

Sugarcane cultivation area in the State goes up



Though the total cultivable area in Tamil Nadu has reduced from 58 lakh hectares to 43 lakh hectares, the only crop for which the area has expanded is sugarcane, K. Ramasamy, Vice-Chancellor of Tamil Nadu Agricultural University (TNAU), said in Coimbatore on Friday.

Inaugurating the biennial workshop of the All India Co-ordinated Research Project (AICRP) on Sugarcane at the university, he said there were reports that some farmers were harvesting record yields in rice in the Cauvery Delta of Thanjavur district.

This phenomenon needed to be studied and the factors that contributed for such high yields, despite drought, needed to be determined.

“It is obvious that the private industry has capitalised on the cotton crop by introducing a new gene and thereby captured almost 95 per cent of the seed market. In a similar manner, sugarcane scientists too need to be innovative in their research ideas so as to exploit the potential of sugarcane crop through improved breeding methods,” the Vice-Chancellor said.

He emphasised the need for greater use of biotechnology tools for improvement of sugarcane varieties.

N. Gopalakrishnan, Assistant Director General (Commercial Crops), Indian Council of Agricultural Research, said that sugarcane was a commercially vibrant crop on which ICAR placed great emphasis through budgetary support, and fundamental and strategic research.

Though nearly 100 sugarcane varieties had been released by AICRP, only 46 had been notified and were available for cultivation by farmers.

He further added that the AICRP needed to dovetail its programmes with the XII Five Year Plan so that viable sugarcane technologies could be taken to the field.

N. Vijayan Nair, Director, Sugarcane Breeding Institute, said that despite deficit rainfall during June 2012, the country would still produce nearly 24 million tonnes of sugar against a requirement of 22 million tonnes, and thereby avoid imports.

A Tamil translation of the book “Experiments on Plant Hybrids” was released by the Vice-Chancellor on the occasion.

More credit to farm sector urged

Chief Minister N. Kiran Kumar Reddy has expressed concern that not even 10 per cent of the targeted Rs.2,000 crore for financing licensed cultivators was met by banks in the State this year, and called for increasing credit to agriculture, allied sectors and others.

Addressing 179 State Level Bankers Committee (SLBC) meeting in Hyderabad on Friday, he recalled that banks had exceeded the targets for agriculture (122 per cent) and crop loans (114 per cent) in 2011-12 and achieved 98 per cent (Rs.23,396 crore) of the target set for kharif in the credit plan for 2012-13. This year, there was a need not only to increase the targets but it was also decided to enhance the scale of financing.

He said the scale of financing was revised by 15-20 per cent for all major crops and urged banks to implement the revised scales. He also wanted them to extend revised Kisan Credit Card scheme to all farmers.

Mr. Reddy said loans to the tune of Rs.4,662 crore were extended as against a target of Rs.11,577 crore to women SHGs so far. Describing credit flow to the housing and handloom sectors as less, he wanted increased credit flow for both.

In particular, he sought the implementation of ‘Revival, Restructuring Reform’ package announced for handloom sector by the Government of India. The Chief Minister also urged the banks to extend assistance in a big way to SCs, STs and minorities. Under the Rajiv Yuva Kiranulu, he wanted the banks to help in achieving the target of 3.6 lakh jobs and promoting self-employment through skills development.

Finance Minister Anam Ramnarayana Reddy said that although it was agreed in previous meeting that at least 15 per cent of the credit in welfare programmes should be provided to minorities, only seven per cent was given, he wanted the banks to launch a special drive to

improve it. Referring to the power situation, he said Chief Minister would shortly unveil a solar energy policy and sought bank financing for schemes to promote it.

SLBC president and Andhra CMD, B.A. Prabhakar said that at the end of June 2012, the deposits and advances in the State stood at 3,59,228 crore and 4,15,010 crore, reflecting a growth of 22 and 21 per cent respectively. He said the credit deposit ratio in the State stood at 115.53 per cent on June 30 as against the prescribed minimum of 60 per cent by the RBI and emphasised the need for resource mobilisation, especially in untapped rural, semi-urban areas. Minister for Cooperation Kasu Krishna Reddy, Minister for Handlooms Prasad Kumar, RBI's regional director A.S. Rao and Chief secretary Minnie Mathew also spoke.

Flood control room set up at Collectorate

A flood control room has been set up at the Collectorate to gather information on flood damage, crop damage and loss of cattle and lives. Contact number of the control room is 1077. All arrangements have made at the control room, according to Collector N. Venkatachalam who addressed an agriculturists' grievance redressal meeting here on Friday.

People should inform the control room about flood damage immediately to facilitate immediate action. The district had received good rain this month. Farmers should store water in all water sources nearby and utilise them for irrigation. There was sufficient stock of paddy seeds and it was ready for distribution.

The Agriculture Department had farm equipment for hiring. Farmers should use transplantation equipment for raising paddy, he said and appealed to adopt System of Rice Intensification method for a better yield.

The Horticulture Department would supply saplings to raise them on 220 hectares and amla in 120 hectares. Precision farming would be taken up on 300 hectares. Carrot and peas seeds would also be given to farmers at subsidised rates.

Agriculture grievance redressal meet would continue to be held in the third week of every month, he added.

Later, the Collector distributed farm equipment worth Rs.28,720 to farmers.

BJP, CPI reject government claims that FDI will benefit farmers

PTI

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Criticising government's decision to introduce FDI in multi—brand retail, BJP and CPI on Friday rejected its claims that foreign investment will benefit farmers by eliminating middlemen and providing a direct access to the market.

CPI leader D Raja also attacked government for going back on its assurance to hold consultations with all stakeholders including Chief Minister of states before introducing FDI.

Addressing a ASSOCHAM conference on retail, Raja and BJP spokesperson Nirmala Sitharaman also insisted on holding an .

“inclusive” debate in Parliament, so that “government could explain the mechanism it has set up to ensure that FDI in retail will benefit farmers and empower them“.

“Economy largely consist of agriculture, manufacturing and services. FDI in retail will impact all these three sectors..

Why did not government hold an inclusive debate in Parliament before introducing it. They could have set up a committee to study the issue,” Sitharaman said.

Observing that FDI in retail is different from similar foreign investments in insurance and pension, she said,

“The so called growth driven planning of this government is not generating employment. This FDI will slowly but surely eliminate self employed people such as traders and those in Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs).”

Accusing the government of betraying Parliament— the supreme institution in a democracy—, Raja said it had assured a debate in the House over the issue.“When the FDI issue came, there was an uproar in Parliament and the then Finance Minister had assured consultations with all stakeholders including Chief Ministers.

Now what happened to that assurance given in Parliament...This government had betrayed and violated its own assurance, ” he said.PTI

Native plants are less demanding maintenance-wise

Who is watering the millions of plants in the forests, supplementing the fertilizers and taking care of the pests? When the forest plants do not make many demands, why do the garden plants? Can't we mimic the forest situation in our gardens? Having those forest plants in our garden is the answer to all these questions.

As the native plants have adapted themselves to the climate, geology and hydrology, and evolved according to the local conditions over thousands of years, they are not exacting. Also these indigenous plants have co-evolved with animals, fungi and microbes, to form a complex network of mutual relationships and make perfect balance in the eco-system they sustain.

Designing native landscape

Before deciding the design of the landscape, one has to assess the factors of locality like – light availability, drainage pattern, soil depth and its characters, site terrain, irrigation facility, species growing naturally in the surroundings; and accordingly finalise the type of the landscape which can match the site.

Since many of the urban open spaces are barren and sterile with no good soil (in most of the situations the ground is filled with construction debris mixed with plastics), cleaning the area and soil amendment may be needed to have good growing media for the plants.

Plant selection

By observing native plants in their natural habitat, one can learn about the cultural requirements and growth habits of various species. We can choose plants basing on the soil, light and water requirement, location in which the plant to be placed and size, shape, texture and type of foliage and blooms. Also the selection shall be based on what type of garden we intend to develop – wild-flower garden, butterfly garden, bird garden, screen garden, tree grove, fruit garden or pond garden.

Whatever we plant it is the commercial availability of native plant species in local nurseries that will determine which plants we may use in the landscape.

As of now, sourcing many of the native plants is very difficult in commercial or forest nurseries, because there is no demand for them in ornamental landscaping. But things may improve with the increased awareness on the 'naturescape' development projects in future.

Characteristics may get altered

The native plants, which have adapted to the climate, soil, and interactions with other plants and animals may face certain adverse growing conditions in the city environment, change in the chemical characteristics of soil, decrease in soil organic matter, increase in shade due to the high-rise structures, interference from pollution, invasive weeds and physical damage, increased supply of nutrients especially when irrigation is sourced from the urban lakes to mention a few. Due to this changed environment, the characteristics of the species may get altered in terms of the foliage, flowers, time of flowering and form of the plant.

Since native plants require less care, there will be savings of time, energy, money, water and other resources in maintaining the landscape. These gardens provide more variety in plant species and offer myriad alternatives to the same old exotic species. Also the landscape looks different with more diversity, not only in terms of plant species but also the visiting birds and butterflies, which add colour and vibrancy to the garden.

(The author is a forest officer, presently Additional Commissioner (Parks) in GHMC and can be contacted at 'nchandramohanreddy@ gmail.com')

Coco peat makes soil better

HEMA VIJAY finds an easy and healthy growing medium for your plants



Aids in growth: The coco peat is a very good growing medium for plants.

Is there some magic ingredient that can prevent potted soil from getting hardened and caked up over time?

An ingredient that can keep the soil loose, which in turn enables roots to spread out easily, enjoy more breathing space and aeration, and consequently achieve better plant growth? Well, the answer can be found in the humble coconut fibre, which is now being processed and marketed as coco peat.

Additional benefits of coco peat are that this fibrous, spongy and light-weight material brings down the weight of the potted growing medium, and also helps the soil retain moisture for a much longer time because of the water absorptive and retentive nature of the fibre, which means that you need to use less water and water your plants after far longer intervals.

“In many houses, the soil is too clayey or sandy to support plants. Besides adding fresh soil and manure, coco peat can be used to cure clayey soil (since it helps to break it up) and sandy soils (as it enables moisture retention)”, says Navneeth Raghavan, environment and landscape architect.

Coco peat becomes especially crucial when the plant is given liquid growth stimulators like panchakavya, the indigenous growth-stimulating manure derived from cow products, as the peat prevents rapid evaporation of the liquid panchakavya.

Coco peat is produced as coir dust, a by-product during coconut husk processing, while making coir and other products.

The processed coir dust becomes coco peat and is a very good growing medium for plants.

It is emerging as a good alternative to mined peat moss and is used in homes, gardens and horticulture centers for seed starting, bedding plants, container plants, and more.

Home-made coco peat

For a small home garden, you really don't need to buy processed coco peat.

Each time you de-husk a coconut, you will notice the wheat-brown fibre strands along the sides of the coconut, some even turning powdery as you handle it.

“Collect these fine fibres and the powder too, and chop the fibres to bits. Now you have home-made coco peat that you can add to the soil in your pots or plant beds. But discard the thick and tightened bunch of fibres at the top of the coconut (called the ‘kudumi),” says S.S. Radhakrishnan, who has been helping scores of people set up kitchen gardens in their houses.

Coco peat has a slow degradation rate. “Adding fresh coco peat about once in three months suffices, when the soil seems to need it,” says Navneeth.

It's a dream come true for flower growers

A modern flower market and training centre for floriculture was inaugurated at Ambapua area of the city by Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik on Friday.

The project was aimed at promoting floriculture in six districts -- Ganjam, Gajapati, Rayagada, Koraput, Kandhamal, Boudh, and Nayagarh.

It was established at a cost of Rs. 2.55 crore.

Out of it, Rs. 1.92 crore was sanctioned under the Rashtriya Krishi Vikash Yojna and the remaining amount was invested by Regulated Market Committee (RMC), Digapahandi.

Members of Ganjam District Flower Growers' Association (GDFGA) welcomed establishment of the centre. They said it was their long-standing demand and finally their dream came true.

The modern flower market at the centre would provide all facilities for proper marketing of flower collected from growers to increase their profit.

Flower grading

It has a receiving dock, flower grading area, modern cooling chamber for preservation of flowers, and a florist-flower distribution area. It has packing centre where flowers would be packed in scientific process so that they could be transported to far off places.

The centre also has a dormitory for flower growers coming from outside, an auction hall, and a well-facilitated conference hall.

GDFGA secretary Sridhar Verma said the flower market was on par with any modern flower market centre in the country.

Training

Mr. Verma said it was planned to train 5,000 farmers of six districts regarding intricacies of floriculture during the first phase.

During the training, farmers would be trained in hi-tech floriculture. They would be provided indepth knowledge about plantation, micro irrigation, flowering plant protection, and their management by experts during the training process.

Flower growers, who attended the inaugural function, felt the centre would give a fillip to commercial floriculture.

This eco farmer has radical solutions



Taghi Farvar

Taghi Farvar who promotes ecological farming among nomads in Iran has unusual wish of his country be subjected to more international sanctions, if only to enable it to attain food sovereignty.

“These sanctions practically reduced oil production to one third of what it was and made it look for innovative alternatives, away from the model of exporting oil and importing food grains”, he told *The Hindu* on the sidelines of the COP 11 CBD.

“I say this with conviction as the food-for-oil is not a sustainable model. Apply squeeze to get the best out of a country as then it would be forced to depend on indigenous food production. More than food security, it is food sovereignty that is important and then you can ward off threats from the new imperialists”.

Mr. Farvar of Centre for Sustainable Development (CENESTA), said long years of dependence on oil made Iran lose out native varieties of wheat and barley. “We started restoring the situation virtually seed by seed, getting some from the seed bank of the International Centre for Agriculture Research and Development in Arid Land.”

Through a participatory and “evolutionary” plant breeding programme among indigenous people, 1,600 varieties of these crops were revived, on lands that they were traditionally dry and drought-prone. In doing so we disproved the myth that illiterate farmers are incapable of taking up such research based programmes. Their native knowledge keeps them in good stead, which is often undermined.

Along with ecological farming, native breeds of sturdy two-humped camels, cattle and sheep that thrive in adverse conditions were reintroduced, he said.

A similar experiment was shared by Sutej Hugu of Tao Foundation on a tiny 45 square km Orchid Island off Taiwan. His worry was to retain the last of the small indigenous population of 2,000 in the island and introduce youngsters to fishing and farming.

“With limited opportunities on the island, they want to migrate to Taiwan for jobs. They are prepared to work as labourers there than being independent fishers and farmers here. We counsel and try to bring them back,” he told this correspondent.

Tourism indeed has come to the rescue of the local communities and that was one reason why they want to stay in the island. “But we ensure that it is sustainable and ecological tourism and does not exceed the carrying capacity of the island”.

Demand for increase in MSP for cotton



Cotton farmers staging a protest in front of the Collectorate demanding enhancement of minimum support price for cotton in Adilabad on Friday.-PHOTO: BY ARRANGEMENT

A delegation of representatives from all opposition party units in Adilabad will soon meet officials concerned in the Union government to demand enhancement of the minimum support price (MSP) for cotton from Rs.3,900 a quintal to Rs.6,000. The delegation will apprise the government of the increased cost of agriculture especially investment on cotton and the damage to the crop due to excessive rainfall.

The decision was taken on Friday at a public meeting at the dharna camp in front of the Collectorate, wherein representatives of opposition parties participated.

The meeting attended by Adilabad MLA Jogu Ramanna (TRS), senior political leaders A. Indrakaran Reddy and Koneru Konappa, who had quit the Congress party the previous day, Bandi Dattatri [CPI(M)], B. Goverdhan Reddy (TRS), Dr. Praful Vaze (BJP), and M. Prabhakar Reddy (CPI) among others.

As an alternative measure to protect interests of cotton farmers, some of their representatives had demanded the State government give a bonus of Rs.2,100 per quintal of the produce.

This would compensate the farmers in case the MSP was not enhanced, they added.

Rally

Earlier, farmers from neighbouring villages had gathered at the Adilabad agriculture market yard from where a rally was taken out to Collectorate.

They submitted a memorandum to Joint Collector Sujata Sharma.

White Revolution by Ramraj Cotton

Ramraj Cotton was founded at Avinashi, by entrepreneur and visionary Mr.K.R.Nagarajan. Ramraj Cotton started out small in the year 1983. Ramraj Cotton has opened its new exclusive showroom in D.D.Urs road, Mysore. Ramraj Cotton is known for its variety of products in white.

The Company's mantra of 'quality without compromise' was the driving force behind its astounding success. Today, Ramraj spins Dhories, while safeguarding the environment.

The dhori is the traditional attire for the South Indian male. The dhori is known by different names in different places. Its veshti in Tamil, panche in Kannada, mundu or veshti in Malayalam, pancha in Telugu and so on. But whatever be its name, dhori is undoubtedly majesty woven in white.

The secret of Ramraj's success is its emphasis on quality. Nobody buys a bad quality product, the second time, even if costs a whole lot less. So, the focus was to sell a great product and let the customer see the difference.

Today 70 out of every 100 dhories sold in these four states; bear the distinct Ramraj brand name. Through the times, Ramraj has continued to innovate in an effort to deliver value to customers.

The Company has now added diversified products like Readymade White Shirts, Shirting's, Wedding Collection Gift Sets, Towels, Under Garments and many more to its portfolio to cater the client's increasing demands.

Farmers receive compensation



Relief: Collector R. Selvaraj giving away compensation to a farmer during grievance day meeting in Tirunelveli on Friday. District Forest Officer C.H. Padma (left) and District Revenue Officer P. Uma Maheshwari (second from left) look on.— Photo: A. SHAIKMOHIDEEN

Five farmers who suffered crop damage in wild animal invasion into their ranches close to the Western Ghats received compensation during monthly farmers' grievance day meet held at the Collectorate on Friday.

The beneficiaries, all from Vadakarai under Kadayanallur Range of the district, received demand drafts for Rs. 65,000 from Collector R. Selvaraj in the presence of District Forest Officer C.H. Padma.

When a section of the farmers informed Ms. Padma that they were suffering huge crop loss due to wild animal invasion, especially by elephants, deer and the wild boars, the District Forest Officer replied that wild animals, which were entering the cultivable lands close to the Western Ghats in search of food and water and damaging the standing crops, should not be harmed and urged the farmers to chase them away without injuring them.

“The farmers’ request for removing wild boar that enters the ranches in huge number causing serious damage to crops and consequently unbearable loss to the farmers, from Schedule III of Wildlife (Protection) Act 1972, is under the government’s consideration. The farmers cannot hunt down the wild boars unless it is removed from ‘privileged list.’ If anyone dares to defy it and forest officials turn a blind eye to such an act will call for action. Hence, I appeal to the farmers not to harm wild boars until a final decision is taken by the government,” Ms. Padma said.

Accepting the DFO's appeal, the agriculturists urged her to expedite the process of getting wild boar removed from Schedule III of Wildlife (Protection) Act 1972 by conveying the farmers' agony and concern to the Secretary, Department of Forest.

When a few members including K. Kasamuthu and P. Perumbadaiyaar of Communist Party of India wanted the enrolment of only the farmers in the cooperative societies as members to avoid non-farmers becoming office-bearers of the societies, Dr. Selvaraj asked the Joint Director of Cooperative Societies to ensure the distribution of applications to all farmers.

Alleging that a group of people have misappropriated funds without desilting the Palayam Channel, farmer R. Ganesan of Kurichi said that the important irrigation channel should be desilted right from Pazhavor to Palayamkottai so as to ensure adequate distribution of water for irrigation to tail-end regions at least during the ensuing 'pisanam' paddy season.

District Revenue Officer P. Umamaheshwari and Joint Director of Agriculture K. Soundararajan were present.

Rain keeps farmers busy

Agriculture activities in-rain fed areas, around one lakh hectares, were in full swing thanks to incessant rains in all parts of the district.

The agriculture department has been encouraging farmers to adopt sapping method instead of traditional sowing system for raising tur dhal, saying it will scale down production cost and use of seeds. Almost 95 per cent of 14,707 acres in the double-crop areas of Cumbum valley have been brought under cultivation, thanks to advancement of second crop in the valley — the first crop had failed owing to poor storage in Periyar dam and failure of southwest monsoon. Harvesting of first crop started in 5,500 acres in the valley. However, rain disrupted harvesting in certain pockets. The farmers expedited the harvesting process to protect grains from rain as it would dampen them. Despite sharp increase in inflow to Periyar dam, storage level went up marginally. Discharge is increasing steadily thus raising storage levels in rural tanks and in Vaigai dam that has water little more than half of its capacity.

Pulses, rice worth Rs. 6.24 cr seized in raids

Officials of the Vigilance and Enforcement (V&E) Department conducted raids and seized a huge quantity of pulses and rice worth about Rs.6.24 crore, from millers.

Three teams searched rice and dal mills and seized more than 5,000 quintals of pulses, and rice. The raids were conducted in the last three days under the supervision of Regional Vigilance and Enforcement Officer Soni Bala Devi. The team headed by Vigilance Deputy Superintendent of Police N. Venkat Reddy, raided Kousalya Dal Mill and Shivadatta Dal Mill, Paritala, Sri Subramanyeswara Traders, Machilipatnam, Pavan Dal and Flour Mill, Bapulapadu, and Venkateswara Dal Mill, Nandigama.

Deficit monsoon to cast shadow on yield, price of pulses

Deficit monsoon this year is set to cast its shadow on pulses, presenting a gloomy picture vis-à-vis yield and prices. Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh and Maharashtra account for 75 per cent of the country's sunflower production. Area sown in Andhra Pradesh stands at 0.57 lakh ha for kharif in 2012-13.

Going by the modal prices of Kurnool market, the National Agricultural Innovation Project (NAIP) study found the price to hover around Rs.3,600-Rs.3,800 per quintal in three months ending December 2012, tipping the farmers to dispose of the crop on harvest.

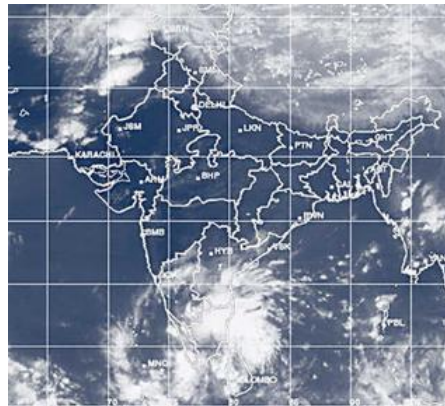
In the rabi forecast, scientists found the late onset of kharif monsoon to have a cascading effect on the area under oilseeds.

Against the 75 per cent fall in area for kharif, farmers are expected to get 1.30 lakh ha sown for rabi in 2012-13.

Giving an indication to prospective farmers, scientists have pegged the price that will prevail in Jan-Feb 2013 at Rs.3,800 – Rs.3,900.

However, the yield is not commensurate to demand.

Weather



The columns show maximum and minimum temperature in celsius, rainfall during last 24 hours (trace) and total rainfall in mm since October 01, 2012.

Isolated rain over coastal A.P.

CHENNAI: Northeast monsoon rains have commenced over Tamil Nadu, Kerala and adjoining Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka today the 19th October 2012. Northeast monsoon has been active over Tamil Nadu. Rainfall occurred at most places over Tamil Nadu, many places over Kerala. Isolated rainfall occurred over coastal A.P., Rayalaseema. Mainly dry weather prevailed over South interior Karnataka and dry weather prevailed over Telangana, coastal and north interior Karnataka and Lakshadweep.

FORECAST (VALID UNTIL SUNDAY MORNING):

Rain or thundershower would occur at most places over Tamil Nadu and Puducherry and at many places over Kerala. Isolated rain or thundershower may occur over South Coastal Andhra Pradesh, Rayalaseema, Coastal and South Interior Karnataka and Lakshadweep.

Hindustan Times

TODAY FARM NEWS

20.10.2012 A.M

Weather

Chennai

Chennai - INDIA

Today's Weather



Cloudy

Saturday, Oct 20

Max Min

29.2° | 22.8°

Rain: 0

Humidity: 84

Wind: normal

Sunrise: 06:00

Sunset: 05:46

Barometer: 1012

Tomorrow's Forecast



Cloudy

Sunday, Oct 21

Max Min

29° | 23°

Extended Forecast for a week

Monday Oct 22	Tuesday Oct 23	Wednesday Oct 24	Thursday Oct 25	Friday Oct 26
30° 23° Cloudy	32° 25° Overcast	33° 25° Overcast	33° 25° Overcast	32° 25° Overcast

Airport Weather

Delhi

Delhi

Rain: 0

Humidity: 38

Wind: normal

Sunrise: 06:25

Sunset: 05:46

Barometer: 1017



THE HINDU Business Line

TODAY FARM NEWS

19.10.2012 P.M

20.10.2012 A.M

19th oct 2012 P.M

Pepper market goes higher



Pepper market continued its upward run on good buying support from a bulls' cartel on Friday. All the active deliveries ended much above the previous day's closing.

“Squeezing and cornering” continues to take place. The turnover has not shown any substantial increase while the open interest was also thin. There was, in fact, no support from overseas markets while that from the domestic market was also very little. “Still the prices are shooting up,” market sources told *Business Line*.

On the spot arrivals remained thin. Much of the domestic demand, albeit small at present, was reportedly being met by supplies from Karnataka.

October contract on the NCDEX increased by Rs 160 a quintal to the last traded price (LTP) of Rs 43,230 a quintal. November and December went up by Rs 225 and Rs 215 respectively to the LTP of Rs 43,500 and Rs 43,000 a quintal.

Turnover

Total turnover rose by 254 tonnes to close at 1,925 tonnes. Total open interest decreased by 52 tonnes to end at 7,756 tonnes.

Open interest for October fell by 344 tonnes to 319 tonnes while that of November and December moved up by 213 tonnes and 70 tonnes respectively to close at 5,137 tonnes and 1,747 tonnes.

Spot prices in tandem with the futures market trend and buying interest shown by the cartel moved up by Rs100 to close at Rs40,400 (ungarbled) and Rs41,900 (garbled) a quintal.

Indian parity in the international market was at around \$8,600 a tonne (c&f) for Europe and about \$8,850a tonne (c&f) for the US. As the Malabar remained much above other origins no enquiries were coming in for a long time.

Festival season buying perks up wheat



Fresh buying coupled with the expectations of good demand in the coming days pushed dara wheat and flour prices up on Friday. The Dara variety improved by Rs 50 and settled at Rs 1,490-1,500 a quintal against around Rs 1,450 quoted earlier this week.

Sewa Ram, a wheat trader, told *Business Line* that increased off-take by flour mills to meet domestic demand, mainly pushed Dara prices up. Wheat prices are likely to remain supportive following the festival season, he added.

In the physical market, around 500 quintals of dara variety arrived from Uttar Pradesh the stocks were directly offloaded at the mills. Mill delivery was at Rs 1,490-1,495 while delivery at the chakki was Rs 1,500.

On the National Commodity and Derivatives Exchange, wheat for November delivery increased by Rs 8 and traded at Rs 1,555. December contracts went up by Rs 11 to Rs 1,564. Ample supplies pulled wheat spot prices on the exchange down by Rs 19 and traded at Rs 1,545.25.

Flour Prices: An increase in demand pushed flour prices too up by Rs 25 and sold at Rs 1,490 for a 90-kg bag. Similarly, Chokar went up by Rs 15 and went for Rs 670 for a 49-kg bag.

Wheat exports: According to the reports, MMTC has issued a global tender to export 100,000 tonnes of wheat for shipments between November 25 and December 31.

Quality arrivals lend colour to turmeric



Spot turmeric gained by Rs 200 a quintal on arrival of quality turmeric and stockists' buying.

The hybrid variety increased to Rs 650.

“Due to arrival of quality produce, some local traders purchased along with stockists by quoting a higher price. Exporters purchased fine quality hybrid turmeric quoting an increased price of Rs 650-700 a quintal. Further after a month, arrivals increased to 2,500 and 70 per cent of the stocks was sold”, said R.K.V. Ravishankar, President, Erode Turmeric Merchants Association.

Still, no upcountry order has been received by local traders and exporters.

As usual, most of the stocks were procured by stockists.

“We are expecting that next fresh order will be received by them only in the first week of November.”

Turmeric growers also said that they are keeping more than 12 lakh bags with them. It is not possible for them to sell all the stocks within two months time.

So, there will be a carryover stock of more than 10 lakh bags of turmeric next year when the new crop arriving for sale.

At the Erode Turmeric Merchants Association Sales yard, the finger variety was sold at Rs 4,041-5,431 a quintal, the root variety Rs 4,011-4,899.

Salem Hybrid crop: The finger variety was sold at Rs 5,485-6,219 and the root variety Rs 5,017-5,261.

Of the 629 bags that arrived, 25 per cent stocks were sold.

At the Regulated Marketing Committee, the finger variety fetched Rs 4,011-5,614 and the root variety Rs 4,011-5,310. Of the 1,226 bags, 1,093 were sold.

Sugar turns bitter on selling pressure



Sugar prices on the Vashi wholesale market declined further by Rs 10-20 a quintal on Friday on increased resale selling pressure at naka level. Buyers have to lift purchases from mills on October 20. Naka prices slipped by Rs 20-30 for S-grade and Rs 20-40 for M-grade.

Mill tender rates ruled almost unchanged with usual volume.

In the physical market, continuous supply kept stockists away from fresh inventory buying. Sentiment was steady, said sources.

A Vashi-based wholesaler said currently there is a routine middle month demand – ample supply and need-based volume with steady decline in price due to higher free sale quota.

From the first week of November, demand for Diwali festival is expected to rise. Vashi market currently carries a stock of more than 100 truckloads, sufficient to meet the demand.

In Vashi market, arrivals continued to be at 67-68 truckloads (each of 100 bags) and local dispatches were about 65-66 loads.

On Thursday, about 14-15 mills offered tenders and sold 34,000-35,000 bags (each of 100 kg) to the local traders in the range of Rs 3,370-3,420 (Rs 3,380-3,430) for S-grade and Rs 3,440-3,530 (Rs 3,440-3,530) for M-grade.

The Bombay Sugar Merchants Association's spot rates: S-grade Rs 3,502-3,562 (Rs 3,512-3,571) and M-grade Rs 3,560-3,712 (Rs 3,582- 3,702).

Naka delivery rates: S-grade Rs 3,430-3,500 (Rs 3,460-3,510) and M-grade Rs 3,500-3,570 (Rs 3,540-3,660).

Cotton wilts on higher inflow, restricted offtake



Cotton prices declined by Rs 200-300 for a candy of 356 kg on Friday as arrivals increased and buying was limited.

According to traders, market sentiments are not supporting the cotton price as most of the buyers are waiting for quality arrivals.

A Rajkot-based broker said, “Demand from mills and exporters are limited and that’s why cotton price is declining. But it will not go down further as after Navaratri demand will likely to come from export front.”

New cotton was offered at Rs 33,800-34,000 a candy in Gujarat. A-grade S-6 cotton fetched Rs 33,700-34,000 and B-grade fibre Rs 33,500-33,800.

Prices of V-797 were at Rs 27,500-28,000.

In Maharashtra, A-grade cotton low micronaire was ruling at Rs 33,000-33,500 while A-grade high micronaire cotton (29+ MM) was at Rs 33,500-34,200.

New crop was offered at Rs 33,800-34,500 .

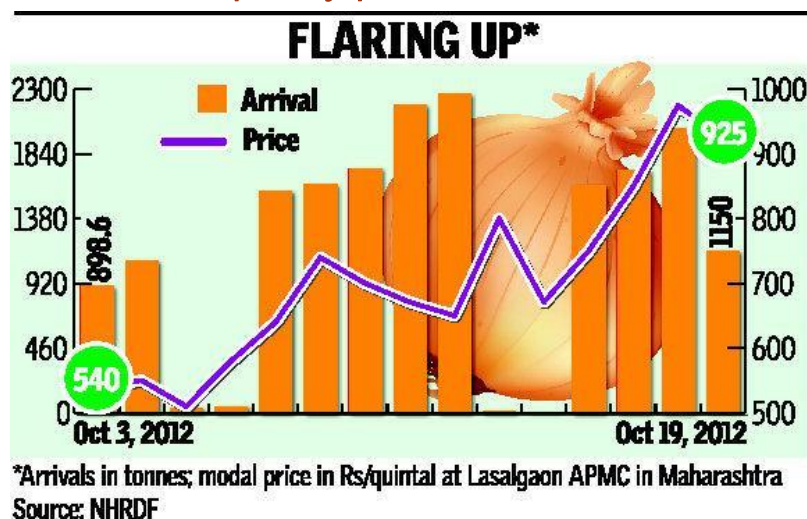
About 15,000-17,000 bales of 170 kg arrived in Gujarat and 28,000-29,000 bales arrived in India.

Mills and exporters bought around 12,000 bales from Gujarat on Thursday.

Raw cotton or Kapas price stood at Rs 775-845 for 20 kg.

Cotton futures for December delivery fell 1 per cent to 77.12 cents a pound on ICE.

Onion rallies on lack of quality produce



Onion prices have surged to nearly double in the last couple of weeks on lack of quality produce.

“Prices have begun to surge since only poor quality onions are available,” said a trader from Nashik.

“There is lack of quality onions in almost all markets except Bangalore. Therefore, quality onions are commanding a premium,” said Madan Prakash, Director of Rajathi Group of Companies that exports agricultural produce.

“Whatever is coming in Nashik and surrounding markets are of average quality and even they are quoting over Rs 900 a quintal,” said the trade.

In Lasalgaon Agricultural Produce Marketing Committee (APMC) yard, the modal price or the rate at which most trades took place was Rs 925 a quintal with arrivals over 1,100 tonnes. Quality onions were fetching over Rs 1,100.

“Even exports have improved. We are getting orders from the Gulf, Malaysia and Indonesia,” said Prakash.

Delay in arrival of kharif onion is also cited as a reason for the price surge.

“Arrivals have been delayed this year but we are told the quality of onion is good,” said Prakash.

Already, the Centre has taken note of the rise in prices and discussed imposing minimum export price earlier this week. However, it decided not to impose any floor price for exports and to allow shipments without any curbs.

“Prices have rallied sharply in the last two days,” said the trader.

The end of the inauspicious period when people abstain from having non-vegetarian food, besides the start of the festival season, has also boosted the rally.

Rise in inflow pounds pulses

Masoor prices for the past one week have been ruling steady on scattered buying support. On Friday, masoor (bold) ruled at Rs 3450-75 a quintal, while masoor (desi) was at Rs 3,275-3,300.

According to Kamal Agrawal, a trader, with prevailing money crisis in the market and rise in arrival of pulse seeds, bullish trend in masoor and other pulse seeds appears unlikely in the coming days. Masoor dal also ruled steady on sluggish demand with masoor dal (average) being quoted at Rs 3,950-75, masoor dal (medium) at Rs 4,025-50, while masoor dal (bold) ruled at Rs 4,125-50.

Urad and its dal also ruled stable on subdued demand. Urad (bold) was at Rs 3,600-3,800, while urad (medium) at Rs 3,000-3,300 .

With arrivals gaining momentum, bullish trend in urad currently appears unlikely but given an expected decline in crop output this year, future of urad appears to be bullish.

Urad dal (average) fetched Rs 4,100-4,200 , urad dal (medium) at Rs 5,000-5,100, while urad mongar ruled at Rs 5,900-6,200 .

Retail inflation based on agri, rural labourers up in Sept



The retail inflation based on agricultural and rural labourers rose to 9.43 per cent and 9.93 per cent in September due to rise in price of major food crops.

These figures stood at 9.18 per cent and 9.34 per cent, respectively in August this year.

It was mainly due to increase in the prices of rice, wheat, wheat atta, bajra, pulses, mustard oil, vegetables and fruits, sugar, gur, saree cotton (mill), shirting cloth cotton (mill) and anacin, according to an official release.

The inflation based on food index of consumer price index (CPI) of agriculture and rural labourers stood at 9.05 per cent and 9.20 per cent, respectively during September 2012.

The rise in index varied from state to state and in case of agricultural labourers, it recorded an increase ranging between 1 to 19 points in all 20 states.

Haryana with 757 point topped the index table, whereas Himachal Pradesh with the index level of 555 points stood at the bottom.

In case of rural labourers, it recorded an increase between 1 to 17 points in all the 20 states.

Again, Haryana with 750 points topped the index table, whereas Himachal Pradesh with the index level of 577 points remained at the bottom.

Spot rubber falls on buyer resistance

Spot rubber finished weak on Friday. Sharp declines in the domestic and international futures and the overall weakness in the Asian stock markets, kept prices under pressure on late trades.

According to observers, the market declined mainly on buyer resistance than selling from dealers or growers.

Sheet rubber weakened to Rs 183.50 (Rs 186.00) a kg according to traders. The grade dropped to Rs 184.00 (185.00) a kg at Kottayam and Kochi, as reported by the Rubber Board.

RSS 4 declined with November contracts slipping to Rs 180.50 (Rs 184.03), December to Rs 181.50 (Rs 184.17), January to Rs 182.80 (Rs 185.56), February to Rs 185.40 (Rs 188.22) and March to Rs 187.10 (Rs 190.79) a kg on the National Multi Commodity Exchange.

RSS 3 (spot) slipped to Rs 169.08 (Rs 169.70) a kg at Bangkok. The October futures surrendered to ₹248.0 (Rs 168.76) from ₹ 256.8 per kg during the day session but then remained inactive in the night session on Tokyo Commodity Exchange.

Spot rubber prices (for Rs/kg) were: RSS-4: 183.50 (186); RSS-5: 177 (178); Ungraded: 170 (171); ISNR 20: 164 (165) and Latex 60%: 120 (120).

J&K to give incentives to farmers to check narco farming

In a bid to encourage farmers to give up cultivation of narcotic crops, the Jammu and Kashmir Government will provide incentives such as seeds, fertilisers or cash for growing vegetables.

Incentive of Rs 45,000/hectare of land will be given to farmers to convert narcotic belts into vegetable farms, Director Agriculture, Kashmir, Farooq Ahmad Lone, said, according to an official spokesman.

Lone was addressing a gathering of farmers during an awareness-cum-training camp organised by Farmers Training Centre, Department of Agriculture at Bijbehara and Anantnag in south Kashmir, the spokesman said.

A provision of Rs 45 lakh had been made in the current year's plan under Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana (RKVY) for the scheme targeted at covering 100 hectares of land, he said.

The south Kashmir belt has emerged as a narcotics hub in the Valley with widespread cultivation of poppy and 'bhung' being undertaken by the farmers in violation of the Narcotic, Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act, he said.

The incentive shall be in the form of seeds, fertilisers and other inputs or on cash reimbursement basis depending upon the choice of the farmer, he said.

Lone directed officers of the department to launch a door-to-door awareness campaign for the scheme and requested people to participate in the programme so that the cultivation of narcotics is checked.

Lone called on Imams and religious scholars to play their role in eradicating the menace of narcotics cultivation.

He advised farmers to take advantage of schemes launched by the department and co-operate with field functionaries in implementing all the programmes for making the state self-sufficient in various food crops like pulses and oilseed.

Paddy procurement in Haryana up 11%

Paddy procurement in Haryana has gone up by 11 per cent so far as purchase by Government agencies and private millers reached 21.25 lakh tonnes (lt) in the state during the current Kharif season.

In the corresponding period of last year, the paddy lifting stood at 19.10 lt. Stating this here today, a spokesman of Haryana Food and Supplies Department said out of the total arrival of paddy, maximum quantity of paddy has arrived in district Kurukshetra which is over 5.72 lt .

Similarly, district Karnal received over 5.59 lt of paddy, district Kaithal over 3.69 lt and Fatehabad over 2.08 lt.

He said out of the total arrival of paddy, six Government agencies had so far procured over 20.28 lt of paddy whereas the remaining quantity of 97,637 tonnes of paddy was procured by the millers.

Soyabean futures propped up by spot demand, lower arrivals



Soyabean futures rebounded on Friday, gaining more than 2 per cent on account of lower arrivals, firm spot demand and bargain-buying led by festive season demand for edible oils.

The rise in the Chicago Board of Trade soya complex also aided the trend.

On the NCDEX, soyabean October futures gained 2.26 per cent to Rs 3,236 a quintal on short-covering, while the November and December contracts gained 2.1 per cent each to Rs 3,280 and Rs 3,312 respectively. Arrivals were down to around 7,50,000 bags (of 100 kg each) compared with 8,50,000-9,00,000 bags yesterday.

In the spot market at Indore (Madhya Pradesh), oilseed prices increased due to a fall in arrivals coupled with demand from millers. Soyabean was quoted at Rs 3,233 a quintal.

Global scenario: CBOT soyabean settled 2.4 per cent higher on good weekly export sales data of 5.252 lakh tonnes. Also, buying emerged at lower levels as the prices have reached a 3-1/2 month low due to higher supplies.

According to the latest USDA report, global soyabean output is projected at 264.3 million tonnes, up 6.2 million tonnes due mainly to an increase for the US. Brazil could churn out 81 million tonnes of the oilseed and replace the US as the world's top soyabean producer.

The Chicago Board of Trade November soya fell 0.6 per cent to \$15.37 a bushel by 0311 GMT.

Business Standard

TODAY FARM NEWS

20.10.2012 A.M

Cardamom remains up on rising festive demand

The November delivery added Rs 3.90, or 0.43%, to Rs 906.60 per kg
Press Trust of India / New Delhi October 19, 2012, 13:27 IST

Cardamom rose for the second straight day adding Rs 3.90 to Rs 906.60 per kg in futures trade today as speculators enlarged their positions, driven by rising festive demand.

Tight stocks availability in the physical market following less arrivals from producing region also supported the uptrend.

At the Multi Commodity Exchange, the November delivery added Rs 3.90, or 0.43%, to Rs 906.60 per kg, with a business turnover of 182 lots.

The December cardamom gained Rs 2, or 0.21%, to Rs 945 per kg in 10 lots.

Marketmen said speculators enlarged their positions, tracking a firm spot market trend on rising festive demand against tight supplies mainly kept cardamom prices up at futures market.

Potato moves up on good demand

Potato prices moved up by Rs 4.70 to Rs 939.50 per quintal in futures trading today on good spot market demand supported by ongoing 'Navratri' festival against limited arrivals from producing belts.

At the Multi Commodity Exchange, the March delivery gained Rs 4.70, or 0.64%, to Rs 739.50 per quintal, with a business turnover of single lot.

The May potato also edged up by Rs 4.50, or 0.61%, to Rs 939 per quintal, with a business turnover of two lots.

Marketmen said besides good demand in the spot market for the auspicious 'Navratri' festival, less arrivals from producing belts mainly led to rise in potato futures.

Expand agri toolkit to feed the world: Calestous Juma

With the world population set to exceed 9 billion in less than 50 years, there will be increasingly great demands placed on agriculture, according to Calestous Juma, an internationally-recognised authority in the application of science and technology to sustainable development worldwide.

“Clearly, the task at hand is to significantly increase agricultural productivity on existing land while conserving natural resources. Therefore, it is critical to maximise the agricultural toolkit, including plant biotechnology, to feed the world for decades to come,” said Juma, professor (practice of international development) and director (The Science, Technology and Globalisation Project) at Harvard University in Cambridge.

The original goal of plant biotechnology, he said, was to improve crops and minimise the environmental impact of agricultural activities. But, it (plant biotech) has also displayed the potential of enhancing nutritional benefits of many foods.

“Admittedly, the major cause of global malnutrition is not food shortage. It is the absence of essential nutrients from diets and dysfunctional food grain distribution systems in developing nations,” he said, adding that billions of people worldwide suffered from conditions such as anemia, blindness and rickets due to a lack of essential vitamins and minerals such as iron and vitamin A and D.

Nutritionally-enhanced biotech crops such as ‘Golden Rice’ (beta carotene-enriched rice) have the potential to deliver necessary nutrients to large populations in a cost-effective manner, according to him.

Stating that while biotech insect-resistant crops such as Bt cotton and maize reduce the need for pesticide applications, saving farmers time and money, Juma said herbicide-tolerant crops had significantly reduced the back-breaking work of weeding and promoted sustainable practices such as conservation tillage.

“Moreover, drought-resistant crops have the potential to allow re-vegetation of lands that are no longer suitable for cultivation,” he said.

According to studies, from 1.7 million hectare worldwide in 1996 to 160 million hectare in 2011, accounting for a 94-fold increase, the uptake of biotech crops has been one of the fastest adoption rates for any agricultural technology in history.

“Over 16.7 million farmers from 29 countries grew biotech crops in 2011, with more than 90 per cent (15 million) of them being small, resource-poor farmers from developing economies. This year, it is predicted that more biotech crops will be cultivated in developing nations than in developed ones,” Juma said.



THE TIMES OF INDIA

TODAY FARM NEWS

20.10.2012 A.M

Lotus sells at a premium, but growers get Re 1

HOWRAH: Buying 108 pink lotuses, without which the sandhi puja on ashtami won't even start, for your puja pandal will burn a hole in your pocket this time. But those who are growing these flowers in marshy lands of Bagnan, Uluberia and Kolaghat are struggling for two square meals. When you pay at least Rs 8 just for one lotus, they get Re 1.

Flower traders at Mallickghat wholesale market are making brisk business selling 100 lotuses for around Rs 500. By the time they reach the retail market, the price almost doubles. When every body is making money out of this business, why have they, who grow the produce, been left in the lurch?

"Yield of lotuses in the state has dropped sharply over the year. So traders mainly depend on import. Those who grow [lotus](#) in Bengal are thus failing to benefit from selling their produce," said Anjan Das, a lotus grower.

"There was little rainfall this year when the flowers needed it. We had to wait for late showers. But then, the autumnal dew affected the growth. As a result, we couldn't grow much. Flowers that come across in the market are mostly those that are being stored in cold storage," he added.

According to another lotus grower, fly ash deposits from thermal power plants in the vicinity and the sludge from paper mills are reasons for low yield.

The flower growers' concern found an echo in district Kishan Congress president Alip Khan's version. "It is a fact that about 40% of local growers has switched to other crops. Pollution is damaging the business," Khan said.

Bagnan and Uluberia, or for that matter villages along the Hooghly and Rupnarayan rivers, produce the best quality lotus. "The river silt helps in lotus cultivation. The best quality lotus used to come from Howrah and East Midnapore ten years ago. They were on demand in the Mallickghat market. Now the lotus is being sourced from Birbhum and Burdwan," Mallickghat flower trader Ganesh Khamaru said. "Storage facilities are far from what is needed in the state. We do not have multi-purpose cold storage. We have to store the crop stored outside Bengal. This adds to our transport cost," the flower trader said.

An estimate made by the Phul Chasi and Phul Byabsayee Samiti bears out that the state needs nearly one crore lotus for the durga puja of which about 60 lakh come are those stored in cold storage. "The stored crop was reaped in August-September, and we had to bear the storage costs for a month. This has led to the price push," Samity secretary Narayan Chandra Nayak said.

Chancellor tells farm varsities to close gap with growers

NAGPUR: The Maharashtra governor and chancellor of state universities [K Sankaranarayanan](#) expressed concern on the disconnect between the agriculture and animal sciences universities in the state and the need of farmers. He called upon the universities to prepare themselves for XII five year plan that aims at 4% annual agriculture growth.

The chancellor addressing the vice-chancellors meet in city on Thursday also warned the universities to streamline their administration urgently to meet their basic mandate and also generate their own resources to become self-sufficient. In the wake of the foreign direct investment in multi-brand retail, he said universities should work to see how this could benefit the farmers.

Speaking about dryland agriculture, he said that there were lot of limitations in the state due to limited irrigation and agro-climatic conditions. Being a member of the committee set up by the prime minister for recommending steps for increasing productivity, making agriculture more sustainable and competitive in rain fed areas Sankaranarayanan pointed out that agriculture needed to be more farmer-centric, industry supported and knowledge-based in rainfed areas.

Suggesting that universities should join hands with industry to evolve mutually beneficial models to turn agriculture into a game-changer, he said that in next plan government would be setting up [agro-processing industries](#) in rainfed areas on a large scale.