

THE HINDU

TODAY FARM NEWS

05.10.2012 A.M

Training at TNAU

Tamil Nadu Agricultural University will organise a training in preparation of spice powders and pickles on October 9 and 10. The training will cover the preparation of the following aspects: spice powders, ready-to-use pastes, mushroom pickle, banana flower pickle, bitter gourd pickle, brinjal pickle and onion pickle.

Those interested can attend the training by paying a fee of Rs. 1,000. For details, contact Head, Post Harvest Technology Centre, TNAU, Coimbatore – 641003. For details, contact 0422-6611268.

Store and sell small onions'

Farmers have been asked to sell small onions in November since the price is expected to increase during that time.

The Domestic and Export Market Intelligence Cell at Tamil Nadu Agricultural University has urged farmers to store small onions as the prevailing price in October-November – Rs. 2,400 to Rs. 2,500 – is expected increase around November.

The forecast was made based on studying the market price for the last 14 years in Dindigul market.

At present, small onions from Tirupur, Tiruchi, parts of Coimbatore and Karur districts, were arriving at the market. Of this, 90 per cent are cultivated through bulbs and the rest through seedlings.

The current average price for onion cultivated through bulbs is Rs. 24 a kg.

Crop diversity vital for ecological systems

Crop diversity is important for both the functioning of ecological systems and generation of a vast array of ecosystem services, said K. Ramasamy, Vice Chancellor, Tamil Nadu Agricultural University Coimbatore.

Participating in the 'Foundation Day Dialogue' held at Dhan Foundation on the occasion of the Foundation's 16th annual day on Tuesday, the Vice Chancellor said that agricultural biodiversity underpins agricultural productivity and therefore makes a critical contribution to agricultural sustainability.

Pointing out that agricultural biodiversity was the key for food production and supply, he said that agro biodiversity from one point of view is part of natural capital and the flow of services is the interest on the capital. Farmers and breeders use biodiversity to adapt crops to different and changing production environments.

Dr. K. Ramasamy said that the sustainable management of natural resources is a primary global concern, as increasing population and rapid technological advances are putting tremendous pressure on these resources. Plant Genetic Resources (PGRs) are one of the essential components that hold the key to the very foundation of agriculture as well as food and nutritional security for the world.

Realising the need to conserve crop biodiversity to meet the future challenges Tamil Nadu Agricultural University, a pioneer institution of the country in agricultural research, technology development and education has established a Gene Bank facility which is first of its kind among the South Asian Universities.

"At the Gene Bank we can store up to one lakh germ plasm entries including farmers' varieties, land races, wild species and cultivars," he said.

K. Palanisami, principal researcher and director, IWMI-TATA Water Policy Research Programme, Hyderabad in his presentation titled 'Water Resource Management and Tank Irrigation: Challenges and Opportunities' said that the experience of Tamil Nadu in the case of tank fed irrigation is instructive and it shows that technological interventions alone are not enough; sustainability requires attention both for management and to mobilise the resources to

maintain the storage. M. P. Vasimalai, Executive Director, Dhan Foundation, Annette Houtekamer, Corporate Social Responsibility Manager, Achmea Foundation, Netherlands were present.

Emergency meeting of farmers

A number of farmers associations are planning to meet here on Saturday to discuss the Cauvery waters issue. According to Mahadhanapuram V.Rajaram, working president of the Cauvery Delta Farmers' Welfare Association, all the associations have been invited to this emergency meeting which will be held at about 3 p.m. at the National Higher Secondary School.

Paddy harvesting begins

The harvesting of the second round of 'virippu' paddy cultivation in around 12,500 hectares in Kuttanad in the district has begun.

Already, harvesting was going on in nearly 1,200 hectares in places like Champakkulam, Edathua and Thakazhi, Principal Agricultural Officer, K. Babu said. A total of 8,320 tonnes of paddy has been procured by Supplyco till Wednesday.

Combine harvester machines are being used for harvesting in most of the fields. Kerala Agro Industries Corporation (KAIC) has 100 combine harvester machines and nearly 25 such machines are in the custody of private parties.

Out of the total 150 combine harvester machines needed for harvest, the remaining 25 machines are being sourced through agents.

Cotton production, exports likely to decline this season



Cotton, which registered a steep increase in production and exports in 2011-2012, is estimated to see almost five per cent decline in production this season (October 2012-September 2013).

The Cotton Advisory Board, which met in Mumbai on Thursday for its first meeting this season, estimated production this year to be 334 lakh bales as against 353 lakh bales last year. India's cotton exports is also expected to drop to 70 lakh bales this year. The reduction is because of the delay and deficient south west monsoon in cotton growing areas.

Industry representatives told *The Hindu* that the global availability of cotton is high this year and the carry over stock is nearly 65 per cent. Further, the current prices of Indian cotton are higher than the international prices. Hence, exports are not expected to be more than 70 lakh bales this year.

While some fear that this can lead to MSP operations (minimum support price) in India, an official of the Union Textile Ministry said that prices were now above the MSP. The prices of Indian cotton were likely to hold on because of domestic consumption and exports. The domestic textile industry, which is the main consumer of cotton, is seeing better operations now.

The mill consumption is estimated to be 250 lakh bales this season as against 239 lakh bales last year. Imports are expected to be 12 lakh bales in 2012-2013 as in 2011-2012.

When the international prices are lower than the Indian prices, the mills may go in for imports, said industry representatives.

Horticulture programme to cover 1 lakh tribal families

The Andhra Pradesh Scheduled Tribes Cooperative Finance Corporation (TRICOR) in cooperation with the Integrated Tribal Development Agency (ITDA) is in the process of formulating an action plan and identifying beneficiaries under a family horticulture scheme aimed at reaching out to one lakh tribal families for making them economically self-sufficient.

The programme launched under the National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (NREGS) in 2012-13 had targeted one lakh tribal families within a two-year-time frame. Depending on the necessity the programme implementation will be stretched to 2015-16 to realise the target of

covering one lakh families. Of the total two lakh tribal families' one lakh families already have horticulture plantations of their own.

Under the programme, the tribal farmers should take up plantation in one hectare of land among the four plants proposed including coffee, cashew, mango and silver oak. Each tribal family should eke out permanent livelihood period by promoting any of the four plantations to help them eke out a permanent livelihood in their one or more hectares of land. The four plantations include coffee, cashew, silver oak and mango. Tribal Finance Corporation (TRICOR) is extending financial assistance of Rs.20,000 per acre and the Department of Tribal Welfare will pass on 100 per cent subsidy on the loan component.

The beneficiaries of the scheme can develop their own farm lands using the NREGS component of wages for farm labour for three years. Under the scheme, the beneficiaries are eligible for payment of three-year maintenance costs.

The beneficiary farmers are supplied plant material, grafts and organic manure making the total scheme 100 per cent financed by the government. In the first year a maintenance of Rs.20,000 will be given followed by Rs. 7,000 and Rs. 8,000 for the subsequent second and third years.

Horticulture officer Ramanjaneyulu told *The Hindu* that in 2012-13 cashew will be planted in 1,500 acres, coffee in 7,000 acres, and silver oak in 20,000 acres. This apart the farmers will also go in for inter crops, including vegetables, turmeric, and pepper, for earning regular income as the above mentioned plantations have a gestation period running into 3-4 years.

The target fixed up to 2015-16 based on feasibility studies include coffee plantation in 27,209 acres benefiting 25,357 farmers, silver oak in 34,124 acres benefiting 35,455 farmers, mango in 23,758 acres benefiting 22,948 farmers, cashew in 4,289 acres benefiting 4,846 farmers, and other horticulture crops in 4,117 acres benefiting 4,846 farmers.

A survey had been conducted in the Paderu agency area at the mandal level in all the 11 Agency mandals by the agriculture and horticulture officers to identify the beneficiaries.

Uninterrupted irrigation assured for farmers

Installation of solar panels provides sufficient power to continuously run an 8.5 HP pumpset



Good alternative:Farmer Srinivas Goud with the pumpset running on solar energy at his paddy farm in Yellapur village, Medak district.— PHOTO: MOHD. ARIF

Imagine farmers being able to get uninterrupted irrigation for the required hours, especially when many are ending their lives due to crop failure. It would be nothing short of a boon and that's what A. Srinivas Goud, a farmer of this tiny village located in Narsapur mandal of Medak district, has realised, after getting water unhindered for the past two days at his farm.

All thanks to the solar panels that was installed at his farm as part of a demonstration by Solwin Power, part of Kishore Group of companies, based at Hyderabad.

Thirty-six solar panels, each with an output capacity of 230 watts, were erected in the farm with a combined power output sufficient enough to run an 8.5 horse power (HP) motor from a depth of 120 metres. The system can be run even with less number of panels, but additional numbers have to be added to get the required voltage and ampere as the horse power of the pumpset increases.

Tamper-proof

A 440 volts open circuit voltage was given to transformer-less microchip controlled drive with maximum power-point tracking and variable frequency drive was fixed for the system so that there would not be any problem to run the pump and motor and it works with peak performance. The system was designed in such a way that it can operate with certain circuit power losses even with less sun light. The system can be run with cell phone as well as remote. The panels used for generating power are tamper-proof and can extend service for 25 years, with 90 per cent output for 10 years and 80 per cent output for the remaining 15 years.

For the past three days large number of farmers from neighbouring villages are coming here and enthusiastically observing the performance of the solar powered water pumping system.

“This will be helpful for farmers who are totally dependent on power supply. The government should offer subsidy to assist farmers,” Mr. Srinivas Goud told *The Hindu* .

“This demonstration is arranged to create an awareness among farmers about the alternative power system that is available. Though it is costly, a group of farmers can have the solar power system instead of depending on erratic power supply,” A.V. Ravi Kiran, CEO, Solwin Power, informed. The system would be put for demonstration for another 10 days, he added.

Sugarcane growers should get better prices

The Karnataka Rajya Raitha Sangha (KRRS) has urged the government to ensure that cooperative sugar factories pay a minimum price of Rs. 3,000 a tonne to sugarcane growers.

“We will lay siege to the Deputy Commissioner’s office on October 11, to press for this demand,” KRRS district president Vishwanath Patil Koutha said here on Thursday.

Sudden drop in temperature worries farmers

Minimum temperature recorded at Botanical Garden on Thursday morning was 8 degrees Celsius



Unusual: Plants covered with dew at the Breeks Open Air stadium in Ooty on Thursday.—

Photo: M.Sathyamoorthy

Even as people particularly members of the farming community in this hill station and its surroundings are still struggling to cope with the impact of the unusually dry South West Monsoon this year, they received a jolt on Thursday with many parts of the town experiencing shivering weather early in the morning.

While some of the low-level areas reportedly received light hoar, many open places including the Brecks Open Air Stadium and the Government Botanical Garden were covered with heavy dew.

Assistant Director of Horticulture V.Ramsundar told *The Hindu* that the nippy conditions were abnormal for this part of the year.

He attributed it to the erratic rainfall during the monsoon.

The minimum temperature recorded at the Garden on Thursday morning was 8 degrees Celsius.

Pointing out that if the dew gives way to frost appropriate measures would be taken to protect the carpet beds in the garden, he said that since the second season had been well into its second half the necessity of protecting the flowers did not arise.

If the unusual weather continued, tea growers should go in for sprinkler irrigation.

Meanwhile, the farmers expressed the hope that the weather, which had let them down in the monsoon, would not play spoilsport again.

Mettur level

The water level in the Mettur dam stood at 71.73 feet on Thursday against its full level of 120 feet. The inflow was 10,578 cusecs and the discharge, 14,005 cusecs.

Wildlife photography exhibition

Osai, an environmental organisation, organises 'Uyir Nizhal', a wildlife photography exhibition. The event will feature photographs of birds, animals, reptiles, landscapes and more. Documentary films on Nature and wildlife will also be screened.

Venue : Techno Park Hall, Tamil Nadu Agricultural University

Date : Till October 14

Time : 9.30 a.m. to 7 p.m.

Tel : 0422-4372457

Repair APMC yard: traders

Traders in the Agriculture Produce Marketing Committee closed their shops for several hours, demanding roads, drains and other civic amenities be provided in the agriculture produce marketing yard here on Thursday.

More than 100 traders gathered in front of the APMC office and urged the APMC secretary P. Manjunath to inspect the yard with them. They showed him bad roads, overflowing drains, and dustbins that had not been cleared for weeks, and demanded that a waste dumping yard and compost yard be built to dispose of agriculture waste.

Protestors said that the roads had been repaired nine years ago, and the drains had either not been built or repaired for several years now. The APMC market generates a marketing cess of Rs. 5 crore per year for the government. Why can't it spend just one year's revenues to provide amenities for the yard?" they asked.

The president of the Traders' Association, Kashappa Dhannur, participated.

Food for thought

A government-appointed committee constituted to formulate the State's agricultural policy has recommended modern agricultural practices to meet the increasing food demand in Ernakulam district, besides stepping up the production levels.

The samithi, headed by the former MLA K. Krishnankutty, suggested a rapid increase in the production of rice, egg and meat. Farmers could even seek foreign technology to achieve this target, it said.

R. Hali, agricultural expert, who participated in the samithi meeting held here on Wednesday, pointed out the need to notify special zones in the district to promote pokkali farming. The advantages of pokkali rice, which enjoyed the protection of Geographical Indication certificate, should be explored actively to promote the farming, he said.

Dr. Hali said that vegetable and fruit farming could be extensively done in the eastern region of the district, while promoting coconut farming in the western side. Value-addition of agricultural produce also held a lot of potential here.

Suggesting that every family could be encouraged to take up agricultural activities, Dr. Hali said that many people would come into the field, if it helped in improving their earnings. The panchayat-level samithis for development of agriculture should be provided financial support.

Mr. Krishnankutty said that export-oriented agriculture should be promoted in the district by utilising the facilities available at the Cochin International Airport. Various types of vegetables and fruits could be produced here after assessing the seasonal demand in the Gulf and other countries. Fruits and vegetables could also be taken to various parts of the country through refrigerated railway wagons and containers.

R. Ajith Kumar, Director of the Department of Agriculture, stressed the need for diversification considering the fact that traditional coconut farming was not yielding profits for the farmers.

Paddy harvesting begins

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Two cotton farmers commit 'suicide'

Two cotton farmers allegedly committed suicide in separate incidents in Adilabad district on Thursday owing to the incidence of weeds spoiling their crops.

Heavy debts

Heavy rainfall during the season had caused weeds to grow unchecked in their fields which resulted in the crop suffering damage in terms of yields.

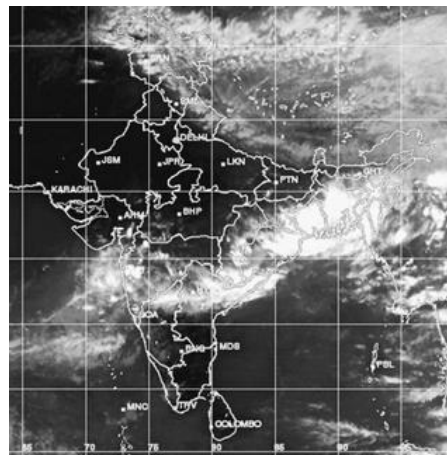
Both farmers incurred a debt of Rs. 1.5 lakh each obtained as crop loan from the Deccan Grameena Bank. Failure of crop made the debts unpayable, which apparently perturbed them.

Consume pesticide

Jajimalla Ramdas, 48, belonged to Kapparla village in Tamsi mandal and had cultivated cotton in six acres while Salla Narayan Reddy, 42, belonged to Pembi village in Kadem mandal and had cultivated cotton in nine acres.

Both the farmers consumed pesticide during the intervening night of Wednesday-Thursday and died early in the morning.

weather



Rainfall

The withdrawal line of southwest monsoon continues to pass through latitude 29 deg. North/long. 81 deg. East Kheri, Kanpur, Guna, Ratlam, Vallabh Vidyanagar and Porbandar latitude 21 deg. North/long. 67 deg. East and latitude 21 deg. North/long. 60 deg. East.

Rain/thundershowers have occurred at isolated places over Himachal Pradesh, Jammu and Kashmir east Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand. Weather was dry over rest of the region. The chief amounts of rainfall in cm are: HIMACHAL PRADESH: Jogindernagar and Manali 1 each, JAMMU AND KASHMIR: Pahalgam 1 and UTTAR PRADESH: Jaunpur and Rajghat 3 each, Zamania 2 and Chandauli and Varanasi city 1 each.

TEMPERATURES :

MAXIMUM: The maximum temperatures changed little over the region. They were above normal in Himachal Pradesh, Punjab ,Rajasthan and east Uttar Pradesh and normal in the rest of the region. The highest maximum temperature in the region was 40.0°C recorded at Phalodi and Churu (Rajasthan).

MINIMUM : The minimum temperatures fell appreciably in Himachal Pradesh and Jammu and Kashmir, fell in Haryana, west Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand and changed little elsewhere. They were normal over the region. The lowest minimum temperature in the plains was 17.5°C recorded at Narnaul (Haryana).

FORECAST VALID UNTIL THE MORNING OF 06th OCTOBER 2012: Rain/thundershowers may occur at one or two places over Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand during the next 48 hours and mainly dry weather thereafter. Weather will be mainly dry over rest of the region.

FORECAST FOR DELHI AND NEIGHBOURHOOD VALID UNTIL THE MORNING OF 06th OCTOBER 2012: Mainly clear sky.

Weather

Chennai

Chennai - INDIA

Today's Weather



Sunny

Friday, Oct 5

Max Min

34.1° | 24.9°

Rain: 0

Humidity: 79

Wind: normal

Sunrise: 05:58

Sunset: 05:55

Barometer: 1009

Tomorrow's Forecast



Rainy

Saturday, Oct 6

Max Min

33° | 25°

Extended Forecast for a week

Sunday Oct 7	Monday Oct 8	Tuesday Oct 9	Wednesday Oct 10	Thursday Oct 11
33° 24° Sunny	33° 24° Sunny	30° 26° Rainy	32° 26° Rainy	32° 26° Rainy

Airport Weather

Delhi

Delhi

Rain: 0

Humidity: 65

Wind: normal

Sunrise: 06:16

Sunset: 06:02

Barometer: 1008



Rahul backs FDI in retail, says it will benefit farmers

Backing Centre's decision to allow FDI in multi-brand retail, Congress leader Rahul Gandhi has said the decision will help farmers prosper by removing middlemen from the supply chain and generate new jobs. Addressing the national executive of Indian Youth Congress in Srinagar last night,

Rahul said FDI in retail will help farmers store their produce safely for a longer duration, thus ensuring best value for their crops.

The 42-year-old AICC general secretary, who is here on a two-day visit that began on Thursday, said around 60 to 70% of all perishable products in the country eventually rot due to lack of proper storage facilities.

The situation, however, will change once FDI in retail comes in, Rahul was quoted as saying in a Youth Congress release.

He said farmers could not get good price for their produce as the middlemen in the 'Mandis' would buy from them at very low rates and sell the same at a much higher price in cities.

But once FDI comes in, they will be taken out of this equation, he said.

FDI will also create lot of new jobs, which will not only lead to higher income generation but also significantly reduce unemployment, thereby having a salutary effect on the economy, he said.

He, however, said all contractual agreements that farmers get into with the retailers "should be carefully monitored" in order to ensure that interests of the farmer are not harmed.

Rahul noted that in the contemporary world, all economies are interconnected, thus having impact on each other.

"If something happens in the US, it will most likely affect events in India, and vice versa," he said.

Earlier, talking to members of the Jammu and Kashmir NSUI national executive, Rahul said it was important to win the hearts and minds of the student community in Kashmir.

"We need to earn their trust, their faith. I am here to win their trust through dialogue and deeds," he said.

Rahul also asked state NSUI leadership to bring a delegation of students to Delhi and meet Union HRD Minister Kapil Sibal to sort out all issues concerned to them.

THE HINDU Business Line

TODAY FARM NEWS

04.10.2012 P.M

05.10.2012 A.M

Rupee may keep gold on leash; grains seen mixed

Rupee's gain is likely to leash Gold's gain in the domestic market, while natural rubber prices could gain on surge in crude oil prices on Friday.

Oilseeds and edible oils could continue to hold on to gains seen on Thursday. Industrial maize (corn) could come under further pressure taking cues from the global market but wheat could benefit from the rebound on the Chicago Board of Trade.

Gold continued to rule nearly the highs seen since November last in Singapore. It could also test the support of \$ 1,800 an ounce. Early in the morning, Gold was quoted at \$1,791.75 an ounce. The European Central Bank's statement that it is ready to buy bonds to help the influential bloc nations to tide over the current crisis will continue to support Gold.

The metal could get further direction from the US jobs data expected later tonight.

Crude oil futures in the domestic exchanges could gain after Brent crude and New York oil gained over four per cent each last night following tension in Syria and Turkey. Brent crude on the ICE futures exchange ended up \$ 4.41 at \$ 112.58 a barrel on Thursday.

This, in turn, could lift rubber prices on spot and futures market.

Soyabean gained in early trade on Friday morning, rising to \$ 15.55-1/4 a bushel. This could perk up domestic soyabean futures, while palm oil could stabilize as a result.

Industrial maize is seen under pressure after Thursday's fall. In early trade, corn for December delivery ruled marginally lower at \$ 7.56-3/4 a bushel.

Wheat is seen gaining after CBOT December contracts increased to \$ 8.715 a bushel in early trade after closing higher in Chicago.

Copper could gain as the market opened higher in Singapore on hopes of a positive US jobs data but others could be range-bound.

4th Oct 2012 P.M

Cotton output pegged at 334 lakh bales on Gujarat factor



Cotton production is estimated to be lower by over five per cent at 334 lakh bales (of 170 kg each) during the current season that began this month.

The drop from 353 lakh bales is mainly due to lower production in Gujarat, according to the Cotton Advisory Board. A.B. Joshi, Textile Commissioner, said that scanty rainfall and farmers shift to other remunerative crops in Saurashtra, the main cotton growing region in Gujarat, led to 24 per cent drop in area to 24 lakh hectares.

Production in the region is anticipated to dip 29 per cent to 85 lakh bales (120 lakh bales).

Domestic demand

Overall, production in the northern region will fall four per cent to 58 lakh bales (60 lakh bales), while central zone is expected to register a drop of 14 per cent at 182 lakh bales (212 lakh bales).

In contrary, cotton production in the southern region is expected to increase 16 per cent to 89 lakh bales even as output in Karnataka and Tamil Nadu shrink 14 per cent and 23 per cent, respectively. Andhra Pradesh, the bright spot in the southern region, will register a growth of 29 per cent at 72 lakh bales. Domestic demand has been pegged higher by five per cent at 230 lakh bales against 218 lakh bales registered last year.

EXPORTS TO HALVE

The total supply including imports and carryover stocks will dip nine per cent to 375 lakh bales (411 lakh bales). Though the demand from the textile and non-mill consumption is expected to remain stable at last year's level, exports may almost halve to 70 lakh bales from 129 lakh bales due to weak demand from China. China accounts for nearly 65 per cent of the total shipments made from India, said Joshi. Moreover, the high global carryover stock of 13.78 million tonnes will also exert pressure on demand for cotton produced in India, he added. The Directorate General of Foreign Trade has issued a notification designating seven regional authorities of DGFT at Ahmedabad, Bangalore, Chennai, New Delhi, Hyderabad, Kolkata and Mumbai to issue registration certificate (RC) for exports. Exporters can apply for one RC at a time for a maximum of 10,000 bales. New exporters can apply for 1,500 bales, it said.

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Excessive hoarding by farmers hammers onion prices



Onion farmers in the Lasalgaon market, Asia's largest, are crying copiously.

Wholesale prices have dipped as low as Rs 3 for a kg and most have resorted to distress sales, so as to liquidate their stocks.

Currently, prices range between Rs 300 and Rs 600 a quintal (100 kg), while in June, the average wholesale prices were around Rs 800.

Changdev Holkar, Board member of the National Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Federation of India, told *Business Line* that prices have taken a hit due to hoarding by farmers in May.

Beginning to rot

Usually, farmers hold back onion grown during rabi season as it has a longer shelf life. But this time, they have held back more quantity expecting prices to rule higher during July-August.

He said that almost 15 per cent of stocked onions have started to rot, pushing farmers to liquidate their stocks.

Holkar said that the bearish trend would remain for a couple of months.

On the other hand, he said that since the kharif crop has already been delayed due to delayed monsoon, prices could increase, with the crop reaching the market only by December.

He said that a sharp decline in wholesale prices had not resulted in a reduction in retail prices. Traders continue to make money, not passing on the resultant decline to the end-consumer, he said.

Last few years, due to the remunerative price, farmers in Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh (M.P.) have also taken up onion cultivation in a big way.

R.P. Gupta, Director of the National Horticultural Research and Development Foundation, said that traders were not keen on buying onions from Nashik, since M.P. too had a good crop.

Due to the glut in Maharashtra, some farmers have not planted kharif onions and instead, opted for other crops, he said.

Ajay Agarwal, onion trader from Bhopal, said that this year, farmers from areas such as Khandwa and Shajapur had managed to produce a bumper crop.

Higher stock release from cold storages mashes potato



Spiralling down prices: A view of a potato shop in a vegetable market

Potato prices have dropped by about Rs 100 a quintal over the last one month on account of a higher release of stocks from cold storages.

Wholesale prices of the tuber (Jyoti variety) that were ruling around Rs 1,050-1,100 in the first week of September have now dropped to Rs 950.

Prices were ruling around Rs 1,300 in early July.

According to Patit Paban De, Member, West Bengal Cold Storage Association, nearly 62 per cent of the potatoes kept in cold storages have been released into the market till date.

“This year, close to 51 lakh tonnes of potatoes were stored in the 403-odd cold storages across the State.

“Nearly 32 lakh tonnes of potatoes have been released so far, compared with just about 55 per cent last year.

“A good and timely release has helped bring down prices,” De said.

Low production

Potato prices increased at the beginning of this year primarily due to lower production.

Production dropped to around 85 lakh tonnes in the 2011-12 season ending June against 95 lakh tonnes a year ago.

Despite the lower production, prices have been spiralling downwards due to the West Bengal Government’s restriction on export of potatoes to other States.

“The ban on the launch of new Tarakeshwar potato contracts by the Forward Markets Commission also helped in the easing prices in the spot market,” he said.

Prices will likely remain stable around these levels during the rest of the year, De said.

Last year, farmers held on to stocks expecting to gain higher prices. This led to piling up of stocks in cold storages that later led to a supply glut during the latter part of the year.

“This year, however, with a good quantity of potatoes already having been released from cold storage, we do not expect a supply glut.

We do not expect prices to crash. It (prices) is likely to remain steady around these levels,” De said.

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Spot rubber improves on short covering

Physical rubber prices improved on Thursday. The market gained strength on fresh buying and short covering despite a weak closing on the National Multi Commodity Exchange. According to observers, the sentiments were also catalysed by the bullish reports from domestic stock markets.

Sheet rubber increased to Rs 196 from Rs 195 and Rs 195.50 a kg, respectively, according to traders and the Rubber Board. The absence of quantity sellers kept the prices firm during late trading hours. The overall volumes were low.

The October series slipped to Rs 195.10 (195.98), November to Rs 191.11 (192.79), December to Rs 189.82 (191.44), January to Rs 189.99 (191.05) and February to Rs 190.10 (193.35) a kg, while the March series remained inactive on the NMCE.

RSS 3 (spot) dropped to Rs 174.93 (177.14) a kg at Bangkok. The October futures inched up to ₹267 (Rs 175.77) from ₹266.2 a kg during the day session and then to ₹267.1 (Rs 175.92) in the night session on the Tokyo Commodity Exchange.

Spot rates were (Rs/kg): RSS-4: 196 (195); RSS-5: 190 (189.50); ungraded: 184 (182); ISNR 20: 178 (176) and latex 60 per cent: 129 (128).

Pepper falls on selling pressure

Pepper futures on Thursday declined on indications of a selling pressure amid limited activities and all the active contracts ended marginally below the previous day closing. Those holding stocks which would expire on Oct 5 were offering them at Rs 10 below the Oct delivery price.

Oct delivery on the NCDEX dropped by Rs 115 a quintal to the last traded price of Rs 43,300. Nov and Dec contracts decreased by Rs 75 and Rs 135 respectively to close at Rs 43,230 and Rs 42,260. Total turn over decreased by 210 tonnes to 2,094 tonnes. Total open interest increased by 83 tonnes to 8,929 tonnes. Oct open interest fell by 389 tonnes to 4,914 tonnes while that of Nov and Dec increased by 379 tonnes and 84 tonnes respectively to close at 2,976 tonnes and 740 tonnes. Spot prices remained unchanged.

New tech to grow rubber in non-traditional areas

To increase area under cultivation and to tap the potential in non-traditional rubber growing areas, the Rubber Research Institute of India (RRII), in association with the National Remote Sensing Centre (an arm of ISRO), has established the unique spectral signature of rubber.

The technology would help estimate the spatial extent of the existing rubber plantation in the region and locate cultivable wastelands where cultivation of natural rubber could be extended without leading to deforestation and conversion of crop lands. Analysis of satellite data showed that no low lying land was being used for cultivation of rubber, indicating land use for growing rice had not been converted into rubber plantation so far.

In his presentation on rubber at the commodities outlook session at the recently-concluded Upasi meet in Coonoor, James Jacob, Director of RRII, said that the process was carried out in the North-East region and it has been found that "Tripura can have a total area of approximately 76,000 hectares of land under rubber cultivation without causing deforestation or conversion of rice fields."

As of March 2012, Tripura has 59,285 hectares under rubber cultivation. The study also found that diverse crops with canopy underneath rubber could be integrated with rubber from planting onwards without affecting growth of rubber.

There is limited area available to expand rubber cultivation in the traditional rubber growing regions which include Kerala and Tamil Nadu (Kanyakumari district).

So, the Rubber Board is focusing on expanding rubber cultivation to non-traditional areas such as North-East, Konkan, Odisha, Andhra Pradesh. Next to the traditional regions, the north-eastern region had potential to grow rubber, the presentation said. Tripura is the second largest natural rubber cultivating State after Kerala.

Presenting his outlook for current year (2012-13), James Jacob projected a 9.3 lakh tonnes production against a consumption of 10 lakh tonnes. A conservative estimate showed that by 2016-17, production would be around 11.66 lakh tonnes against a consumption of 12.18 lakh tonnes.

FICCI to organise Food 360° in Nov

The Federation of Indian Chamber of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) will hold the second edition of Food 360° here on November 5 and 6.

This edition will focus on how technology can be used to enhance agricultural efficiency .

The plenary sessions will deal with technology for improving farm incomes, mechanisation of small holdings and technology for supply chain management, said S. Sivakumar, group head of agri business division of ITC Ltd and Programme Chair of Food 360 degrees. There will be four plenary sessions. Besides, it will hold a focus meeting on dairy sector and how to improve it using technology.

“Using of information technology solutions such as ERP (enterprise wide resource planning) in the food sector too will be discussed,” he said.

Mixed trend in edible oils



Edible oil prices continued their bearish trend despite a bounce back in futures on Thursday. Imported edible oils such as palmolein and soyabean refined oil dropped by Rs 3 and Rs 6 each for 10 kg. Sunflower and rapeseed oil extended loss further by Rs 10 each while groundnut oil and cotton refined oil ruled steady.

A Mumbai-based broker said less than expected arrival of new crops in producing areas pushed up groundnut and cotton oil prices at Rajkot.

Towards the day's close, Liberty was quoting palmolein at Rs 497, super palmolein Rs 555, soya oil Rs 645. Ruchi quoted palmolein at Rs 493, super palmolein Rs 553, soya refined oil Rs 641 and sunflower refined oil Rs 691.

Kamani's rates were palmolein Rs 498, super palmolein Rs 571 and sunflower refined oil at Rs 691.

Allana's rates were Rs 505 for palmolein and Rs 555 for super palmolein.

Malaysia's crude palm oil November contracts closed at MYR 2,275 (2,269), December at MYR 2,352 (2,351) and January MYR 2,438(2,339) a tonne. In Saurashtra-Rajkot, groundnut oil *Telia* tin improved by Rs 25 to 1,475 and loose 10 kg up by Rs 15 to Rs 950 .

The Bombay Commodity Exchange spot rates were (Rs/10 kg): groundnut oil 1,000 (1,000), soya refined oil 645 (651), sunflower exp. ref. 640 (650), sunflower ref. 695 (700), rapeseed ref. oil 790 (800), rapeseed expeller ref. 760 (770) cotton ref. oil 620 (620) and palmolein 500 (503).

Turmeric traders scour for quality



Poor arrival of quality turmeric coupled with slack demand affected the turmeric market on Thursday.

“For the past ten days, only medium variety turmeric has been arriving and buyers who prefer hybrid variety are purchasing meagre quantity. Some traders have obtained orders for fine hybrid turmeric, but for want of quality crop arrivals they could not meet the orders”, said exporters.

Traders said that they could not purchase huge stock for want of orders and the sales were very low. On Thursday, 3,200 bags of turmeric arrived for sale, but only 45 per cent stocks were sold. If the prices improve to Rs 7,000 a quintal, farmers are likely to bring more quantity for sale.

At the Erode Turmeric Merchants Association Sales yard, the finger variety was sold at Rs 4,030-5,666 a quintal; the root variety at Rs 3,896-5,197.

Salem Hybrid crop: The finger variety was sold at Rs 5,310-5,939; the root variety at Rs 5,019-5,411. Of the 971 bags that arrived, 350 bags were sold. At the Regulated Marketing Committee, the finger variety was sold at Rs 4,569-5,806 and the root variety Rs 4,313-5,306. Of 968 bags on offer, 671 found takers.

At the Erode Cooperative Marketing Society, finger variety fetched Rs 4,798-5,940; the root variety Rs 4,296-5,419. All the 552 bags put up for sale were sold.

At the Gobichettipalayam Agricultural Cooperative Marketing society, the finger variety was sold at Rs 4,760-5,966 and the root variety Rs 4,117-5,229. All the 230 bags of offer had takers.

Mustard crackles on weak demand, slack buying



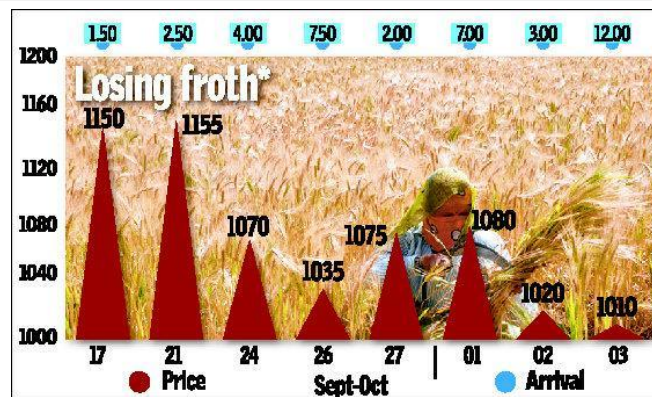
Downtrend in mustard oil continued on weak demand and slack buying support both in the spot and futures. In the past one week, mustard oil in Indore mandis has dropped by Rs 36 to Rs 726 for 10 kg. It was Rs 720 (down Rs 35 from last week) in Neemuch and Rs 730 in Morena (down Rs 40). Steep decline in futures and strong buying support in super palmolein oil have also added to the sluggish trend in mustard oil, said a trader.

According to traders, the bearish trend is likely to continue in the coming days with rise in arrival of soya seeds and weak demand in soya oil . Super palmolein oil is currently ruling at Rs 615 which would further fuel the sentiment.

Downtrend also continued in mustard seeds with stockists releasing existing stock on the hopes of better crop prospect in the coming season. In Indore mandis, mustard seeds on Thursday ruled at Rs 4,300-4,400 a quintal, while it was Rs 3,400-3,500 at Neemuch (down Rs 300 from last week).

Similarly, plant deliveries of mustard seeds for Jaipur line also declined to Rs 4,010-4,040 a quintal on weak demand from crushers. October and November contracts on the NCDEX closed at Rs 3,737 (up Rs 25) and Rs 3,795 a quintal (up Rs 30) respectively. Arrivals were recorded at 63,000 bags in the country with a break-up of 33,000 in Rajasthan; 4,000 bags in Madhya Pradesh; 6,000 in UP; 7,000 in Punjab; 3,000 in Gujarat and 10,000 bags elsewhere in the country.

Barley loses froth as arrivals zoom



Source: Agmarkenet. *Arrivals in tonnes; modal price in Rs/quintal at Kota APMC in Rajasthan

Barley prices have declined 12 per cent in a fortnight's time on drop in global grains prices, higher arrivals and weak demand.

Arrivals at Kota Agricultural Produce Marketing Committee yard in Rajasthan, the top grower, have registered an eight-fold jump during the period.

On Thursday, prices of the bold grain dropped by the maximum permissible limit on the National Commodities and Derivatives Exchange.

Hopes of higher acreage of this rabi crop are also putting pressure on the counter.

October contracts declined by 4 per cent to Rs 1,119 a quintal, while November and December contracts slid by 3.8 per cent each to Rs 1,181 and Rs 1,221.5 respectively.

Restricted offtake by traders, beer and cattle-feed makers depressed the sentiment. Investors added to the trend by booking profits, compounding the bearish trend.

global trend

Globally, the grain counter was under pressure from a fall in wheat and corn prices on the CBOT.

Corn December contracts on CBOT slid to \$ 7.56-3/4 a bushel on Wednesday following sluggish demand.

December wheat futures on CBOT ended up 1-1/2 cents at \$ 8.73 a bushel after slipping to \$ 8.73.

Production of barley is estimated to have declined by 6.50 lakh tonnes from 20.50 lakh tonnes last year.

This is due to fall in the productivity of barley in Rajasthan on poor rainfall during the crop development stage (December- February).

In the spot market at Jaipur (Rajasthan), barley was traded at Rs 1,187.75 a quintal.

Feed eases on low input costs



Following a drastic fall in soyameal prices over the past few days, rates of poultry feed products decreased by Rs 60-150 for a 30-kg and 50-kg bag respectively, on Thursday.

Low input cost has pulled the poultry feed prices down, said Subhash Sharma, Financial Head, Sarvottam Poultry Feed Supply Centre Pvt Ltd. Prices of soyameal coupled with other ingredients have dropped over the last few days, he said.

Traders said that adequate stocks following rising arrivals of new crop pulled down soyameal prices that declined by Rs 900 and quoted Rs 2,900-3,000 a quintal on Thursday. Soyameal prices are expected to drop further as the production is likely to touch a new high this year.

Bajra eased by Rs 80 and sold at Rs 1,170; maize was flat at at Rs 1,350. DCP decreased by Rs 3 to Rs 34 a kg, while fish oil eased by Rs 24 and quoted at Rs 72 a litre.

Feed Prices

Prices of Broiler concentrate feed were down by Rs 150 and quoted at Rs 1,900 for a 50-kg bag while broiler starter mash was at Rs 1,440, Rs 80 down from previous level. "Broiler pre-starter concentrate 30 per cent" eased by Rs 100 and sold at Rs 1,640 for a 30-kg bag while layer concentrate quoted at Rs 1,430 for a 50-kg bag, Rs 140 down from previous level.

Prices of pre-lay mash decreased by Rs 60 and quoted at Rs 1,020, while broiler finisher went down by Rs 90 and went for Rs 1,420 for a 50-kg bag.

Poultry Products

Meanwhile, egg improved marginally by 2 paise and sold to Rs 3.17. On the other hand, broiler continued to rule around its previous level and quoted at Rs 70-72 a kg, while chick went up by Rs 3 and sold for Rs 17-18.

Jeera sizzles on export demand



Jeera prices gained in the spot market on fresh export demand.

Similarly, jeera futures, too, gained as speculators enlarged positions, tracking a rising trend in the spot markets on good demand against thin supply.

Jeera medium quoted Rs 20 higher at Rs 2,345-2,445 for 20 kg, NCDEX quality raw quoted at Rs 2,670-2,770 at Unjha market of Gujarat.

Arrivals stood at 3,500-4,000 bags and traded around 6,000-7,000 bags.

Traders said that besides a pick up in demand in the spot market, limited arrivals from producing belts mainly strengthened jeera prices at futures.

On the National Commodities and Derivatives Exchange (NCDEX), jeera for November delivery was traded higher by Rs 42.50 at Rs 13,855 a quintal with an open interest of 18,480 lots. December contract increased by Rs 95 to Rs 14,157.50 with an open interest of 4,389 lots.

NCDEX accredited warehouses jeera stocks gained by 30 tonnes at 9,155 tonnes.

The country's jeera exports are expected to reach 45,000 tonnes this year due to lower prices along with waning supplies in other exporting na

Soyabean, soya oil futures recover



Soyabean and soya oil futures turn bullish on Thursday after hitting the four per cent lower circuit yesterday.

At 1.56 pm, the soyabean futures were trading up 1.52 per cent at Rs 2,996 a quintal, while soya oil gained three per cent to Rs 631.

Soyabean arrivals had increased sharply to four lakh bags on Wednesday. Spot prices in Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh were quoted at Rs 2,800 a quintal.

Demand from millers was lacklustre as they expect the prices to fall as soyabean output is expected to a record high this year.

Area under soyabean cultivation is estimated at 10.71 million hectares against 10.34 million ha, while the output is pegged at 110 lakh tonnes in 2012-13 against 100 lakh tonnes last year.

Arrivals of soyabean and other kharif edible oilseeds are expected to increase this month, which may pull down prices in the short-term.

Business Standard

TODAY FARM NEWS

05.10.2012 A.M

Ministry asks DGFT to stop sugar export registrations



The ministry of food has directed the Directorate General of Foreign Trade (DGFT) to stop further registration of sugar export. However, the decision is yet to be notified.

Sugar export is unrestricted under the current policy. Sources said exporters will honour commitments for registrations made till September 30. They added there had been cancellations even in registrations already contracted since prices are more remunerative in the domestic market than abroad.

The food ministry has estimated production of 23.5 million tonnes (mt) for the current 2012-13 season, as against 26.2 mt last year. According to officials, the major shortfall has been in Maharashtra which has estimated production of 6.2 mt, against nine mt last year. A part of the crop has been diverted for fodder in the state. Uttar Pradesh, the largest producing state, has estimated 7.2 mt of production this year, marginally higher than last year's 6.95 mt. The higher estimate is based on high acreage in the state, said officials.

According to sources, even if UP's estimates are higher, the recovery (conversion of sugarcane into sugar) fluctuates, depending on the state advised price (SAP). "Many producers divert sugarcane for gur and khandsari for better remuneration and, thus, the higher estimates do not materialise in reality many times. Therefore, shortfall in Maharashtra is a cause of concern," said officials.

They added that 23.5 mt was a conservative estimate calculated by state cane commissioners from data based on September and many of the states have not accounted for the recovery seen in acreage, following resurgence of monsoon towards the end of kharif season, especially in Karnataka and Maharashtra. Therefore, once the late harvest starts coming into the market by the end of November, estimates could be a little higher than 23.5 mt.

India's annual consumption is 22-23 mt. According to industry reports, apart from low rain, Maharashtra also saw diversion of cane into fodder, owing to lucrative prices and fears of low rain in the kharif season. In Uttar Pradesh, however, farmers have reportedly planted cane in an additional 90,000 hectares, about four per cent higher than last year, prompted by a high SAP last year. So far, sowing in Uttar Pradesh rose to 2.36 million hectares, against 2.27 million hectares last year, according to the government data.

Dip in Chinese orders pulls down cotton export



India's cotton export in 2012-13 is expected to fall to seven million bales (a bale is 170 kg) compared with 12.8 million bales last year, following a sharp fall in Chinese demand, according to the Cotton Advisory Board (CAB), headed by the textile commissioner.

China's total imports are projected to fall to 2.5 million tonnes this year, half of last year's. Around 65 per cent of India's cotton export goes to China. "China's imports will be lower as their crop is good; they also have huge stocks," said A B Joshi, textile commissioner. India's cotton prices are higher compared to global ones.

COTTON BALANCE SHEET		
(in million bales)	2011-12*	2012-13*
SUPPLY		

Opening stock	4.58	2.86
Crop	35.30	33.40
Imports	1.20	1.20
Total supply	41.08	37.46
DEMAND		
Mill consumption	21.77	23.00
Small-scale units	2.16	2.00
Non-mill consumption	1.41	2.00
Exports	12.88	7.00
Total demand	38.22	34.00
Closing stock	2.86	3.46
<i>* Provisional</i>		
<i>Source: Cotton Advisory Board</i>		

“Although China is expected to reduce import of cotton from India, they may start importing cotton yarn,” said Umang Kapasi, joint managing director of the Coimbatore-based Shri Vardhaman Cotton Corporation, which is also an indenting agent.

CAB has estimated this year's (the cotton year starts in October and ends in September) total cotton production at 33.4 million bales compared to 35.3 million last year. The 2012-13 production would be lower due to scanty rainfall in major growing areas of Gujarat, particularly Saurashtra.

However, output in Andhra Pradesh is expected at 7.2 million bales compared to 5.6 million last year, compensating for the loss in Gujarat.

Consumption of cotton by mills and non-mill consumption is expected to be higher this year compared to last year (see table). "Mill consumption is higher this year due to rise in productivity of smaller mills, which are in a financially better situation compared to last year. Also, the order inflow is much better this year," said D K Nair, secretary general of the Confederation of Indian Textile Industry.

Last year, many mills had financial issues, which led to their taking less of orders.

Internationally, too, mill consumption is put higher. According to the estimates by International Cotton Advisory Committee, "outside of China, mill use is expected to increase by five per cent, to 14.9 million tonnes (mt). Taking into account reduced shipments to China, cotton production is forecast down by six per cent to 18.6 mt, while stocks in the rest of the world are expected to grow by 16 per cent to nine mt in 2012-13."

According to ICAC, with this projected fall in Chinese imports, the price outlook in the rest of the world is conducive to lower international prices in 2012-13.



THE TIMES OF INDIA

TODAY FARM NEWS

05.10.2012 A.M

Rahul Gandhi backs FDI in retail, says it will benefit farmers

SRINAGAR: Backing Centre's decision to allow FDI in multi-brand retail, Congress leader Rahul Gandhi has said the decision will help farmers prosper by removing middlemen from the supply chain and generate new jobs.

Addressing the national executive of Indian Youth Congress here on Thursday night, Rahul said FDI in retail will help farmers store their produce safely for a longer duration, thus ensuring best value for their crops.

The 42-year-old AICC general secretary, who is here on a two-day visit beginning Thursday, said around 60 to 70 per cent of all perishable products in the country eventually rot due to lack of proper storage facilities.

The situation, however, will change once FDI in retail comes in, Rahul was quoted as saying in a Youth Congress release.

He said farmers could not get good price for their produce as the middlemen in the 'mandis' would buy from them at very low rates and sell the same at a much higher price in cities.

But once FDI comes in, they will be taken out of this equation, he said.

FDI will also create lot of new jobs, which will not only lead to higher income generation but also significantly reduce unemployment, thereby having a salutary effect on the economy, he said.

He, however, said all contractual agreements that farmers get into with the retailers "should be carefully monitored" in order to ensure that interests of the farmer are not harmed.

Rahul noted that in the contemporary world, all economies are interconnected, thus having impact on each other.

"If something happens in the US, it will most likely affect events in India, and vice versa," he said.

Earlier, talking to members of the Jammu and Kashmir NSUI national executive, Rahul said it was important to win the hearts and minds of the student community in Kashmir.

"We need to earn their trust, their faith. I am here to win their trust through dialogue and deeds," he said.

Rahul also asked state NSUI leadership to bring a delegation of students to Delhi and meet Union HRD minister Kapil Sibal to sort out all issues concerned to them.

Noida Extn farmers to get cheques worth Rs 150cr

GREATER NOIDA: The [Greater Noida Authority](#) on Thursday released Rs 150 crore to its land acquisition department to resume disbursement of pending cheques to farmers of Greater Noida West (Noida Extension).

This step is in response to farmers venting their ire against developers last month by stalling construction of few housing projects.

The Authority has also decided to take a loan of around Rs 800 crore from banks to pay the farmers their compensation dues at the enhanced rate of 64.7%. The Authority had stalled disbursement of compensation cheques in December last year as it was facing a severe cash crunch.

The Authority is yet to pay at least Rs 1,000 crore due to the farmers as enhanced compensation directed by the [Allahabad high court](#) in October last year. While it has already written to the state government requesting financial aid, developers with upcoming projects in the Greater Noida West area have also resumed paying their instalments on allotment after the NCR Planning Board approved the Master Plan 2021.

"The Authority hopes to receive all due instalments from developers for the period between October 2011 and September 2012 by the end of this month. Following this, we hope to pay the farmers their enhanced compensation and settle their grievances," an Authority official said. "Once money from the developers is received, the Authority can also resume development work that had remained stalled for almost 10 months," he said.

The developers owe the Authority around Rs 20,000 crore as instalment for the land allotted to them in Noida Extension. The Authority had collected nearly Rs 300 crore from the developers. However, following the land dispute, most developers stopped paying the instalments. For just the period between October 2011 and September 2012, the developers owe the Authority a sum of around Rs 1,000 crore.

National seminar on cultivation of guar gum

NAGPUR: [Guar gum](#) has emerged as a profitable crop, even topping the export list of the country this year. The state [agriculture department](#) along with city-based Pacific Agro group and [NCDEX Mumbai](#) have organized a national seminar and agri-tour on Sunday to increase awareness about the crop and its usage.

The seminar would be followed by a field visit to a plantation. Vice chancellor of [RTM Nagpur University](#) Vilas Sapkal, joint director of state agriculture department JC Bhutada and AB Rogde of Marathwada Agriculture University would be the guests at the seminar.

"The guar seed has a high amount of edible gum. It has tremendous economic potential, that is encouraging farmers from various states to cultivate it. In Rajasthan, only one crop is taken a year but the climatic conditions in other parts of the country, especially Vidarbha and

Marathwada regions, makes it possible to take two crops a year," said [Ashok Kumar](#) of Pacific Agro.

His partner Bhausahab Choudhari added, "Guar gum plantation has increased tenfold in Punjab this year and farmers are shifting from cotton to guar gum crop. This is because of the high demand of this gum in the international market. India fulfils 85% of the global demand of the gum."

Those wishing to register for the seminar can contact Ashok Kumar on 094228 81280 or Vaibhav on 09970717162 or email herbal_globe@rediffmail.com.

Bank forces small farmers into fixed deposit trap

Midnapore: Farmers in Daspur village of West Midnapore had grudgingly accepted the "extortion" till Sayera Bibi put her foot down.

The middle-aged woman walked out of the local [Punjab National Bank](#) branch refusing to take Kishan Credit at the bank's whims. Her grouse has reached up to the level of chief minister [Mamata Banerjee](#) who had urged all the farmers to apply for the Kishan Credit Card during her district tour.

"The bank officer told me to withdraw the sanctioned Rs 50,000 loan on condition that I keep Rs 14,000 in fixed deposit and buy an [life insurance](#) policy of Rs 6,000. How should I keep such a huge amount in the bank?" said Sayera Bibi after refusing to withdraw the sanctioned amount from PNB branch at Gour Gobindanagar under Daspur-Nandanpur gram panchayat I.

Within days of her refusing the money on September 29, as many as 45 farmers in two groups - one 30 and another 15 - made a formal complaint to the West Midnapore district magistrate and also wrote to Mamata Banerjee.

The Kishan Credit Scheme, however, does not have any such stipulation. A look at the policy makes it clear that the Centre wants banks to limit short term cash credit should be fixed

based on the cropping pattern and the amounts for crop production, repairs and maintenance of farm assets and consumption.

Banks sanction the loan after proper inquiry of the land assets of the loan applicant. However, the policy allows banks to take suitable collateral as per their policy "where the card limit/liability so arrived warrants additional security". But this clause doesn't apply for a flexible loan (Flexi KCC) between Rs 10,000 and Rs 50,000 meant for marginal farmers.

Sayera is not alone. Her neighbour Israful Sheikh bought an insurance policy of Rs 20,000 from the sanctioned bank loan and went home with the remaining Rs 30,000.

"What do I do? I have no choice. The sum doesn't suffice to take care of the rising input costs, including diesel for running pumpsets," Shiekh said. So did Imran Ali and Anabul Hossain. Imran bought an insurance for Rs 18,000, while Anabul was asked to buy a Rs 20,000 insurance policy, possibly as collateral.

Prodded by West Midnapore district magistrate, district manager of the lead bank (UBI) Samarendra Sannigrahi held a district-level meeting on Thursday to take stock of the progress of kishan credit cards and the problems farmers are facing.

Sayera's complaint came up in the meet following which Sannigrahi has sought an explanation from the particular PNB branch.

Additional district magistrate (development), Arindam Datta, held that banks can't force farmers to keep a part of the loan amount in fixed deposits or other schemes. "The bank can't take back the money sanctioned for the individual farmer," Datta said.

PNB Midnapore circle head [Virendra Kumar](#) Kaushik said: "We will take up the complaints with Manas Pathak, the business facilitator at the bank branch."

CSA sells seeds worth Rs 16 lakh in a day

KANPUR: [Chandra Shekhar Azad University](#) of Agriculture and Technology made a record sale of Rs 16 lakh worth of seeds both on Wednesday and Thursday during the ongoing [Krishi Mela](#) at the varsity's campus.

The university has sold 300 quintals of wheat, 10 quintals of mustard, 60 quintals of chickpea, 50 quintals of tablepea, six quintals of lentil and 5 quintals of vegetable pea (Azad P-3) seeds so

far.

A total of 1788 quintals of seeds worth Rs 95 lakh are up for sale during the four day event, out of which 1555 quintals are those of wheat. Farmers have been coming to the agriculture fair in large numbers to buy high yielding varieties of seeds developed by the CSA scientists. Naushad Khan, media incharge of CSA University informed TOI that the Krishi Mela will continue till October 6.

An interactive session between [CSA scientists](#) and farmers was organised on Thursday in which vice chancellor, Prof PK Sharma participated and responded to the farmers' queries. Scientists told farmers about ways of meeting newer challenges in increasing their produce.

The farmers were also told about the adequate quantity of fertilizers to be used in the fields. A large number of students also turned up at the fair to find out the employment and business in the field of agriculture.



TODAY FARM NEWS

05.10.2012 A.M

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