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THE HINDU

This farmer grows 11 crops on 6 acres



Nidoda Vaijanath says that he plans his farm activities three years in advance.

Nidoda Vaijanath, who follows an integrated farming model, keeps himself updated by reading, consulting scientists

How many crops can you grow on six acres? For this enterprising farmer from Bidar, the answer is 11.

Nidoda Vaijanath of Kamathana village also keeps cows, buffaloes and sheep and also has a mini-poultry farm.

His farm has small patches covered with fig, cashew, ginger, watermelon, lime, mosambi, drumstick, brinjal, coriander, mango and curry leaf, and he makes a good profit from each.

But integrated farming is not the only thing that makes him different. The arts graduate, who also works in the zilla panchayat office, constantly updates his knowledge by reading magazines and books, meeting fellow progressive farmers, and consulting farm scientists.

He plans his farm activities three years in advance. “It is not enough if you plan. We need to micromanage things,” Mr. Vaijanath says.

“I have a clear idea of how much to spend every year and how to increase profits,” he adds. He increases or decreases the acreage for short-term crops, depending on the rates in the market.

He stores the produce in a small godown on the farm, and waits to sell it at a high price after gathering information from multiple markets.

This year, for example, he got a yield of 180 quintals of ginger per acre and sold it for Rs. 10,000 per quintal. The two-acre crop earned him around Rs. 35 lakh.

He spends just under Rs. 1 lakh per acre on cultivation.

“Two words explain his success: personal attention,” says Praveen Jhologikar, assistant professor, College of Horticulture in Bidar. Resource persons from the college routinely visit Mr. Vaijanath’s farm to provide guidance and give solutions.

Mr. Vaijanath visits the field every morning from 6 to 9. Unlike most other farmers, he does not depend on labourers.

“He stands apart from farmers who grow crops such as sugarcane that are water-intensive and do not guarantee remunerative prices,” says Ravi Deshmukh, training coordinator, Krishi Vigyan Kendra.

Cocoa proves most promising intercrop

Nellai farmers are reaping good income



S. Raja Mohamed, Deputy Director of Horticulture, Tirunelveli inspecting a cocoa crop in a farm near Kadayam.

Cocoa (*Theobroma cacao*L) has proved to be the most promising perennial intercrop both in coconut and in banana plantations as the farmers, who have cultivated this crop are reaping good income.

Though cocoa has been cultivated on over 50 hectares in the district for the past few years, the area of cultivation has increased after it became a highly promising intercrop.

Hence, new planting has been done on over 145 hectares at Valliyoor, Kalakkad, Cheranmahadevi, Ambasamudram, Kadayam, Tenkasi, Shencottai, Kadayanallur and Vasudevanallur, all close to the Western Ghats, as intercrop.

Under National Horticulture Mission during the year 2014-15, cocoa has been planted in 145 hectares in the district benefitting more than 100 farmers, thanks to the attractive subsidy of Rs. 12,000 per hectare with a total allocation of Rs. 17.40 lakhs for cocoa in the first year. For the second year maintenance for 50 hectares, the district has received Rs. 2 lakh under NHM, says S. Raja Mohamed, Deputy Director of Horticulture, Tirunelveli.

Around 500 cocoa plants are required to cover one hectare area as intercrop. Farmers are getting an income of Rs. 2 lakh from one hectare of cocoa by selling the cocoa beans at the rate of Rs. 210 per kilo to Cadburys India Limited as agreed upon through buy-back arrangement. A cocoa tree, in about two-and-a-half years to three years, yields about 2 kilo of cocoa beans and hence a farmer gets a return of Rs. 420 per tree every year, he says.

Cocoa grown under shade requires a higher proportion of potassium for better yield. Since coconut and banana are also potassium needy crops, cocoa can be grown as an intercrop in the district where soil is high humus, potash rich, alluvial, absorptive clays or volcanic ash. As this crop ensures attractive subsidy, cocoa cultivation area is gradually increasing.

Subsidies

The subsidies are being given in the form of chemical fertilisers such as urea, di-ammonium-phosphate and potash through the block Primary Agricultural Co-operative Banks concerned besides the water soluble (19:19:19) fertilizers through the block-level horticulture offices for fertigation purposes.

“As of now, about 86 tonnes of urea, 33 tonnes of DAP and 67 tonnes of potash, worth about Rs. 23 lakh, have been distributed for crops such as

cocoa, mango, acidlime, chillies, hybrid vegetables, flowers, through the PACBs to 450 beneficiaries identified under NHM”, Mr. Mohamed says About 11 tonnes of water soluble fertilisers, worth about Rs. 11 lakh, has also been given to the beneficiaries under NHM through the block-level horticulture offices, he added.

2,651 tonnes of imported urea reaches Tirunelveli

To be distributed to farmers for ‘pisanam’ paddy cultivation

The seventh consignment of 2,651 tonnes of urea to be distributed to the farmers for ‘pisanam’ paddy cultivation reached here on Sunday.

The chemical fertilizer, imported from China, reached Tirunelveli Railway Junction via Karaikkal harbour on Sunday afternoon.

To be sold to the farmers through the Primary Agriculture Cooperative Banks, it will be shared among Tirunelveli (1,000 tonnes), Tuticorin (1,300 tonnes) and Kanyakumari (351 tonnes) districts.

“Each bag (50 kg) will be sold at the rate of Rs. 270.50,” said R. Gajendra Pandian, Assistant Director of Agriculture (Quality Control).

Joint Director of Agriculture C. Chandrasekaran and Regional Manager of Tamil Nadu Cooperative Marketing Federation Balakrishnan supervised the unloading of urea here and the forwarding of the same to the PACBs across the district.

A silent revolution in horticulture production

It has crossed 270 million tonnes, says ICAR official

The horticulture production in the country has crossed 270 million tonnes, surpassing the total grain production for the first time, in 2013-14, according to N.K. Krishna Kumar, Deputy Director General, Horticulture, Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR). The current total production of grains stood around 260 million tonnes.

The horticulture production in 2012-13 was 269 million tonnes.

It was an important milestone in a country where the focus was on grain production. This was a silent revolution, achieved by cultivating on 23,694 million hectares, which was just 9 per cent of the total area under cultivation in the country, he said.

Vegetables and fruits constituted about 65 per cent of the total production. The markets across the country were literally flooded with fruits, Dr. Kumar told reporters here.

There was a possibility of doubling the horticulture production in the next five years.

The ICAR planned to increase the production by 450 million tonnes. The target was achievable if the post-harvest loss, which was 20 to 25 per cent, was brought down to about 5 per cent. Besides increasing the area under horticulture, the transformation of modern cultivation techniques could help achieve the target, he noted. Though it was just one or two per cent of the total horticultural production, floriculture too was expanding by 20 to 25 per cent a year.

The rate of growth of floriculture was much more than that of vegetables and fruits. More and more farmers were investing heavily on floriculture due to the high percentage of profit. It was followed by hybrid vegetables and fruits.

The ICAR was working on bringing the entire sub-Himalayan and Northeast regions to take up horticultural crops in a massive way. It was aimed at reducing the import of fruits, almonds, dates and other fruits.

Floriculture too was expanding by 20 to 25 per cent a year

Rainwater harvesting turns college into green campus

EVERY DROP COUNTS



• Eight farm ponds set up in a cascade model collect rainwater and irrigation water draining from demonstration fields

• The total water storage capacity of these ponds is 14,400 cubic metres

• Rainwater collected on a catchment area of 300 acres diverted to the ponds

• Minor millets and high-yielding rice varieties grown on the demo fields

• The ponds support supplement irrigation of rain-fed crops on 25 acres

• Considerable improvement in water table due to the storage system

The Agricultural Engineering College and Research Institute at Kumulur near here has developed a network of eight farm ponds in a cascade model to collect rainwater and irrigation water draining from its paddy demonstration fields.

Previously, the demonstration fields were irrigated through the water pumped from the Pullambadi canal through lift irrigation; one-season crop was raised on the field.

Three pits measuring up to a depth of one metre each have been used to set up system tanks. Now, additionally, five farm ponds each measuring 30m x 30m x 2m have been dug up in a cascade model with a total water storage capacity of 14,400 cubic metres.

“The rainwater collected on a catchment area of 300 acres, including areas outside the college campus, was being diverted to these farm ponds,” said K.Ramaswamy, dean of the college.

All these ponds have filled up once this year and twice last year.

The ponds were also used for fish farming and supplement irrigation of rain-fed crops on 25 acres.

The stored water also recharges groundwater in open wells, he said.

Minor millets such as Cumbu (Co.9), Thenai (Co (T)-7), Samai (Co.4), Kudiraivali (Co(kv)-2), and Maize (Co.6) have been grown in the farm.

“Timely-sowing of seeds have been taken up based on the forecast from the automatic weather station set up in the farm,” he said.

About 50 acres of high-yielding rice varieties (ADT-49, BPT-5204, W-Ponni, and CR1009) were also grown in the fields.

Besides, efforts were also made to create a large irrigation tank of 30 acres in area with sluice arrangements to store 0.15 cubic metre of water.

Every effort has been made to channelize the excess rainwater to the collecting area. While seed production and rice productivity has improved, two crops would be raised in an additional area of 20 acres due to good ground water availability in the existing six open wells, the dean said.

Auction of turmeric fetches Rs. 20 lakh

The weekly auction of turmeric held at the Agricultural Farm Produce Cooperative Marketing Society at Attur Pudupettai registered a sales turnover of Rs. 20 lakh on Saturday. More than 700 bags of turmeric was sold on a single day.

While a quintal of *virali manjal* fetched a price ranging between Rs. 4,039 and 7,499; the *urundu manjal* fetched a price between Rs. 4,089 and Rs. 6,719. *Panangali manjal* got a price ranging between Rs. 4,389 and Rs. 14,039, according to marketing committee sources

‘Govt. will take back forest land if used for non-agriculture purpose’

Deputy Commissioner N. Jayaram has warned that the government would take back the forest land from the beneficiaries if the latter misused it for non-agriculture purposes.

He was distributing the title deeds to the beneficiaries belonging to the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes who have no land of their own and were fully dependent on forest land to eke out a living every day, here on Monday.

Order

He added that the government had issued an order to distribute forest lands which were being tilled by the SCs/STs families so that they could improve their economic conditions.

He said the names of the beneficiaries would be inserted in the pahani patra within three days.

First stage

In the first stage, title deeds were distributed to 758 beneficiaries. All other beneficiaries will also get it within next 15 days, said Vijay Kumar Honakeri, Assistant Commissioner, Bailhongal.

According to Deputy Conservator of Forest Ambadi Madhav, the government had decided to distribute lands to all those SC/ST families who had been tilling forest lands for living with a cut-off date of November 30, 2005.

- *758 beneficiaries get title deeds to land in the first stage on Monday*
- *Other beneficiaries will get the deeds within the next 15 days*

Agro chemical firm Adama to invest more in India

Israeli agro-chemical company Adama, whose facilities in India include a formulation plant at Dahej in Gujarat and a global R&D centre in Hyderabad, is looking to scale up investments in the country.

Senior executives led by Adama Agricultural Solutions Ltd president and CEO Chen Lichtenstein, who spoke to presspersons here on Monday,

said over next five years fresh investments could total around \$50 million. Since 2008, the company has invested \$50 million in India.

“We want to grow,” Mr. Lichtenstein declared, while pointing to the huge potential that exists in the context of pesticide usage in India being one of the lowest in the world. Adama India Pvt Ltd (formerly Makhteshim-Agan India) was keen on emerging out of the single digit share it has in the \$2 billion agro chemical market in India, he added.

The investments, Adama India Pvt Ltd president and CEO Yossi Goldshmidt said, would be in line with the need and focussed on Dahej, where enough land was available for expansion.

The R&D facility at Hyderabad, the second such centre of Adama outside Israel, he said, supported activities not only for India but also globally. The headcount at the facility is to be doubled from 35, he said, adding how Hyderabad offered a pool of scientists by virtue of being a pharmaceutical hub.

Agricultural exhibition

The Indian Institute of Spices Research (IISR) is organising a three-day agricultural exhibition at Edamaram Square on P.T. Usha Road in the city in connection with the 21st plantation crop symposium being held at the Gateway Hotel here from December 10 to 12.

Renowned agricultural scientist M.S. Swaminathan will inaugurate the event at 9.30 a.m. on December 10, said a press release issued here by the organisers.

KMF plans Rs. 100-cr. mega dairy in Dharwad district

The Karnataka Milk Federation (KMF) has come up with some new projects to exploit the potential of north Karnataka in dairy farming and to boost milk production. Addressing presspersons here on Monday, KMF president P. Nagaraju said that the federation would set up a mega dairy in Dharwad district and a dairy unit had also been planned in Ramadurg of Belagavi district.

Mr. Nagaraju said that the mega dairy would help produce all milk products in the region itself and would require an estimated investment of Rs. 100 crore. He said that Bengaluru had such a plant and milk products produced there were being sent to other districts. It would also help ensure that the customers got fresh milk products, he said.

Mr. Nagaraju said that the KMF had planned a 10,000-litre ice cream unit under the Ballari Milk Federation to introduce ice cream products in the domestic market. Mr. Nagaraju said that soon a 250-room hostel would be constructed in north Karnataka for the benefit of KMF employees' wards.

Considering the increasing demand for buffalo milk in Bengaluru and south Karnataka, the KMF had planned to increase the procurement of buffalo milk from KMF units in north Karnataka region from 1.4 lakh litre to a minimum of 12 lakh litres. He pointed out that Bengaluru alone required 10,000 litre curd made from buffalo milk and the KMF had initiated steps to meet the demand.

Considering the fact that maize had become a major crop in the north Karnataka region, the KMF had decided to implement a programme to use maize for fodder production and talks were under way with the Chief Minister for getting approval for purchasing maize directly from farmers, he said.

To a query, Mr. Nagaraju said the federation would give Rs. 2.5 lakh as grant for setting up cooperative milk societies and it had plans to facilitate setting up of 50 to 100 cooperative milk societies in every taluk of north Karnataka.

He said that the federation had sanctioned a calf nurturing centre to Shahapur in Yadgir district under which calves purchase from cattle market were nurtured and sold back to the farmers at subsidised rates. He said that Rs. 4 crore had been earmarked for the project and the plan was to have similar centres in every district in the future.

- *Plant capable of producing all milk products*
- *KMF to increase buffalo milk procurement in NK*

Number of winged visitors on the decline in Okhla



(Clock-wise) Streaked weaver, common teal, northern pintail, and bar-headed goose and graylag geese spotted at the Okhla Bird Sanctuary in Delhi.

The Okhla Bird Sanctuary has recorded a decline in the bird population from earlier this year, say environmentalists. They have noted that the fall could be attributed to the ill-effects of global climatic change which is having an adverse impact on migration with lesser species diversity and population being sighted in Delhi/NCR.

Ecologist T. K. Roy explains: “The overall disturbance in wetland habitat and high public and vehicular thoroughfare are other reasons.”

The birds at the Okhla Sanctuary were sighted, numbered and recorded this past weekend under a programme organised by the Delhi Bird Community to popularise birding and bird conservation awareness.

“A birding team participated in this popular event at Okhla Bird Sanctuary on December 6 and recorded an overall total 80 species of both water birds and terrestrial birds,” he added.

The final report noted that out of the 80 bird species, 38 species of water birds (13 species of resident water birds and 25 species of winter migratory birds). included three threatened species and a few of the wader species. Forty-two species of terrestrial birds (38 species of resident birds and four species of Indian migratory bird species) were also found.

Bird lovers claimed it is difficult to watch flocks of winter migratory birds easily as most of the species stay in the middle part of the sanctuary/islands due to hyacinth cleaning work except smaller flocks of a few species like common teal, northern shoveler, common pochard, common coot, gadwal and brown-headed gulls in the eastern side during day time.

“Decreasing winter migratory water bird species could be attributed to overall disturbance in wetland habitat due to late cleaning of water hyacinth in the eastern side, heavy public and vehicular thoroughfare and large scale cattle/buffalo grazing,” said Mr Roy. Meanwhile the decrease in the terrestrial bird species is being attributed to over lopping tree canopy on the eastern side, cleaning of ground habitat and increased human activity.

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Chennai - INDIA

Today's Weather

Tomorrow's Forecast

Tuesday, Dec 9 Wednesday, Dec 10

Clear

Max 28°
Min 21°

Max 28°
Min 22°

Rain: 0

Sunrise: 06:17

Humidity: 78

Sunset: 05:41

Wind: normal

Barometer: 1014

Extended Forecast for a week

Thursday
Dec 11



27° | 23°

Rainy

Friday
Dec 12



29° | 22°

Cloudy

Saturday
Dec 13



28° | 22°

Cloudy

Sunday
Dec 14



28° | 26°

Sunny

Monday
Dec 15

28° | 26°

Sunny

7 daily habits that can change your life

Your daily habits could actually be detrimental for you in the long run. And by working on these small habits, you could make a big difference to your well-being. Here's what you should start doing...

1. While brushing twice a day is a must, don't think flossing is any less important. Flossing effectively removes bad bacteria from your mouth and also removes plaque build-up that is present in those areas of your teeth that a toothbrush can't reach. When plaque isn't removed, it gnaws away the bone that ensures that your tooth stays in place.

2. If you are one of those who believe in eating three big meals a day, you could be doing yourself more harm than good. Break your meals up into several small meals so that you're eating every 2-3 hours and won't go hungry. Eating three large meals means that you end up eating more at each meal — and pile on those dreaded pounds. Eating whenever you're hungry will reduce the chances of binge eating.

3. Are you aware of how many steps you take in a day? Experts reckon you need to take at least 10,000. While keeping a count is not possible, what you can do is to wear a pedometer, which will do the job for you. It will also make you aware of how much more you need to walk in a day.

4. Invest in a good pair of gym/ workout clothes. This will act as an incentive to exercise.

5. Don't be strict with yourself all the time; it's alright to cut yourself some slack at times. Accept your limitations and embrace your plus points. The happier you feel about yourself, the more it will reflect in your life. Focus on the good things and let go of things that aren't in your control. This acceptance will actually help you feel better overall.

6. Don't forget to include a blood test to check your vitamin D blood levels when you go for an annual checkup. Thousands suffer from a deficiency of this important vitamin, which can cause tiredness and lethargy among other things. So get yourself tested.

7. Switch off the television during mealtimes — being distracted when you're eating means you end up eating more than is required. Instead, put on some soft music in the background. Avoid fast music as experts say that listening to fast music while eating makes you eat more than usual.

What's your food IQ?

Consider yourself a know-it-all on what one needs to eat to stay in shape? This 7 question challenge is for you.

What's healthier? Sushi or sandwich?

Answer: SANDWICH

Sushi might seem healthier than a sandwich but in reality, it's often little more than processed carbs with a side of salt. And certainly nowhere near the 140 g fish needed by the body per week. Sushi can also be massively high in salt. Plus, you are going to use soy sauce on the side for flavouring. A tablespoon of it has about 2.3 g of salt. That's 38 per cent of the maximum daily quota.

Bina Chedda, a registered clinical dietician at Cumballa Hill Hospital, says, "A sandwich gives greater satiety, whereas we eat 6-8 pieces of sushi without thinking."

If you are trying to lose weight, what should you pick - carrot cake or chocolate brownie?

Answer: NEITHER

A slice of carrot cake sounds healthier, but it's often one of the worst choices. A slice contains 560 calories - 28 per cent of your daily requirement. It also has around half the daily recommended intake of fat and sugar. On the other hand, a chocolate brownie accounts for 370 calories.

Which one comes packed with more fat - roast chicken or roast pork?

Answer: ROAST CHICKEN

Roast chicken is often promoted as the healthier choice for a Sunday brunch, but you are in for a shocker. A 100 g of roast chicken (a mix of light and dark meat) has about 7.5 g fat, while the same amount of roast pork leg has just 5.5 g of fat. The bright side? Poultry typically has a better iron quotient than pork. "In fact, studies have shown that mutton is the healthier meat in this regard," says Chedda.

You are on a veggie detox. What will you pick - pesto or salsa?

Answer: SALSA

Pesto, a sauce originating in Northern Italy, that's all the rage here, is perfect for whipping up a meal with pasta and veggies. But if you are vegetarian, it may need to be off limits. Pesto often contains either Parmesan (Parmigiano Reggiano) or Grana Padana, both of which are made with animal rennet. Other things vegetarians should watch out for are fish sauce in ready meals or cooking sauces and pork or beef gelatine in sweets and desserts like mousses.

What has more calories - honey or sugar?

Answer: HONEY

Honey has a healthy image but with 75% sugar, 25% water and tiny amounts of vitamins and minerals, it's no better than sugar and is just as bad for our teeth. Surprisingly, it's even worse for waistlines. A teaspoon of honey contains 25 calories, while a teaspoon of sugar has 16 calories. So if you must, opt for the organic, dark-coloured varieties which usually mean more antioxidants like flavonoids.

What has more saturated fat - ice cream or Greek yoghurt?

Answer: GREEK YOGHURT

A dollop of Greek yoghurt on fruit might seem like a healthy choice since it is packed with protein and bone-building calcium. But when it comes to saturated fat, you might be better off with an ice cream cup. About three tablespoons of Greek yoghurt could contain as much as 8.5 g saturates. That's 43% of the recommended daily maximum of 20 g. In contrast, two scoops of a vanilla ice cream contains about 2.5 g saturates.

You want to feel light and airy. What will you order for takeaway - latte or cappuccino?

Answer: CAPPUCCINO

A cappuccino is made with 1/3 espresso, 1/3 steamed milk and 1/3 foamed milk. This makes the total milk content lower than a latte, which is essentially espresso and steamed milk. Avoid whipped cream and any flavouring (vanilla, caramel, etc) to cut down on saturated fat and sugar. A no-fat milk cappuccino of about 0.3 litre has 40 calories. Compare that with a large, non-fat latte that packs in 100 calories.

Why breakfast is important

How many times have you heard the adage, 'Eat breakfast like a king, lunch like a prince and dinner like a beggar'? Well, don't dismiss it. This age-old wisdom holds true even today, say nutritionists, dieticians and obesity consultants.

Break your fast

Consulting nutritionist and clinical dietitian Pooja Makhija says, "The most important meal of the day, undoubtedly, is breakfast. The first food intake after a minimum gap of seven-eight hours, it acts as a fuel to jump-start the body."

Pooja says a person's breakfast habit decides if his/her body goes into burning (high BMR) or storing (low BMR, high fat-storing) mode.

Nutritionist Deepshikha Agarwal says, "You break your night-long fast with this meal. It provides 25% of the total energy and nutrients required by the body. It will boost your energy levels and concentration."

Missing it is dangerous

No breakfast means a sluggish start to the day. It also makes a person eat larger meals in the course of the day, says Pooja.

"Since activity level, for most people, is maximum in the day, whatever you eat for breakfast is burnt well. So, it can be the biggest meal of the day. In fact, it is the best time for a cheat-meal," she says.

The best breakfast

Says Deepshikha, "The first meal of the day should be a perfect combination of carbohydrates, protein and fibre." An ideal breakfast must include all the "five pillars of nutrition", adds Pooja.

Carbohydrates: Poha/upma/bread/idli/dosa/paratha/wheatflakes.

Proteins: Sprouts/milk/curd/egg white/sausage.

Fat: All foods contain inherent or invisible fat.

Vitamins and minerals: Though required in very little quantities, these two are extremely important for a balanced breakfast. Fruits and vegetables are their best sources.

Try this

Her breakfast, says Pooja, includes a glass of vegetable juice, three-four egg whites and a slice of bread. "This ensures a complete, nourishing, balanced, supercharging and roaring start."

Other options for a good breakfast:

Cornflakes/wheatflakes/muesli + milk + fruit

Upma/poha with vegetables and sprouts

Idli/dosa + sambhar with vegetables

Dal paratha + vegetable raita

Dal chilla with vegetables + bread/roti

Vegetable sandwich + milkshake

Egg/sausage + bread + vegetables

Beware

Never start your day with caffeine. Eat something (fruit/biscuit/plain milk) first and about 20 minutes later, have tea or coffee.

Citrus juices rich in antioxidants

Orange juice and juices from other citrus fruits could be much healthier than previously thought as researchers found that these are ten times richer in antioxidant content than what current methods estimate. High content of antioxidants in one's diet help reduce harmful free radicals in our body.

"The antioxidant activity is, on average, ten times higher than that which everyone thought up until now," said Jose Angel Rufian Henares, professor at the University of Granada in Spain.

The new technique to measure antioxidant content called 'global antioxidant response' (GAR) shows that this property has been undervalued in other food as well.

The results suggest that tables on the antioxidant capacities of food products that dieticians and health authorities use must be revised.

The method includes assessments of various physical and chemical parameters, such as colour, fluorescence and the relationship between the concentrations analysed and compounds indicators such as furfural.

Upon applying the technique to commercial and natural orange, mandarin, lemon and grapefruit juices, it has been proved that their values greatly increase.

With the help of this method, scientists have also created a mathematical model in order to classify juices according to their natural and storage conditions, which ensures that the correct raw materials and sterilisation and pasteurisation processes are used.

The findings appeared in the journal *Food Chemistry*.

How to use ginger for better health

It is a well known fact that a majority of Indians prefer home remedies to OTC drugs. The use of ginger is numero uno when it comes to curing common cold and cough.

But there are other reasons why ginger is a remedial herb. Dr. Jaishree Bhattacharjee, Ayurvedic consultant with *Satvikshop.com* shares some top tips and methods to use ginger for various ailments. Read on to discover how you can use ginger for better health.

Why is ginger important?

Dr. Jaishree Bhattacharjee explains the importance of ginger, "Ginger is very popularly used in Ayurveda for its benefits in digestion and respiratory disorders. It is a wonderful carminative, ant flatulent, stimulant and expectorant." She adds, "Ginger has many useful minerals like calcium, phosphorus, iron, magnesium, copper, zinc and few others."

Ginger as an appetizer?

Our specialist also makes a unique point about the benefits ginger, "When used before meals, ginger improves appetite by igniting jatharagni (digestive fire) due to its hot potency. It also enhances digestion due to its pungent taste and alleviates ama (toxins of indigestion) from the body."

Besides cold, ginger is useful for...

"Fresh juice of ginger is used to cure symptoms of cough and cold. It helps stop watery discharge from nose and help cure headache and fever associated with common cold if taken in tea or as decoction with basil and honey," Dr. Jaishree continues to list hidden benefits of ginger.

How is ginger beneficial for travellers?

"Ginger regulates digestive enzymes and improves assimilation and transportation of nutrients to body tissues. When kept in mouth before travelling it helps combat motion sickness."

Did you know, ginger is good for joint pain?

The doctor let's you in on a secret, "Dried ginger or sounth has analgesic and anti inflammatory properties which is used therapeutically to alleviate joint pain and inflammation in arthritis. Other than these situations, ginger is an excellent spice that can be used daily."

Different ways of using ginger for home remedies

We have mentioned the health benefits of ginger, now check out different ways to use it.

"One can eat thin slices of ginger in a salt and limejuice mixture before and after meals to improve appetite and digestion."

This can be the perfect remedy for fussy children. And adults too: Ginger could be a replacement for wine as an appetizer.

"It can be used in cooking as a fresh spice to enhance the taste."

Cooking enthusiasts will agree with this point; ginger is used extensively in Indian curries.

"Therapeutically ginger juice is mixed with basil leaves juice and honey to cure cough and cold."

Tulsi, ginger and honey - are three most beneficial ingredients and fighters for the common cold.

"Used as dried powder as analgesic and anti inflammatory agent for joint pains."

If you can't locate an ayurvedic store, you dry the ginger yourself and grind it.

"Ginger juice application is said to be good for hypo pigmented patches on your skin."

Bet you didn't know this skin care property of ginger.

"It can be used in scrubs and baths for fresh rejuvenating aroma."

Not sure if ginger would give you a refreshing fragrance.

A point to note: we have mentioned how ginger can be used for several ailments, but it would be wise to consult a doctor before for an intensive treatment. Ginger along with exercises, medication and healthy diet can reduce joint pain. These home remedies can complement your medical treatment but it should not be the only treatment.

Recipe: Steamed gourd with prawns

There are certain vegetables we feel are best when kept at a distance from the cooking pan. Green vegetables for instance cannot boast of a fan-following, especially among kids who are hard to please.

The name of one such not-so-palate-friendly vegetable is gourd you might remember your mother conspiring to feed you with. Here comes the good news- mothers can now stop worrying about how to make their fussy kids eat this nutrient-rich vegetable.

Chef Shipra Khanna (winner, Masterchef India season 2) shares with us a unique recipe of steamed round gourd with spaghetti and mint-coriander dip that will no longer have the 'little' ones develop that grimace upon chancing this vegetable .

Ingredients:

6 -7 nos- Tinda (diced)

6 - 7 cloves Garlic (with peel intact)

1 large Onion

5 - 6 pcs: Prawns (finely chopped)

½ cup: Fresh coriander (finely chopped)

½ cup: Fresh mint (finely chopped)

2 - 3 nos.: Green chillies

½ tsp: Cornflour

2 tbsp: White wine

½ cup: Fresh cream

30 gm: Processed cheese

Salt- to taste

200 gm: Spaghetti

For Cold soup

12 pcs. Tinda (6 diced, 6 scooped out)

1 nos. Tomato (blanched and deseeded)

1 - 2 cloves Garlic

½ tsp Worcestershire sauce

½ tsp Tabasco sauce

For garnish

½ tsp Paprika flakes

1 tbsp Lime juice

½ cup Fresh mint (finely chopped)

Method:

1. Heat water in a steamer and steam the tindas for 5 to 7 minutes. Remove and drain.

2. Burn the garlic cloves and onion directly on the gas flame till peel burns. Chop finely.
3. In a large bowl, combine the steamed gourd with prawns, chopped onion, garlic, salt and pepper.
4. Combine the coriander, mint and chillies in a blender and blend to a fine smooth paste.
5. Mix 2 tbsp of coriander-mint dip into the prawn-gourd mixture, mix in the cornflour. Grease hands and shape the prawn - tinda mixture into small balls. Steam in a hot steamer for about 5 minutes.
6. In a frying pan, combine the wine, cream, salt, pepper and cheese and heat till mixture blends and thickens to a sauce. Mix 1 tbsp of coriander-mint paste, remove from flame and keep aside.
7. Boil water with salt in a large saucepan and blanch spaghetti till half done. Remove and transfer spaghetti to the steamer and steam till done, then toss in 1 tbsp of coriander-mint paste and keep aside.
8. For the cold soup, steam diced and scooped out tindas in the steamer till cooked.
9. Puree the steamed diced tindas, remove from blender and keep aside.
10. Deseed the blanched tomatoes, combine with garlic and blend to a puree. Combine with the pureed tindas and strain through a muslin cloth. Mix in worcestershire sauce, tabasco sauce and salt and refrigerate to chill.
11. To serve, shape spaghetti into coils and place a prawn ball on each. Drizzle over with coriander-mint sauce and sprinkle over with paprika.

Take lemon juice in a saucer and chopped coriander in another. Dip a martini glass rim in the lemon juice and press into the coriander to rim it. Pour in chilled soup and serve with hot spaghetti and prawns immediately.

Well, not every healthy food is boring!

Multi-grain chilla recipe

Here's the recipe which is an instant, crispy and perfect recipe to accompany your tea or for a quick breakfast on a lazy weekend morning:

Ingredients:

Half measure wheat flour
Half measure besan
1/4th measure bajra flour
1/4th measure rice flour
Water
Carom seeds 1 teaspoon
1 medium sized onion, grated
1/4th teaspoon turmeric
1/2nd teaspoon red-chilli powder
Salt to taste
Almond or olive oil to cook

Recipe:

- Mix all the flours in the above mentioned proportion.
- Add turmeric powder, red chilli powder, carom seeds, grated onion and salt.
- Now mix all this to prepare a batter in thick consistency.
- Heat the pan, put 1 teaspoon oil, now pour 2 tablespoon of the batter and spread it on the pan till a thin layer is formed. Now pour some oil on this pancake and turn it to other side.
- Remove it from pan once it is crispy and appears brown in colour.
- Follow this method for making more chillas.
- Serve this chilla hot with mint-coriander chutney or tomato ketchup

Your rich and hearty winter food guide

With winters setting in across the country, Nashikites too are prepping up with woollens and changes to their diet. We spoke to a few people from the city and asked what are the things that they are adding to their food to stay warm and healthy this year.

During winters, our body craves for rich food that provides warmth and nourishment. Speaking about such beneficial food items, Dr Subhash Deore said, "Any vegetable whose edible part grows beneath the ground like carrot, potato, onions, garlic, radish, yams, sweet potatoes, beet root, groundnuts, ginger etc usually have a warming tendency and are good for consumption during winters. Certain dry fruits, nuts and seeds also have similar properties."

During winters there is a marked increase in appetite when the body yearns for richer food items. Many Nashik households make various winter delicacies like gond ke ladoo, ponkh, besan ladoo. Samsha Panjwani, a homemaker said, "There are many healthy food items that my children like and I am planning to make them all for the winter season."

Sarson ka saag coupled with makke di roti, white butter and lassi (yoghurt smoothie) from Punjab, is a favourite across India. Manju Narang a Nashikite from Punjab said, "This combination is highly nutritious as mustard leaves have a lot of iron and protein and my whole family enjoys it a lot during winters." Panjiri is another traditional snack made from wheat flour which is eaten extensively during the winter months.

Similarly Gujarati cuisine too has special dishes for the winter months. Sadhana Patel, a homemaker, said, "During winters, Gujaratis prepare undhiyu, a spicy vegetable dish comprising of peas, beans, and eggplants."

Black sesame seeds or black til is another thing that can be consumed during winters. This rich in iron seed can be consumed in various forms including til ladoos and til chikkis. Bajre ki roti served with ghee and jaggery or baingan bharta and uda dki dal she is another classic winter combination.

Things that one can drink to combat the cold include chicken soup, vegetable soup, ginger tea. Kashmiri kahwa and hot chocolate. "A mug of brimming hot cocoa just sounds wonderful to fight the chill," said Vaibhav Sharma, a computer engineering student.

With a gain in appetite and sumptuous fattening food at our disposal, it is very easy to gain weight during winters. Hence one needs to be careful to consume whole grains and condensed calories such as upma or dalia, plenty of low-sodium soups and lean protein. Sunita Savkar from the city said, "We should choose something like gur-chikki, which has enough fat to give a feeling of fullness and is healthy too."

Gajar or carrot halwa is one of the most important and widely available desserts of the winter months. While carrots are healthy, the ghee in the halwa boosts physical health and provides warmth to the body. The ingredients required for making this very simple dish are:

- Carrots - 1/2 kgs or 5 approx
- Sugar - 1 cup (200 gms)
- Whole Milk - 1+1/2 cup (300 ml)
- Ghee (clarified butter) - 6 tbsp
- Cashew nuts - 10
- Almonds - 7 (for garnishing)
- Cardamom powder - 1/2 tsp

Instructions:

- Wash, peel and grate the carrots.
- Soak the almonds in warm water for 15 - 20 minutes and then peel off the skin and chop finely.
- Finely chop the cashew nuts.
- Heat a heavy bottomed pan and add three tbsp of ghee. When it becomes warm, add the chopped cashew nuts and roast over low flame till it turns golden brown and remove them from the pan.
- To the same pan add the grated carrots.
- Simmer the flame and saute for 15-20 minutes.
- By now the carrot should be cooked and the raw smell should have gone.
- Add milk and increase the flame to medium.
- Allow the milk and carrots to cook together till the mixture become semi-dry.
- Keep mixing to avoid the carrots from sticking to the pan.
- In 15-20 minutes add the sugar and mix well. Following this the mixture will again get liquefied.
- Continue cooking till mixture becomes thick.
- The sugar would caramelize making the mixture sticky.
- When the halwa becomes dry, add the remaining 3 tbsp ghee, cardamom powder, roasted cashew nuts and mix well.
- Cook for another five minutes while continuously mixing the ingredients.
- Garnish with almonds and serve hot or cold.

Organic recipes for diabetics

Diabetics needn't restrict themselves to boring soups and fat-free snacks. Try these simple recipes with unconventional grains that pack in flavour and nutrition.

Organic food is the buzz word and every nutritionist, model, health enthusiast is swearing by their daily dose of quinoa. Organic or not, grains such as polenta, couscous, barley and flax seeds suddenly find themselves in the limelight, outshining the good old rajma and chana. We

get Chef Prakash Lopes, from Citrus at The Leela, to teach us healthy and delicious variations using these grains.

Barley and vegetable broth

Ingredients

200 ml Barley (soaked overnight)

5 ml Olive oil

15 gm Carrots (chopped)

15 gm Onions (chopped)

5 gm Fresh herbs of your choice

200 gm Vegetable stock

1 Garlic (chopped)

Salt and pepper to taste

Method

- Boil the soaked barley grains in hot water till they soften and keep aside.
- Boil all the vegetables and cook them until they are soft.
- Combine the boiled barley with the vegetable stock and bring the it to a boil.
- Let it simmer it for a few more minutes and season with salt and pepper.
- Garnish with chopped herbs and serve hot.

Chef's tip for non-diabetics: Add a dash of balsamic reduction to the soup. Alternatively, you can also add a few drops of Tabasco sauce to spice up this preparation. If you want to indulge, substitute olive oil with butter.

Cous cous salad

Ingredients

100 gm Couscous

50 gm Onion (finely chopped)

25 gm Yellow bell pepper (finely chopped)

25 gm Red bell pepper (finely chopped)

50 gm Tomato (deseeded and finely chopped)

20 gm Parsley (finely chopped)

25 ml Lemon juice

30 ml Olive oil

Salt and pepper to taste

Method

- Soak couscous in hot water and cover it with cling wrap.
- Keep it soaked until it softens. This should take about 10 minutes. Strain and let it cool.
- In a bowl, add all the chopped vegetables and tip in the cooked couscous once it cools.
- Season it with salt and pepper, followed by lemon juice and olive oil.
- Toss it gently with a spoon and serve cold.

Chef's tip for non-diabetics: You can toss in some boiled potatoes or red kidney beans to make it wholesome. You can also add a few pieces of fruit for a sweet tinge.

Vegetable and chicken stew with polenta

Ingredients

600 gm Polenta

600 ml Milk

100 ml Olive oil

20 gm Onions (chopped)

20 gm Carrots (chopped)

20 gm Garlic (chopped)

1 kg Chicken (chopped)

1 tsp Peppercorns

5 gm Sage leaves

1 tbsp Rosemary

2 Bay leaves

1 kg Tomatoes (chopped)

1 tsp Nutmeg powder

Salt and pepper to taste

Method

- Heat a litre of water and add the polenta to it.
- Cook this for five to six minutes, stirring continuously.
- The polenta might bubble excessively, so be careful. Once it is cooked, let it cool in an open vessel.

- In another pan, saute the garlic and add the vegetables and meat.
- Cook this mixture until the chicken is done.
- Add sage leaves, rosemary, bay leaves, peppercorns, tomatoes and nutmeg powder to this mix.
- Let the mixture simmer for six to seven minutes. You can add some vegetable stock to avoid browning.
- Continue to cook mixture for about 40 minutes.
- Season with salt and pepper and serve it with polenta.

Chef's tip for non-diabetics: Butter, cream and cheese can be added to the polenta while cooking. This will give it a creamy texture, rich flavour and a smoother bite...

Quinoa salad

Ingredients

- ½ cup Quinoa (cooked)
- ¼ cup Yellow bell pepper (chopped)
- ¼ cup Red bell pepper (chopped)
- 4 tbsp Basil and thyme (finely chopped)
- 1 tbsp Olive oil
- 2 tbsp Fresh lemon juice
- Salt and pepper to taste

Method

- In a salad bowl, mix all the vegetables with quinoa and herbs
- Drizzle it with olive oil and lemon juice. » Season with salt and pepper and serve cold.

Chef's tip for non-diabetics: You can drizzle the salad with some balsamic reduction for a more enriched, gourmet flavour.

Recipe: Sausage pastry roll

Use sausages high in lean meat to keep the fat down in this pastry.

Preparation time: 30 mins

Cooking time: 1 hr 15 mins.

Serves: 6

Ingredients :

Leek 1 medium, halved and sliced
Carrot 1 medium, peeled and diced
Sunflower oil 1 tsp
Eating apple 1, peeled, cored and diced
Dried mixed herbs a good pinch
High meat-content sausages 400g, skinned
Fresh white breadcrumbs 50g
Puff pastry 250g
Poppy seeds ¼ tsp
Salt to taste

Method:

Fry the leek and carrot oil until softened. Add the apple and cook for 2 minutes. Tip into a bowl, add the dried herbs, season and cool. Season to taste.

Heat the oven to 200C/fan 180C/gas 6. mix the sausage and breadcrumbs with the veg. Roll out the pastry to a 35*30cm rectangle and put on a baking tray lined with baking parchment.

Form the meat mixture into a long sausage shape and put in the centre of the pastry, leaving 2cm at each end. Cut 1.5cm strips away from the sausage meat along the length of the pastry. Fold in the ends and then alternate strips of the pastry up and over the sausage meat, crossing over each other neatly. Trim the excess pastry and sprinkle with poppy seeds. Bake for 35 minutes until crisp and golden.

[Recipe: Strawberry Tart](#)

Mazgaon-based Aroma Garden's owner Shahbaz Nawab tells you how to make this dessert at home

Luscious strawberries find favour with people who love to gorge on them with or without cream. However, there's a lot more that you can do with this sinful red fruit that can be a primary ingredient in one of your desserts. We pick the strawberry tart for starters.

Ingredients:

Pastry

200g Plain flour

100 g Butter

1 Egg

80 g Sugar

1 Pinch of salt

Filling

400 g Strawberries

350 ml Milk

4 Egg yolks

75 g Sugar

30 g Plain flour

Vanilla essence (a few drops)

How to make a strawberry tart:

Boil the milk. Mix the egg yolks and sugar well. Add the flour and mix. Add the milk gradually while mixing. Pour the mixture into a saucepan and heat till it boils. Simmer for 3 minutes while stirring. Add a few drops of vanilla essence, let it cool, cover it and then keep it inside the fridge. Heat the pastry in a pie tin for 15 minutes (150-180 °C), then let it cool. Pour the custard filling over the pastry and place the strawberries on the custard.

The strawberry tart is ready to serve.

Recipe: Prawns with asparagus and caponata

Pan seared prawns with sauteed asparagus and vegetable caponata

Recipe Ingredients: For Prawns To taste Salt 12 ml Olive oil A few sprigs Dill leaves A dash Lemon juice 2 nos. Prawns 20ml white wine
For Caponata 20 gm Aubergines 20 gm Green Zucchini 5 basil leaves 5 gm Garlic 15 gm Onion 20 ml White wine 20 ml Tomato puree Dash of Balsamic vinegar
For Asparagus 30g Butter A few sprigs Dill leaves 60 gm Asparagus Recipe

Method:

1. Cut aubergine, zucchini, tomatoes and onions into even dices . Finely chop the garlic and some of the onion. Finely chop dill leaves and cut basil leaves into thin shreds. Dice the olives and set aside.
2. Cut asparagus into 4 inch batons. Heat the butter till it melts and sautee the asparagus in butter.
3. Caponata: In a frying pan heat olive oil, add aubergine and zucchini and saute for a few seconds. Toss in chopped garlic, diced onion, wine and salt and reduce. Add balsamic vinegar.

4. Mix salt lemon juice, dill and olive oil and marinate the prawns.
5. Heat a pan, drizzle with olive oil and sear prawns in the pan and flambe with wine.
6. Arrange the caponata in a mound. Arrange the asparagus on top of the caponata and top with the prawns. Drizzle sauce, olive oil and balsamic reduction in a neat design and finish garnish using dill leaves and diced olives.

THE HINDU BusinessLine

Raw cotton blooms on seed crushers' demand

Rajkot, December 8:

Kapas or raw cotton prices increased on the back of good demand from cottonseed crushers.

Cotton improved marginally on expectation of demand from domestic mills.

Traders expect some demand from domestic yarn mills in the coming days.

Gujarat Sankar-6 cotton was up Rs. 100-200 at Rs.33,000 to Rs. 33,200 for a candy of 356 kg.

About 45,000 bales (of 170 kg) arrived in Gujarat and 2 lakh bales arrived across the country.

Kapas gained Rs. 10 to Rs. 800-835 for a *maund* of 20 kg. Gin delivery *kapas* stood at Rs. 825-840.

'Speculative money distorting agri futures markets'

Kochi, December 8:

Agricultural futures market has seen distortion of price discovery due to large scale speculative finance getting invested in such instruments globally.

According to CJ George, Managing Director, Geojit BNP Paribas, this is hurting farmers and other stakeholders through creation of an artificial demand and supply.

He was speaking at a technical session on the platinum jubilee conference of the Association of Planters of Kerala (APK) here.

While this is a fact, he said there is no point in India or any single country taking an isolated restrictive measure against finance, unless globally all regulators come out with common norms and stop speculative finance from getting invested in agri-futures.

The previous decade had seen huge such investments that resulted in increase in food prices leading to even riots for food in at least in 30 countries and was possibly referred as the reason for the final removal of governments in Tunisia and Egypt, he said.

George was also of the view that Indian commodity boards have outlived their utility as these boards failed to play any meaningful role in the sector. Therefore, the Government should wind up all such boards like those for spices, tea, rubber and silk or completely change the size, shape and roles of these organisations in the interest of stakeholders.

Gilbert D'souza, the outgoing Chairman of APK, emphasised the need for 'Grow in India' campaign for plantation commodities to strengthen the agriculture sector for an equitable growth. Such a novel approach should go along with 'Make in India' campaign where the manufacturing sector and the agriculture sector would complement each other and could usher a new era for inclusive growth and prosperity.

Cardamom gains flavour on domestic demand

Kochi, December 8:

Cardamom gained flavour last week on strong domestic demand at the auctions. However, arrivals were lower than previous week.

Traders said that major growers have resorted to a regulated release in view of the declining trend in prices. Still, the market was buoyant last week as all upcountry buyers, mainly those from Delhi, covered aggressively, Ranganathan, a dealer in Bodinayakannur told *BusinessLine*.

He attributed the "aggressive buying" to dealers' apprehension of a likely shortage in supply from other origins. They are anticipating a squeeze in supply from Guatemala, where the crop could be small this year, he said.

At the Sunday auction held by the Kerala Cardamom Processing and Marketing Company arrivals reduced to 113.4 tonnes as against 124.9 tonnes the previous Sunday and the entire quantity was sold out.

The maximum price was at Rs. 1,019 a kg. The auction average increased to Rs. 778.11 from Rs. 732.25 the previous Sunday, PC Punnoose, General Manager, CPMC told *BusinessLine*.

An uptrend was visible at the auction of the Cardamom Planters' Association (CPA) on Monday in Bodinayakannur. Arrivals stood at 56.6 tonnes against 49.2 tonnes that came in last Monday.

The maximum price was Rs. 898 and the auction average was up at Rs. 750.16 from Rs. 703.34 a kg, they said. Export buying is to remain slack as the current prices are claimed to be at higher levels. The current third round of picking will come to an end by December, growers said.

From the fourth round onwards the arrivals would show a gradual decline and quality would also slip.

Supply of extra bold capsules has come down to 20-25 per cent of the bulk as against 30-40 per cent until recently, because of the misty weather, traders said.

Total arrivals during the season so far stood at 8,587 tonnes as against 9,565 tonnes during the same period last year. The sales were at 8,432 tonnes and 9,251 tonnes respectively.

Prices of graded varieties (Rs./kg): 8mm bold: 970-980; 7mm - 8mm: 830-840; 6mm-7mm: 750-760; below 6 mm: 670- 680.

Mandatory registration for cotton export goes

Shipment norms for yarn also eased

Mumbai, December 8:

The Government has eased cotton and yarn export norms. Exporters now need not register with the Director-General of Foreign Trade before making the shipment. The move is expected to speed up shipments, particularly when overseas demand for cotton and yarn has dropped sharply.

Notifications

With the change in rules, the Centre has done away with the registration requirement for exports of cotton and its yarn, the government said on Monday in two separate notifications.

Earlier, traders were required to register their targeted export volume in advance for the entire year.

DK Nair, Secretary-General, Confederation of Indian Textile Industry, said the development would remove the unnecessary hurdle and ease the process of exports.

No immediate impact

However, he said, it will not make any immediate impact on the demand for exports.

With cotton being procured at the minimum support price (MSP) by the Cotton Corporation of India, yarn prices are likely to come under pressure as globally cotton prices are falling, he said. "If the cotton prices

stabilise in the country in view of the MSP operations and prices fall globally, then our yarn will not be competitive,” said Nair.

The Cotton Corporation of India is gearing up to procure cotton worth Rs. 12,000 crore this season as prices in most cotton growing States have fallen below the MSP level announced by the government.

CCI is expected to buy 60 lakh bales of cotton across Telangana , Andhra Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra.

Bumper crop

The country is likely to harvest a record 40 million bales (37 million bales) of cotton this crop year that began in October. It is expected to surpass China as the world’s top producer.

Cotton export from India has almost come to a standstill with prices in the domestic market ruling five cents above the global market.

China, which imported 50 per cent of the 12 million bales shipped by India last year, is cutting down on shipments.

With the high minimum support price, cotton consignment from India works out to about 71 cents per pound against the now average global price of about 66 cents per pound.

Israeli crop protection solutions firm Adama to invest \$50 m here

Hyderabad, December 8:

Israeli crop protection solutions firm Adama will invest \$50 million India in the next 3-5 years on expanding its research and development activity in Hyderabad and its manufacturing facility in Gujarat.

The company invested a similar amount in the country in setting up its presence.

Addressing a press conference here on Monday, Adama Agricultural Solutions President and Chief Executive Officer Chen Liechtenstein said that India was a strategic base for the firm after Israel and China.

The Indian market contributes about five per cent to the overall revenues of \$3 billion.

Meanwhile, the company has changed the name of its Indian arm Makhteshim-Agan India to Adama, which means ‘earth’ in Hebrew.

It appointed Ilan Levanon as the President and Chief Executive Officer of Adama India. He will take charge in January.

His predecessor Goldshmidt will begin his new role as Vice-President of India, West Asia and Africa. He, however, will continue to be the Chairman of Adama India.

The company has 4,500 employees, with a repository of 120 active ingredients.

It is the seventh largest agrichemical firm in the world and the third largest biggest one in the Indian market.

Sugar millers in a tizzy over re-negotiation of ethanol price

Drop in global crude rates triggers the move by oil marketing firms

New Delhi/Bengaluru, December 8:

The roll-out of ethanol blending programme stares at a fresh hurdle as oil marketing companies such as Indian Oil, Bharat Petroleum and Hindustan Petroleum Corporation are planning to renegotiate prices with sugar millers as global crude prices have dropped in the past few months. Such a move could fuel concerns among the beleaguered sugar mills as crushing gains momentum in the key states such as Maharashtra, Uttar Pradesh and Karnataka.

Crude oil prices have declined over 38 per cent from about \$114 a barrel in July to the current level of below \$70.

Official sources hinted at the OMCs considering going in for a renegotiation of ethanol prices with sugar millers.

This seems imminent, especially after the recent cancellation of the Expression of Interest (EOI) issued by the OMCs for about 120 crore litres in October. While no reason was attributed to the cancellation of EOI, it is widely believed that declining crude prices prompted the OMCs to take such a step, sources said.

The OMCs had fixed a price of Rs. 47.5 per litre for ethanol to be delivered at their depot for blending starting October. In the tender floated for 156 crore litres in July, sugar mills had placed bids for only 62 crore litres, while the OMCs had finalised contracts for 35.5 crore litres for delivery from October this year.

The pricing was based on the Government's revised benchmark price formula for ethanol that was finalised in June, wherein the average of the refinery transfer price (RTP) for petrol for the previous year would be considered against the earlier practice of closest RTP.

As a result, the impact of lower crude prices this year should be felt next year, said Abinash Verma, Director-General, Indian Sugar Mills Association.

However, millers are hopeful that the OMCs will come up with a fresh EOI over the next few days. "We are expecting the OMCs to re-float the tender soon," Verma said. The decline in crude prices should not necessarily influence the OMCs decision. "Even at the reduced price of petrol, they will still stand to benefit at the current rates," Verma said.

With the pick-up in cane crushing, the price of molasses and other by-products such as extra neutral alcohol and industrial alcohol are seen coming down. Molasses prices are now hovering between Rs.3,500 and Rs. 4,000 a tonne against Rs. 6,000-7,000 in July-August.

The Government had mandated five per cent blending of ethanol with petrol while the OMCs have been able to carry out blending of only 1.45 per cent.

China will be the bear in cotton shop

Rising Chinese stock, a dampener for cotton growers especially India

Chennai, December 8:

China could well turn out to be the bear in the global cotton market. This should have Indian growers worried, particularly if one were to go by the US Department of Agriculture's recent report on global cotton markets.

The USDA report sees China's excess stocks staying for a while. This means prices will continue to be under pressure until there is some sharp spike in consumption or a sharp fall in production in one of the major producing nations.

According to the report, China's price support and import policies have resulted in its inventories rising to 45 million US bales (of 218 kg each) or 57.78 million Indian bales (of 170 kg each). This is equivalent to what India produces for almost close to a year-and-a-half.

For the US, it is two-and-half-year production.

China's output

Chinese authorities are keen on cutting down the stocks. Possible measures they are likely to take are imports curbs and production cuts.

The USDA sees production in China dropping by 25 per cent from this year's 29.4 million US bales.

This year itself China's production is eight per cent lower against 31.71 million bales last year.

At the same time, consumption will have to increase by 20 per cent in the Communist nation over the next six years from the current offtake of 36.4 million US bales. Chinese stocks have built up because it buys cotton from farmers at prices higher than rates prevailing in the global market to encourage growers, especially in the Xinjiang province.

Whether China can afford to discourage its growers is a million dollar question; but its task to cut the inventories is a tough one. That's why globally Chinese stocks are seen as dampener for the trade.

Indian exports

For Indian growers, this doesn't augur well. Cotton exports this season that began in October are seen dropping to a four-year low of 6.4 million bales against 12 million bales last season.

A small consolation, though, is that domestic consumption is likely to rise to 31.3 million bales from 30.1 million bales.

As a result of a marginal rise in consumption and exports almost halving, carryover stocks in India from this season is set to rise to a record 17.44 million Indian bales from 14.49 million bales.

Globally, too, the carryover stocks are set to rise to 107 million US bales from 101 million bales.

These data do not augur well for any cotton grower in the world, leave aside India.

Already, farmers in the Saurashtra region of Gujarat are talking of shifting to other crops such as soyabean.

Growers could have been in more trouble but for the Cotton Corporation of India intervening in the market to buy at the minimum support price Rs. 4,050 a quintal.

Prices are ruling at the support price level currently as arrivals have peaked and demand is slack.

The current situation could result in growers losing interest in growing the natural fibre.

Cotton production has been on the rise ever since Bt cotton was introduced in the country. But with labour and input costs rising, growers are looking for better returns.

Cotton yarn exports are on the rise but how much can the shipments help is anybody's guess.