17) a kg at Bangkok.

Spot rates were (Rs/kg): RSS-4: 190 (192); RSS-5: 184 (186); ungraded: 178 (180); ISNR 20: 173 (174) and latex 60 per cent: 124 (126).

Adverse weather spoils the world tea party

If the present situation is any indication, the outlook for tea globally does not appear exciting. The shortfall in production in Kenya, Sri Lanka and India,currently exceeds 43 million kg compared with the previous year, according to J. Thomas & Company Private Ltd, the world's biggest tea auctioneers.

The adverse weather conditions across the globe have affected supply of tea in the world market. With the exception of China, which is the largest producer of green tea and growing crop exponentially, extreme and erratic weather has affected production elsewhere in Asia and Africa.

Climatic conditions and pest attacks, particularly in North India, mean a deficit of 15.4 mkg till July-end; the dip is 21 mkg all-India.

While the August crop is likely to show a small surplus, September harvest in North India is expected to be well below that in the same month last year. The deficit in crop, therefore, is expected to widen further by October-end.

Green leaf prices are moving which would signal the hardening of prices at the bottom of the market, as well as a shortage of green leaf availability.

Demand and supply

Liquoring Assams continue to hold levels in spite of normal arrivals at auction centres.

With increased purchasing power and discerning tastes, the consumer is willing, and able, to pay significant premiums for good quality.

Medium Assams and Dooars are irregularly easing in value, but overall averages continue to be well above last year.

The demand for these categories is also expected to rise as the supply line gets squeezed. .

The supply of quality Assam teas for the rest of the year will be limited as the production season gradually draws to a close.

In North India, factories close down by December end as the cold weather inhibits leaf growth; they resume operations only towards March end.

Most upcountry markets are low on stock and the usual winter buying will start shortly.

With domestic consumption growing at over 2.5 per cent annually, an additional 20 mkg of tea would be required, further accentuating the supply shortfall.

Crop shortages

Crop shortages traditionally impact year-end prices the most. Already the year to date North India auction average is up by Rs 25 over the previous season.

Continuing shortfall in production, increased demand and low stocks at buyer's destinations all indicate that tea prices are clearly poised for a further strengthening. Yet, tea prices, per se, continue to remain below the commodity and inflation index.

Drop in production and increased costs have negated price increases for producers. Recent wage revisions and sharp hikes in input costs like fertiliser and fuel have added to the burden of the planter, which even the buoyant prices, have not managed to mitigate.

Prospects for wheat export to Iran improve

Iran wants to buy two lakh tonnes of wheat at a price of $325 a tonne during December-January period.

Iran will soon resolve the quality issue related to Indian wheat and may initially import two lakh tonnes of the grain during the December-January period, the Food Minister, K V Thomas said today.

” Our officials have just returned from Tehran. They were informed that the issue of Karnal Bunt, a fungal disease, will be resolved soon. It is their internal problem and they will sort it out soon,” the Minister said.

He said initially Iran wants to buy two lakh tonnes of wheat at a price of $325 a tonne during December-January period.

“Internationally our wheat is accepted. We export to 25 odd countries. If they want to buy, they have to resolve the quality issue at their end. The ball is in their court,” Thomas said.

Iran has been severely impacted by trade sanctions by the US and some other western countries related to its nuclear programme.

The west Asian country wants to step up trade with India, particularly in food products through a bilateral payment arrangement. The wheat export transactions will be done through the UCO Bank in India.

The Indian offer placed before the Iranian officials included the shipment at $ 340 a tonne, loading from Kandla and Mundra ports and the Karnal Bunt tolerance limit of 0.25 per cent.

Iran has not been importing Indian wheat since 1996 because of the quality hurdles.

In the face of surplus stocks, India is now scouting for global wheat market. Over 1.5 million tonnes of wheat has already been exported since it lifted the export ban in September 2011.

Import duty hike on white sugar likely

To avoid dumping of sugar in the domestic market, the government is mulling raising import duty on white sugar and retain the levy at 10 per cent on raw sugar for the next three months.

Currently, import duty on white and raw sugar is 10 per cent. “There is a case to increase import duty on white sugar from 10 per cent to avoid flooding of white sugar in the domestic market. We are working on a proposal,” a senior government official said.

However, the import duty on raw sugar should be in place for at least next three months to avoid large scale imports, he said.

A final call on this issue would be taken by the Finance Ministry, he added.

The hike in import duty on white sugar is necessary as large imports could dampen domestic prices, hitting margins of Indian mills and further affecting cane payment to farmers, the official said.

The ex-mill rate of sugar in the country has declined by Rs 200 to Rs 3,260 per quintal in last few days on sufficient supply.

Currently, white sugar is being imported mostly from neighbouring Pakistan as Indian prices are higher.

Sugar production in the country is estimated to be 26 million tonnes in this year, higher than the annual demand of 22 million tonnes.

HC allows HML to cut 83,000 rubber trees

The Kerala High Court (HC) today permitted Harrisons Malayalam Ltd (HML) to cut 83,000 rubber trees from its 10 estates in four districts.

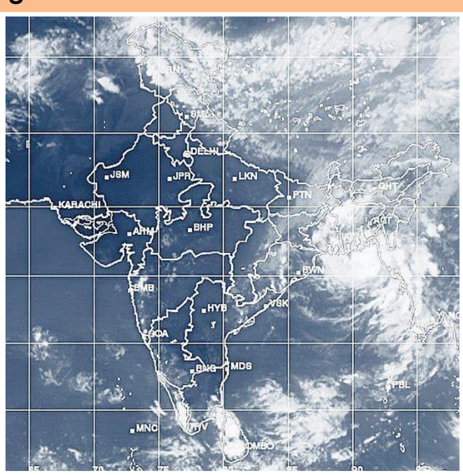
The order in this regard was issued by a division Bench comprising Justices, M Sashidharan Nambiar and P Bhavadasan on a petition by the plantation company to cut old rubber trees from its estates in Kollam, Pathnamthitta, Kottayam and Thrissur districts.

The Bench made it clear that no trees should be cut from the forest area.

HML was also directed to furnish a bank guarantee of Rs 20 crore before cutting the trees.

The Bench also directed forest officials to ensure strict supervision when the trees are cut.

Wind patterns begin to align for North-East monsoon



Meteorological features have started to align themselves to a pattern over peninsular India to set the platform for North-East (reverse) monsoon.

An 'offending' circulation with a stubborn presence over Maharashtra has since weakened and disappeared into the vastness of the Arabian Sea.

WIND PATTERN

North-easterly winds, though weak in strength, have taken its place, even as they were in the process of 'straightening out' suitably over the rest of the peninsula.

The low-pressure area over Bay of Bengal has moved away to the east and was on Wednesday located over North-East Bay of Bengal off Bangladesh and Myanmar.

The 'low' has set up a stream of easterly winds over east India.

Importantly, it has also opened up a trough of lower pressure along the east coast past Odisha down to Tamil Nadu.

An India Meteorological Department (IMD) update said that rains lashed many places over the north eastern states, sub-Himalayan West Bengal and Sikkim during the 24 hours ending Wednesday morning.

SHOWERS FORECAST

Sporadic showers were reported from Odisha, Jharkhand, Bihar, Gangetic West Bengal and Tamil Nadu also.

Forecast valid until the weekend said that thundershowers may break out over many places over Odisha, Gangetic West Bengal and the north eastern States. Rain has been forecast also over coastal Karnataka, Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Lakshadweep, Rayalaseema and coastal Andhra Pradesh.

An extended outlook valid until Wednesday next (October 17) said that rain or thundershowers would occur at many places over extreme south peninsular India.

LIKELY ONSET

Thundershowers have been forecast also along the east coast.

This is likely expected to bring in North-East monsoon, as per early forecasts.

Meanwhile, minimum temperatures continued to be below to appreciable below normal at a few places over east Madhya Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh and Gujarat and at one or two places over Rajasthan, Maharashtra, west Uttar Pradesh, Haryana, Punjab, Chhattisgarh and Odisha.

The lowest minimum of 15.7 deg Celsius was recorded at Narnaul in Haryana.

Raw cotton futures lower on increasing arrivals

Raw cotton or kapas futures have declined on the back of increasing arrivals. The ongoing harvest in the key growing States, coupled with reports of improved crop condition in the US, also fuelled the bearish trend.

However, demand might emerge due to buying at lower levels, restricting any sharp fall.

On the NCDEX, February contracts slipped 2.3 per cent to Rs 898 for a maund of 20 kg and March contracts lost 1.9 per cent at Rs 944.

Cotton arrivals from the new crop are estimated at 24,000 bales (of 170 kg each) in the country — up 1,800 bales from Tuesday. Gujarat, the top producer of the fibre, recorded 7,500 bales, and in Maharashtra arrivals were flat at 3,500 bales. The cotton season is from October to September.

As on September 28, cotton was being planted on 114 lakh hectares, down from last year's 119.6 lakh hectares.

According to the latest CAB report, exports in the 2012-13 marketing year that began on October 1 are likely to be lower by 46 cent at 7 million bales compared with 12.7 million bales in the 2011-12 season. The ending stocks have been revised upward to 3.4 million bales.

Kapas prices gained on the spot market and at Surendranagar (Gujarat) were ruling at Rs 799.4 a maund.

Global scenario: New York cotton for December delivery inched up 0.1 per cent to settle at 71.84 cents/lb on ICE Futures U.S.

Global cotton prices are mainly influenced by China, the US and India. China's 2012 cotton output is estimated at 6.97 million tonnes, down 4.2 per cent from last year.

Pepper futures climb higher

The pepper market continued its upward trend on bullish activities and all the active contracts ended above the previous day's closing on Wednesday.

Overall open interest has moved up marginally while the total turn over decreased following a drop in activities.

The staggered delivery is seems to have helped small and medium players who could sell further new quantities. Those who were trying to squeeze the market appear to have failed, as the staggered delivery system believed to have torpedoed their efforts, market sources told *Business Line*.

On the spot around 33 tonnes of farm grade pepper arrived that that were traded at Rs 407, 412 and 415 a kg depending upon the quality, grade and area of production.

Oct contract on the NCDEX increased by Rs 295 to the last traded price of Rs 43,980 a quintal. Nov and Dec contracts went up by Rs210 and Rs 295 respectively to the LTP of Rs 43,805 and Rs 43,100 a quintal.

Turnover

Total turnover decreased from 1,534 tonnes to close at 1,085 tonnes.

Total open interest increased by 74 tonnes to 7,324 tonnes. Oct open interest fell by 186 tonnes to 1,999 tonnes showing liquidation while Nov and Dec increased by 176 tonnes and 81 tonnes respectively to 3,994 tonnes and 81 tonnes showing some additional buying.

Spot prices in tandem with the futures market trend increased by Rs200 to close at Rs40,400 (ungarbled) and Rs41,900 (garbled) a quintal.

Indian parity in the international market was at $8,500 a tonne (c&f) despite increase in the futures market due to weakening of the rupee against the dollar, they said.

Hybrid turmeric gains as traders strike deals

Hybrid variety turmeric gained on Wednesday following orders some traders received. Stockists, too, quoted a higher price especially in Gobichettipalayam since the fine variety arrived for sale.

“The sale of hybrid turmeric increased and the buyers quoted Rs 500 higher than Tuesday and purchased all the 300bags.

Some other stockists quoted increased price of Rs 250 and purchased all the 91 bags in the Gobichettipalayam Cooperative Society as the fine variety arrived for sale.

Similarly, the price in the other markets also increased by Rs 150”, said R.K.V. Ravishankar, President, Erode Turmeric Merchants Association.

He said that still there were no fresh orders from North India. Prices may increase up to Rs 7,000 once orders come in. With such hopes, stockists have started buying the commodity.

Of the 3,000 bags that arrived, 60 per cent found takers.

At the Erode Turmeric Merchants Association Sales yard, the finger variety was sold at Rs 4,096-5,691, the root variety Rs 3,896-5,159.

Salem crop: The finger variety fetched Rs 4,889-6,538, the root variety Rest 4,696-5,368. Of the 548 bags put up for sale, 112 got sold.

At the Erode Cooperative Marketing Society, the finger variety was sold at Rs 4,899-5,969, the root variety Rs 4,611-5,349. All the 595 bagswere sold.

At the Gobichettipalayam Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Society the finger variety was sold at Rs 4,500-6,039, the root variety Rs 4,410-5,436. All the 91 bags were sold.

At the Regulated Marketing Committee, the finger variety was sold at Rs 4,7495,472, root variety Rs 4,6395,391 Of the 673 bags, 508 were sold.

Rising demand buoys castor

Castor seed moved up in futures as well as in spot market on the back of increasing demand on Wednesday.

A Rajkot-based castor trader said, “Strong export demand of castor oilseed cake also supported the prices.”

On the Rajkot Commodity Exchange (RCX) castor for December delivery gained Rs 45 to Rs 3,886 a quintal.

RCX spot castor was up by Rs 60 to Rs 3,582.50.

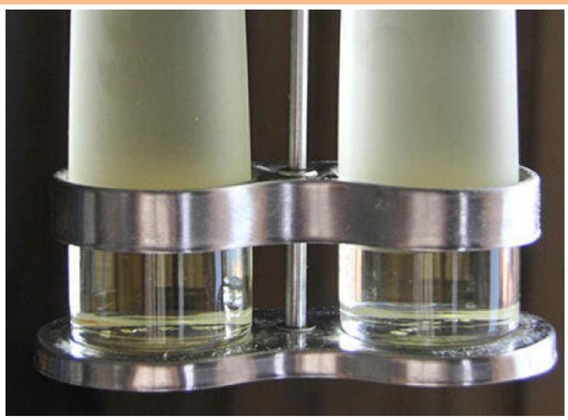
On the National Commodity and Derivatives Exchange castor November contract increased Rs 36 to Rs 3,707 with an open interest of 100,480 lots while December series gained Rs 43 to Rs 3,775, with an open interest of 33,410 lots.

All the four ruling contracts remained in green zone on brisk buying support.

About 11,000-12,000 bags castor seed arrived in Gujarat and price stood at Rs 710-720 for 20 kg. Around 2,100-2,200 bags arrived in Saurashtra region quoting Rs 685-710.

Traders said that increased buying on restricted supply amid low stocks position in spot markets led to a rise in castor seed prices.

Improved buying perks up edible oils



Edible oil prices continued to post moderate gains on Wednesday ahead of festival season. Imported palmolein and soyabean refined oil rose by Rs 5 and Rs 4 for 10 kg each. On expectation of higher demand, groundnut oil rose by Rs 30, cotton refined oil by Rs 10, Sunflower oil by Rs 5 and Rapeseed/Mustard oil by Rs 10.

According to an industry observer, low arrivals of new crop and sharp rebound in global futures pushed up edible oil prices in physical market. Consumer demand is likely to pick up for Navaratri and Dasara starting from next week.

In Mumbai, after witnessing sharp jump in volumes previous day late evening (about 2,400-2,500 tonnes of imported oils were traded) stockists preferred to keep away from fresh bet on Wednesday. About 300-350 tonnes of palmolein and soyabean refined oil were traded in which Ruchi sold 150-200 tonnes palmolein at Rs 510 for Oct 20–Nov 30 and 40 – 50 tonnes of soyabean refined oil at Rs 647. Another 80 – 100 tonnes of palmolein were resale traded in ready at Rs 516-517 ex JNPT.

Towards the day's close, Liberty was quoting palmolein at Rs 524 , Rs 513-516 for Oct 15-Nov 15, super palmolein Rs 575 for Oct 15-Nov 15, soya refined oil Rs 650 for up to Nov 15. Ruchi quoted palmolein at Rs 510 for Oct 20- Nov 30, super palmolein Rs 571 for Oct 20 – Nov 30, soya refined oil Rs 647 for Oct – Nov and sunflower refined oil Rs 691 for Oct –Nov. Allana's rates were Rs 522 for palmolein and Rs 570 for super palmolein.

On the National Commodities and Derivatives Exchange, soyabean refined oil November futures dropped to Rs 638.50 (Rs 641.30), December was lower at Rs 641.50 (Rs 645.95) and January was Rs 646.55 (Rs 651.50).

Malaysia's crude palm oil November futures settled at MYR 2,385 (2,384), December at MYR 2,457 (2,438) and January at MYR 2,525 (2,504) a tonne. In Saurashtra – Rajkot, groundnut oil *Telia* tin was Rs 1,780 (Rs 1,800) and loose 10 kg was Rs 1,170 (Rs 1,175).

The Bombay Commodity Exchange spot rates were (Rs/10 kg): groundnut oil 1,150 (1,120), soya refined oil 645 (641), sunflower exp. ref. 635 (630), sunflower ref. 690 (690), rapeseed ref. oil 820 (810), rapeseed expeller ref. 790 (780) cotton ref. oil 655 (645) and palmolein 520 (515).

Poultry feed rules stable on volatile input costs

Following too much volatility in the prices of its key ingredients, prices of poultry feed remained unchanged on Wednesday.

It is hard to anticipate the movement of market as there is too much fluctuation in the prices of the key ingredients of poultry feed, said market sources.

Soyameal prices have recovered marginally which was unexpected as the industry is expecting a bumper soyabean crop this season, said sources.

According to the reports, production is expected to rise by 9 per cent to 12.68 million tonnes (mt) this kharif season.

After witnessing a big fall last week, soyameal recovered by Rs 200 and quoted at Rs 3,200-3,250 a quintal on Wednesday. Bajra eased by Rs 20 and sold at Rs 1,150; maize at Rs 1,320, Rs 30 down from previous level.

DCP went for Rs 34 a kg, while fish oil eased to Rs 72 a litre.

Feed Prices

After witnessing a fall last week, prices of poultry feed products remained unchanged.

Broiler concentrates feed quoted at Rs 1,900 for a 50-kg bag while Broiler Starter Mash was at Rs 1,440.

“Broiler Pre-Starter Concentrate 30 per cent” sold at Rs 1,640 for a 30-kg bag, while layer concentrate cost Rs 1,420 for a 50-kg bag.

Pre-lay mash quoted at Rs 1,020 while broiler finisher sold at Rs 1,420 for a 50-kg bag.

Poultry Products

Meanwhile, egg and broiler prices improved marginally on Wednesday.

Egg went up by 5 paise and sold at Rs 3.22.

After ruling flat for almost three weeks, broiler went up by Rs 5 and quoted at Rs 75-77 a kg, while chick went for Rs 17-18.

Resale pressure keeps sugar on leash

Sugar prices ruled firm at mill level but declined in the spot market by Rs 10-15 on Wednesday on higher resale selling at naka level.

Fresh selling pressure for lifting commodity from mills and increase in transportation charges pushed up mill tender rates Rs 10 higher.

Naka rates dropped by Rs 20-30 for fair quality, while fine variety ruled unchanged.

Jagdish Rawal of B. Bhogilal and co, said on the back of improved domestic futures markets and expectation of higher demand from consumers and confectioners kept overall sentiment positive.

He said according to the traders, the quantity is higher than demand which may limit the upside.

Secondly, crushing season will also push up prices in coming days despite a slight delay due to the late and erratic monsoon this year.

Transporters have raised their freight charges by Rs 10-20 at local and producing level this week due to hike in fuel cost.

This also reflected on sugar prices.

Mills are continuously selling keeping supply ample in market.

Analyst said resale selling pressure in *Naka* trades for lifting commodity before due dates weighed on physical market but firm futures on expectation of higher demand from next week kept producers away from selling at lower rates. Producers are expecting fresh buying interest of other States to improve in Maharashtra coming days.

Since last week, about 5 – 6 rail rakes (each of 27,000 bags) were covered by Eastern buyers in Maharashtra.

In Vashi market, arrivals were about 68-70 truckloads (each of 100 bags of quintal each) and local dispatches were about 67-68 loads.

On Tuesday evening, about 17-18 mills offered tenders and sold 50,000 – 55,000 bags (each of 100 kg) to the local traders in the range of Rs 3,360-3,430 (Rs 3,350-3,440) for S-grade and Rs 3,450 - 3,550 (Rs 3,450 - 3,540) M-grade.

The Bombay Sugar Merchants Association's spot rates: S-grade Rs 3,512 – Rs 3,571 (Rs 3,522 – Rs 3,575) and M-grade Rs 3,562- 3,691 (Rs 3,572- 3,721).

*Naka **delivery rates:** S-grade Rs 3,450 -3,480 (Rs 3,450 -3,510) and M-grade Rs 3,500-3,600 (Rs 3,530-3,620).*

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