

Draft policy on organic farming soon: VC

COIMBATORE, January 9, 2014 - The Government is expected to come out with a draft policy on organic farming for the State soon, according to Vice-Chancellor of Tamil Nadu Agricultural University K. Ramasamy.

Adding that the State Government had initiated the proposal a year ago, he said an 18-member committee was entrusted with the drafting.

Before finalising the draft, the committee was receiving suggestions from public and stakeholders on the website of the Department of Horticulture of the Government.

According to the site, the objective of the policy will be to analyse the world organic farming scenario and determine the State's role taking in the views of a discerning population.

The department has further admitted that the State, despite being a pioneer in various technologies and policies, lagged behind Sikkim, Himachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Karnataka, Kerala, Andhra Pradesh and Uttaranchal in organic farming.

It has shared the belief that organic farming strategies can be devised based on a strong State policy. The method of implementation and agencies to be involved in this can be defined in the policy draft.

According to the Vice-Chancellor, it was essential to take a stand on adopting organic farming methods with focus on sustainable agriculture, especially with regard to food crops.

"Natural resources have been exploited and environmental degradation has resulted from indiscriminate use of chemicals".

Women entrepreneurship training at TNAU

COIMBATORE, January 9, 2014 - Tamil Nadu Agricultural University will conduct training on 'Value Addition in Fresh and Dry Flowers for Commercial Venture by Women Entrepreneurs' from January 22 to February 19.

According to a release, the training will be held at the Department of Floriculture and Landscaping for 25 days.

The programme is being held free of cost with financial support from the Ministry of Marginal, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSME), Government of Tamil Nadu. Participants will have to make arrangements for their accommodation.

It will cover technical skills, managerial skills including marketing and financial management, preparation of project reports, etc.

The minimum qualification is Plus-Two.

Viable projects submitted by trainees will be linked to the District Industries Centre and banks for appropriate loan and subsidy.

Interested women candidates may register their names with Head, Department of Floriculture and Landscaping, TNAU, Coimbatore; or call 0422-6611230; e-mail to

flowers@tnau.ac.in.,

before January 13.

Eligible candidates will be selected for training.

Viable projects will be linked to the District Industries Centre and banks

Farmers harvest edible sugarcane for Pongal

ERODE, January 9, 2014 - *Edible variety marketed by the farmers through middlemen*



Farmers harvesting sugarcane for sale during Pongal in Erode.-

PHOTO:M.GOVARTHAN.

Farmers in the district are busy harvesting edible sugarcane ahead of Pongal celebration.

Retail sale

The black variety cultivated on a large scale commands a price of over Rs. 30 a piece at retail sale points.

An integral part of Pongal festivities, this juicy variety is sold in units of bunches, each with 10 pieces, in the wholesale markets.

Major crop

Sugarcane is one of the major crops in the district, but the edible variety is cultivated only for festival sale.

Sale

Unlike in the case of the sugarcane cultivated for sugar extraction that are procured by the sugar mills directly from the cultivators, the edible variety has to be marketed by the farmers through middlemen.

After two years of drought, water made available from the Bhavani Sagar Dam this year prompted a section of farmers to cultivate edible sugarcane variety. Sugarcane from Erode is marketed mainly in the markets in the Western region, sources said.

Mild showers in Madurai bring hope to farmers

MADURAI, January 9, 2014 - *"Heavy downpour essential to save crops nearing harvest"*

Residents in different parts of the city were greeted with a pleasant surprise on Wednesday morning when they woke up to cool showers.

A steady drizzle and rains graced most areas in the city bringing down the temperature.

Most people have been experiencing chilly nights and mornings for the last three weeks and cool weather prevailed on Wednesday with the skies remaining cloudy.

The city recorded a total of 4 mm of rainfall on Tuesday night and Wednesday morning and many areas including Simmakal, K.K. Nagar, Anna Nagar and Periyar Bus Stand experienced mild showers in the evening at around 5 p.m. as well.

For many farmers with agricultural lands in the district, the rains brought in cheer.

The farmers however said that unless there was a heavy downpour or till there was sustained rainfall, it wouldn't be of much help to their crops which are in different stages nearing harvest.

The lack of rainfall in the district has led to crops drying up on nearly 1,500 hectares of land. Joint Director (Agriculture) Jaisingh Gnanadurai said that if the rains sustained, boom sprayers would be used to spray water in the fields and salvage crops that could be readied for harvest.

While weather reports predict rains in the region for the next few days, the release of the water from the Vaigai credit too might prove fruitful for farmers with nearly 1,200 acres of land in Melur which needed wetting less than two times.

PWD officials say that with the order of the Madurai Bench of the Madras High Court to release water from the Vaigai credit for irrigation in Melur, around 350 mcft of water will be released over the next three days.

Chilli farmers welcome rain

RAMANATHAPURAM, January 9, 2014 - *The crop has completed vegetative stage on 17,630 hectares*



BENEFICIAL:A chilli field at Perungalur near Ramanathapuram.— Photo: L. Balachandar

The intermittent rains in Ramanathapuram district, under the influence of low pressure area over the Gulf of Mannar, have brought cheer to chilli farmers cultivating the native

“Ramnad Mundu” variety, even as they are anxious about insuring their crops with Centre introducing Modified National Agriculture Insurance Scheme (MNAIS) from this ‘Rabi’ season.

As the chilli crops cultivated on 17,630 hectares in the district have completed the vegetative stage and are reaching the flowering stage, the widespread rains on Tuesday and Wednesday would be extremely beneficial to the crops to grow with fleshy branches and flowering, said B. Ilangovan, Assistance Director, Horticulture.

As there was no sufficient rain in October after the onset of the northeast monsoon, farmers had resorted to broadcast of seeds only in November and the ‘late crops’ had just entered the productive period after completing the growing period, he said.

Barring Tiruvadana and Mandapam blocks, the native “Ramnad Mundu” has been cultivated on about 15,000 hectares of rain-fed areas, while K1 and K2 varieties on about 2,000 hectares of irrigated areas, he said. The clay soil would help to keep the moisture content and it would be enough for the tap-rooted chilli crops to survive during the productive period, he said

As the rains were sprinkle in nature and would not result in water stagnation in the fields, the rains have come as a boon to the farmers, he added. The first fruits would be picked at the end of this month and the production would reach the peak during the third and fourth picking during April-May, he said.

Last year, chilli was cultivated on 19,120 hectares and the farmers harvested 500 to 800 kgs a hectare, he added. The rains would also benefit farmers who had cultivated sesame on about 2,000 hectares. Meanwhile, sources in the regional office of the National Insurance Agriculture Company in Chennai said the government had given its consent for the National Crop Insurance Programme from the ‘Rabi’ season 2013-14 and the office was working out the details of premium for various ‘Rabi’ crops, including chilli.

The last date for paying insurance premium for the non-loanee farmers ends on January 15, but in view of the notification issued only two days ago, the last date is likely to be extended till February-end, it is learnt.

Poly-house farming, the new trend in Tuticorin

TUTICORIN, January 9, 2014 - *Farmer reaps profit by raising hybrid cucumber varieties*



The in-thing: A poly-house set up at Ayanbommaipuram in Tuticorin district. — Photo: N. Rajesh

A recent trend among agriculturists in this region is poly-house farming. V. Akilan of Ayanbommaipuram in Vilathikulam taluk has achieved good results in cucumber cultivation using this greenhouse technology. After raising two

hybrid cucumber varieties successfully, he has laid his hands on the third variety (Hybrid PS 4800) now.

Earlier, 13 tonnes of hybrid variety cucumber (European delight) was cultivated on a 1,000 sq.m poly-house on his land. He raised 3,600 plants through vertical cultivation technique, for which he spent Rs.1.4 lakh. The raised cucumbers fetched good price in the market. The happy farmer said he earned a profit of Rs.2.11 lakh in a span of 120 days. A kilo of hybrid cucumbers fetched a price of Rs. 27.

“Now the third crop is in good condition and I expect a yield of 14 tonnes,” Mr. Akilan said. He imported seeds for the hybrid cucumber crop from The Netherlands through a dealer in New Delhi. The pre-treated seeds were sown in a specialised medium of soil in bags filled with coir pith, vermi compost and super phosphate mixture. Under fertigation method, water soluble fertilizers were used.

The crops were saved from pest and diseases and micronutrient deficiency through bio-pesticide and bio-fungicide. The first flowering was attained in 40 days after sowing and a week later the crops were ready for harvest. The poly-house is equipped with facilities such as drip irrigation with fertigation, fogger, improved medium of soil for better plant growth and paired rows for cultivation. “I expect to get back my investment in a year. My poly-house is a valuable asset for me,” the farmer said. The efforts of this progressive farmer inspired the horticulture officials who visited his farm.

Official sources said 10 advanced poly-houses are being established in the Pudur block, one of the backward areas in Tuticorin district. A sum of Rs. 113.5 lakh had been earmarked under State Balanced Growth Fund for 2013-14 for setting up poly-houses. Farmers could cultivate vegetables, fruits and flowers in poly-houses. With a two-third subsidy and one-third contribution from the farmers, poly-house farming could be taken up in a big way, the sources said.

Friday Balcao to focus on family farming

PANAJI, January 9, 2014 - *‘Small holder farming has a role in eradicating hunger’*

Friday Balcao, the fortnightly discussion event to be held on January 10, will focus on the International Year of Family Farming (IYFF) and its importance for Goa.

Friday Balcao will be held from 4 p.m. to 6 p.m. at the Goa Desc Resource Centre, No.11 Liberty Apartments, Feira Alta, Mapusa (north Goa) and is open to public.

Raising profile

The IYFF aims to raise the profile of family farming and small holder farming by focusing on its significant role in eradicating hunger and poverty, providing food security and nutrition, improving livelihoods, managing natural resources, protecting the environment and achieving sustainable development in rural areas in particular.

“The goal of IYFF 2014 is to reposition family farming at the centre of agricultural, environmental and social policies by identifying gaps and opportunities,” said Roland Martins, co-ordinator of Friday Balcao.

The discussion will address the aims of IYFF 2014 in the context of the farming traditions in Goa, the Comunidades (Goa’s age-old village land communes), the interest in reviving family farms in Goa, the formation of farmers’ clubs, the shift to organic farming and the enthusiasm to start kitchen gardens.

The discussion will also examine the role of the Directorate of Agriculture and Goa State Horticultural Corporation Ltd., NGOs like Botanical Society of Goa (BSG), Organic Farming Association of India (OFAI) and educational institutions promoting vocational studies, in observing the IYFF 2014.

For further information on Friday Balcao, email to goadesc@gmail.com.

‘The goal of IYFF is to reposition family farming at the centre of policies’

Landholding limit for farming may go up

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, January 9, 2014 - The government was taking steps to raise the permissible area of land that an individual may hold for agricultural purpose to four acres, Revenue Minister Adoor Prakash said in the Assembly on Wednesday.

Replying to a submission by E. S. Bijimol on the need to distribute unconditional title deeds to settler farmers engaged in farming in individual holdings, Mr. Prakash said that in Idukki, title deeds would be issued to 1,367 families currently residing in the land which had once been taken over by the Kerala State Electricity Board for various projects and later given up. The Idukki Collector had been directed to issue title deeds to these families, through a GO on January 4.

In a reply to a question by K. Radhakrishnan on the crisis in the construction industry owing to the shortage of sand, Mr. Prakash said steps were being taken to resolve the crisis after a report submitted by the Chief Secretary also pointed out the same.

‘Food Security Army will strengthen farm sector’



THRISSUR, January 9, 2014 -

The “Food Security Army” is an innovative concept, which will help the State’s efforts for attaining self-sufficiency in food, District Collector M.S. Jaya has said.

She was speaking after handing over certificates to the first batch of the Food Security Army (FSA) trainees from the cooperative sector. The Collector was

given a guard of honour by the FSA cadets at the training centre at the Agricultural Research Station (ARS), Mannuthy, under the Kerala Agricultural University (KAU).

The training of the first batch of the Food Security Army from the cooperative sector, which began on December 16, 2013, was part of the initiative to establish 60 agro-service centres in the State under the cooperative sector.

The first batch of 25 trainees was sponsored by Pariyaram Service Cooperative Bank.

Thrissur is the first district to be equipped with the FSA unit in the co-operative sector.

KAU Director of Extension P.V. Balachandran, who presided over the valedictory function, said that the entry of the cooperative sector into the agro service network will pave the way for a silent revolution in agricultural sector.

Farmer's notebook



Low cost: The mixture guarantees 15-25 per cent increased yield in spice crops.- Photo: Special Arrangement

The input should be used alone and not mixed with any other chemicals

Expo showcases Assam's indigenous agri-horti products

GUWAHATI, January 9, 2014 - *Chance for local farmers eyeing global markets to exhibit their produces*



Agriculture Officer Ramen Deka shows a Musa species of banana locally called as "Kese Lepa," which has grown over five feet tall at the first International Agri-Horticultural Show in Guwahati on Wednesday.— PHOTO: RITU RAJ KONWAR

Farmers and entrepreneurs from Assam and other northeast States eyeing the global markets for their agricultural and horticultural products showcased a range of products — from indigenous rice varieties preserved by different ethnic groups, organic citrus fruits, orchid species, spices, sesame seeds, mushrooms, organic handmade tea to eco-friendly disposable betel nut plates at the first International Agri-Horticultural Show-2014 which got under way here on Wednesday and drew participants from 13 countries.

Inaugurating the four-day exposition, Assam Chief Minister

Tarun Gogoi said that future of agriculture and horticulture sectors in the region lay in proper implementation of the Look East Policy. He said that the objective behind organising the international exposition was to showcase the rich potential of the State in agri-horti sectors and facilitate learning by the farmers and entrepreneurs from the State of modern practices of agriculture and horticulture and adoption of technology to boost production and improve quality in the participating countries and other States of India. Minister of Agriculture and Livestock, Sagaing Region of Myanmar Saw Myint Oo; Minister of Agriculture and Livestock, Mandalay Region of Myanmar U. Myint Than, Vice-Minister, Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, Government of Lao People's Democratic Republic Khamphad Sourinphoumy were also present at the inaugural function.

"Goes to show

State is peaceful"

Mr. Gogoi said that the international expo held here in city "has once again established that the State has been making progress and is as peaceful as any other region of India."

Entrepreneurs, business chambers, companies and corporations of agri-machinery, seeds, fertilizers from Myanmar, Lao, Bangladesh, Bhutan, Taiwan, Nepal, Italy, China, Indonesia, South Africa, Israel, Canada, United Kingdom and Netherlands have taken part in the expo and will be interacting with farmers and entrepreneurs from Assam and other northeast States to explore trade and commerce potential during the next three days.

Samba paddy procurement to peak by month-end



55,450 tonnes in Thanjavur, 26,519 tonnes in Tiruvarur procured

Good harvest:Samba and thaladi crops have been raised on nearly 2.50 lakh hectares in Thanjavur and Tiruvarur districts.— Photo: B. Velankanni Raj

THANJAVUR, January 9, 2014 - Samba procurement has picked up with 1,000 to 1,200 tonnes of paddy a day arriving in Thanjavur district, and 1,000 to 1,500

tonnes in Tiruvarur. Tamil Nadu Civil Supplies Corporation (TNCSC) officials said procurement would reach the peak towards the end of this month.

A total of 269 direct purchase centres (DPCs) are functioning in Thanjavur while 405 are functioning in Tiruvarur. Harvest is in full swing at Orathanadu, Thanjavur, and Thiruvaiyaru. "Since the kharif season had begun on October 1, 2013, the TNCSC has so far procured 55,450 tonnes in Thanjavur. The expectation is to procure 3.5 lakh tonnes," said the officials. In Tiruvarur district, the TNCSC has procured 26,519 tonnes.

A. Alagirisamy, senior regional manager of TNCSC, Tiruvarur, said it had been planned to set up 20 cap storages for paddy. Now, paddy is stored in two closed godowns at Bamini near Manargudi and Tiruvarur. "Bamini godown has a capacity to store 50,000 tonnes," Mr. Alagirisamy said. Paddy will be moved through trains and lorries to other districts as season picks up.

The TNCSC is paying Rs. 1,415 per quintal, which includes Rs. 70, as an incentive by the government for grade A paddy, and Rs. 1,310, including Rs. 50, as an incentive for common variety.

Samba and thaladi have been raised on nearly 2.50 lakh hectares in the two districts. Agriculture department officials said that an average yield of seven tonnes per hectare was registered.

Weather-based crop insurance for paddy

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Paddy crop in 11 districts has been brought under a weather-based crop insurance scheme launched by the Agriculture Insurance Company of India, a company formed under a Central government programme. The scheme, made applicable in Palakkad last year, is being extended to Thiruvananthapuram, Kollam, Idukki, Ernakulam, Thrissur, Palakkad, Malappuram, Kozhikode, Kannur, Wayanad and Kasaragod districts.

Paddy farmers who have already begun farming in the current agricultural season can apply to get enrolled in the scheme till January 10, a top official of the regional office of the company in Thiruvananthapuram told *The Hindu*. In those districts where farming begins late in the 'puncha' field, the last date for enrolment will be January 31, he said. Puncha farming in Idukki, Wayanad, Kollam, Kozhikode, Malappuram, Thrissur and Kasaragod falls in the latter category.

The paddy fields of Kuttanad, belonging to Alappuzha, Kottayam and Pathanamthitta districts, have another crop insurance scheme based on the yield of the crop. The scheme was implemented under a 15-year plan, prior to the launching of the weather-based insurance scheme.

The weather-based insurance scheme is being implemented by the Centre in coordination with the State. The State government issued the relevant order only on December 27, which accounted for the late announcement of the scheme.

According to the guidelines of the scheme, farmers have to get enrolled within a month of beginning of the farming season, which began in November for the current crop.

About 18,000 farmers in Palakkad had got enrolled in the scheme last year, out of which 15,000 received insurance claims arising out of bad weather which affected the crop, the official said. The government sets parameters for the weather for each season and considerable fluctuation will make the crop eligible for the claims.

About 130 weather stations have been set up by the government across the State to collect data on weather fluctuations. The scheme will not be applicable to those areas where the service of the weather stations is not available.

The maximum insurance coverage for paddy will be Rs.10,000 per acre and the insurance premium is Rs.200. The premium is eligible for government subsidy of 50-75 per cent.

Coverage areas

Apart from paddy, weather-based crop insurance is applicable to plantains, sugarcane, mango and cashew. separate coverage areas have been announced by the insurance company for each of these crops.

The weather-based insurance scheme will be applicable for sugarcane crop in Idukki and Palakkad districts while it will be applicable for mango farms only in Palakkad district. The scheme for cashew crop is applicable for Palakkad, Malappuram, Kozhikode, Kannur and Kasaragod.

Water levels

Water level in the Periyar dam stood at 114.10 feet (permissible level 136 feet) on Tuesday with an inflow of 151 cusecs and a discharge of 344 cusecs. The level in Vaigai dam was 40.78 feet (total 71 feet) with no inflow and a discharge of 60 cusecs. The combined storage in Periyar credit was 1,851 mcft.

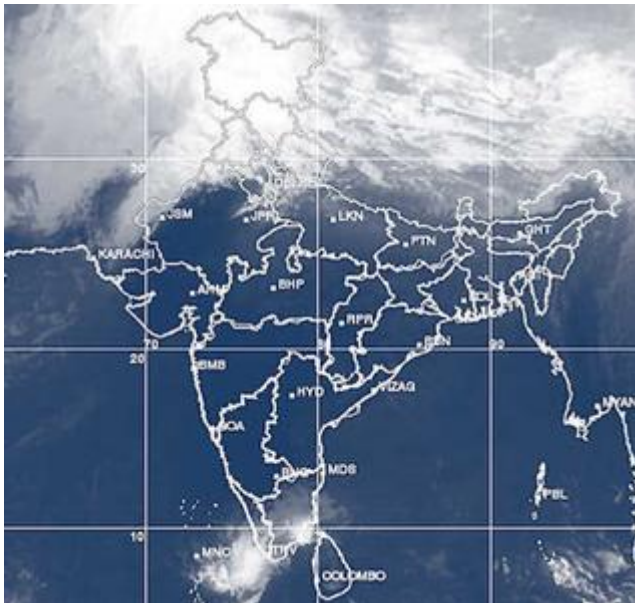
Rainfall - The amount of rainfall (in mm) recorded in the region during the last 24 hours ending at 8.30 a.m. on Wednesday was: Thekkady 1.8, Peranai 2, Madurai 4, Thaniamangalam 3, Cittampatti 2.6 and Viraganoor recorded 10.5, said the PWD officials on Wednesday.

The water level in the Mettur dam stood at 60.41 feet on Wednesday against its full level of 120 feet. The inflow was 607 cusecs and the discharge 6,042 cusecs.

Water level in the Papanasam dam on Wednesday stood at 82.85 feet (maximum level is 143 feet). The dam had an inflow of 329.35 cusecs and 394.75 cusecs water is discharged from the dam.

The level of Manimuthar dam stood at 70.17 feet (118 feet). The dam had an inflow of 73 cusecs and 430 cusecs water is discharged.

Weather



INSAT PICTURE AT 11-30 hrs. Observations recorded at 8-30 a.m. on January 08.

ANDHRA PRADESH

Anantapur	31	17	0	0
Arogyavaram	31	18	0	0
Bapatla	30	18	0	0
Calingapatnam	28	19	0	0
Gannavaram	31	19	0	0
Hanamkonda	31	17	0	0
Hyderabad AP	29	17	0	0
Kakinada	31	21	0	0
Khammam	30	18	0	0
Kavali	29	19	0	2
Kurnool	32	17	0	0
Mahabubnagar	29	17	0	0
Machilipatnam	29	20	0	0
Narasapur	31	21	0	0
Nellore	31	21	0	1
Nizamabad	32	16	0	0
Ongole	31	19	0	0
Ramagundam	31	14	0	0
Tirupathi AP	31	20	0	0

Tuni	32	20	0	0
Vizag AP	30	20	0	0
Vizag	29	21	0	0
KARNATAKA				
Agumbe	31	9	0	0
Bangalore AP	29	15	0	0
Bangalore	29	15	0	0
Bagalkote	32	13	0	0
Belgaum AP	31	14	0	0
Bellary	33	15	0	0
Bijapur	31	17	0	0
Chitradurga	30	15	0	0
Chickmagalur	31	15	0	0
Chintamani	29	12	0	0
Gadag	31	15	0	0
Gulbarga	32	18	0	0
Hassan	28	11	0	0
Honavar	34	19	0	0
Karwar	36	19	0	0
Madikeri	27	13	0	0
Mangalore AP	34	20	0	0
Mysore	30	14	0	0
Mandya	31	15	0	0
Panambur	33	21	0	0
Raichur	31	17	0	0
Shirali	33	18	0	0
KERALA				
Alappuzha	32	25	0	0
Kannur	34	22	0	0
Kochi AP	32	23	0	0
Kottayam	34	24	0	0
Kozhikode	33	23	0	0
Punalur	33	23	0	0
Thiruvanantha				
-puram AP	30	23	3	3
Thiruvanantha				
-puram City	31	23	5	5
Vellanikkara	34	23	0	0
TAMIL NADU				
Adirampattinam	26	22	4	10
Chennai	30	24	0	tr
Chennai AP	30	22	0	1
Coimbatore AP	31	20	0	0
Coonoor	21	10	0	0
Cuddalore	29	21	0	tr
Dharmapuri	30	17	0	0
Kanyakumari	30	20	32	32
Karaikal	27	24	2	5
Kodaikanal	17	10	3	3
Madurai AP	31	21	8	8
Nagapattinam	26	24	3	7
Palayamkottai	29	22	16	16
Pamban	25	23	24	39
Parangipettai	29	22	0	0
Puducherry	30	21	0	1
Salem	32	19	0	0
Thanjavur	29	22	0	1

Tiruchi AP	30	23	tr	tr
Tirupattur	32	20	0	0
Tiruttani	31	18	0	0
Tondi	25	21	28	33
Tuticorin	29	21	8	9
Ooty	19	8	0	0
Valparai	28	13	0	0
Vedaranyam	—	—	—	—
Vellore	30	20	0	0
LAKSHADWEEP				
Amini Divi	33	25	0	0
Minicoy	31	25	0	0
Kavarathi	—	—	—	—
OTHER STATIONS				
Kolkata (Alipore)	24	13	0	0
Mumbai	33	22	0	0
New Delhi	20	4	0	0

The columns show maximum and minimum temperature in Celsius, rainfall during last 24 hours (trace) and total rainfall in mm since January 01, 2014.

RAIN IN COASTAL TAMIL NADU

CHENNAI: Northeast monsoon has been vigorous over south coastal Tamil Nadu. Rainfall occurred at most places over south coastal Tamil Nadu and at a few places over south interior Tamil Nadu. Isolated rainfall occurred over north Tamil Nadu and Kerala. Dry weather prevailed over Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka and Lakshadweep.

The minimum temperature fell appreciably at one or two places over south Tamil Nadu, south interior Karnataka, fell at many places over Telangana, at one or two places in Rayalaseema, rest Karnataka, rose appreciably at one or two places over north interior Karnataka, rose at one or two places over Tamil Nadu and changed little elsewhere over the region. They were appreciably above normal at one or two places over Telangana, above normal at most places over Tamil Nadu, at one or two places over rest Telangana, North interior Karnataka, appreciably below normal at one or two places over South interior Karnataka, South Tamil Nadu and were remained normal over rest of the region.

FORECAST (valid until Friday morning): Rain or thundershowers at a few places over south Tamil Nadu and Kerala. Isolated rain or thundershowers over north Tamil Nadu, Puducherry and Lakshadweep. Mainly dry weather over Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka.

Weather

Chennai - INDIA

Today's Weather



Partly Cloudy

Thursday, Jan 9

Max 29° | Min 23°

Rain: 0

Humidity: 62

Wind: normal

Sunrise: 06:32

Sunset: 05:56

Barometer: 1012

Tomorrow's Forecast



Partly Cloudy

Friday, Jan 10

Max 28° | Min 23°

Extended Forecast for a week

Saturday

Jan 11



29° | 21°

Partly Cloudy

Sunday

Jan 12



30° | 20°

Partly Cloudy

Monday

Jan 13



23° | 21°

Overcast

Tuesday

Jan 14



23° | 21°

Cloudy

Wednesday

Jan 15



24° | 21°

Overcast

THE TIMES OF INDIA

Dalmia Cement buying up fertile land: Farmers

BELGAUM: Hundreds of farmers from Yadawad village in Gokak taluk, under the aegis of [Karnataka Rajya Raita Sangha](#) and Hasiru Sene, staged a dharna on the premises of the DC office here on Tuesday, opposing the limestone mining project of [Dalmia Cement \(Bharat\) Limited](#). To mark the protest, farmers cooked food and had lunch at the protest venue.

The memorandum claims that in 2010, the government had given permission to the company to buy 497 acres in Yadawad village to set up the plant, through [Karnataka Industrial Area Development Board](#) (KIADB). But later, the government extended this permission to 1,598 acres and KIADB is acquiring the land. So far, KIADB has acquired 1,086 acres in the area.

Farmers allege that apart from the government sanctioned land, the company is illegally purchasing land from farmers directly and most of such purchased lands are fertile agricultural lands. They have demanded that the purchase of excess land by the company be stopped immediately.

The memorandum also says that according to the Land Reforms Act, companies must utilize the land for the stipulated purpose within two years of purchase. But except building some

commercial buildings, Dalmia company has not done anything so far. Farmers cautioned of further protests if more land is acquired by KIADB for the company.

Kerala farmers warm up to cool season vegetables

KOZHIKODE: Kerala has never been particularly known for its cool climes. But farmers, in a rare innovative streak in the state's agriculture scene, have successfully battled the odds to embrace cool season vegetable farming, including beet, carrot, cabbage, cauliflower, capsicum and broccoli, even in the plains in all the districts of the state with increasing success.

Spurred mainly by the novelty factor of farming exotic vegetables in their backyards, farmers have brought in a record 600 hectares of land in the state under cool [season vegetables](#) this year, up from around just 100 hectares in 2011.

Farmers in the state have lapped up 30 lakh seedlings of cool season vegetables from Vegetable and Fruit Promotion Council, Kerala (VAFPCCK) alone so far this year in addition to the around 7 lakh seedlings provided by [Kerala Agricultural University](#) (KAU) during the season which extends from November to February. The crops are now getting ready for harvest.

N Vijayan, assistant director of agriculture (vegetable cell), said there has been an overwhelming interest among farmers across the state to grow cool season vegetables with the acreage climbing to 600 hectares this year.

"The success of new seed varieties suitable for our climate and the experimentation spirit among farmers to try out new crops has made cool season vegetables a hit among farmers in the state," he said.

Prof C Narayanan Kutty, of KAU agriculture research station at Mannuthy, Thrissur, said that in the past, farmers in the state had never thought that it would be possible to grow carrot and cauliflower in their backyard. It was the identification of 35 cool season genotypes suitable for cultivation in the plains of the state as part of a research project undertaken by the varsity which opened the doors for cool season vegetables to the farming scene of the state, he said.

"The average day time temperature in our plains during the season is somewhere around 28- 32 degree Celsius, while the night time temperature hovers around 19- 22 degrees. We have identified some heat tolerant varieties which can be grown viably in our agro- climatic conditions with good yield," he added.

He said the varieties being planted this season are Pusa Meghna of cauliflower, NS183 of cabbage, Shin Kuroda of carrot, Pusa Chetki of radish and Madhur of beetroot.

N Anantha Krishnan, a farmer who has cultivated cabbage and cauliflower in his farm in Thrissur, said he was able to get reasonable yield last time.

"I started the winter vegetables cultivation in a small patch of land last year with the intention of getting pesticide-free vegetables for own use. The crop was good and we managed to get cabbage weighing up to 1.5 kg and cauliflower between 800 grams and 1 kg. This year I have increased the crop area and the plants are fine, thanks to the chilly nights we had," he added.

Sephi Joseph, deputy manager at VAFPCK, said there has been an over 25% increase in the expansion of area under crops each year in the plains. "This year we have provided over 30 lakh seedlings and non- traditional areas like Kozhikode and Thrissur had fared well in cultivation of cool season crops last year," she added.

Spurred mainly by the novelty factor of farming exotic vegetables in their backyards, farmers have brought in a record of 600 hectares of land in the state under cool season vegetables this year, up from around just 100 hectares in 2011.

Farmers in the state have lapped up 30 lakh seedlings of cool season vegetables from Vegetable and Fruit Promotion Council, Kerala (VAFPCK) alone so far this year in addition to the around 7 lakh seedlings provided by the Kerala Agriculture University (KAU) during the season which extends from November to February. The crops are now getting ready for harvest.

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Rare paddy varieties



Showcasing progress: A farmer displaying (60) rare varieties of local paddy which are grown in Assam at the first Assam International Agri-Horticultural Show in Guwahati on Wednesday. The four-day exhibition will showcase the progress of Assam in the cultivation sector. Some 324 stalls will highlight the success story of Assam with the participation of different self-help groups, nurseries, NGOs and developmental bodies working in the agricultural and horticultural sectors. Thirteen countries including Bhutan, Nepal, Bangladesh, Myanmar, Thailand, China, Laos, Israel, Taiwan, South Africa and the UK take part in this exhibition. — Ritu Raj Konwar

French firm Lactalis seals deal to buy Tirumala Dairy

Hyderabad, Jan. 8: French multi-national dairy company Lactalis Group is entering India by acquiring Tirumala Dairy, the largest in Andhra Pradesh.

The deal involves the buying out 80 per cent stake held by the four promoters and 20 per cent from private equity major Carlyle Group.

The €15.7 billion Lactalis Group's spokesperson Michel Nalet told *Business Line* that "the acquisition has been completed and it will provide us a platform to grow in the Indian market".

According to reports, the deal size is estimated to be around €220 million.

Lactalis is one of the largest dairy products groups in the world with its operations spanning over 150 countries.

Tirumala Dairy reported a sales turnover of Rs 1,500 crore last fiscal. It is the second largest dairy firm in South India.

In 2010-11, the company divested 20 per cent stake to the Carlyle Group for an estimated \$22 million. One of the original promoters of Tirumala also confirmed the deal with the French major.

The company has manufacturing and procurement units in Wadiyaram in Medak district, Singhavaram in West Godavari, Gudur in Nellore and a procurement unit in Chittoor district.

In the last few months, in addition to Lactalis Group other majors such as Danone, TPG and Apex were said to be in talks to buy the company.

Spot rubber drops on buyer resistance

Kottayam, Jan.8: Spot rubber prices continued to rule weak on Wednesday. The market declined further mainly on buyer resistance, though there was only nominal selling from dealers and growers.

According to observers, there were no buyers in RSS-4 even at lower levels. Moderate enquiries from the industrial sector kept latex (60%) firm, while overall volumes were dull compared to previous sessions. Sheet rubber weakened to Rs 157 (Rs 159.50) a kg, as quoted by traders. The grade dropped to Rs 158 (Rs 159.50) Rs 155 (Rs 156.50) respectively, according to the Rubber Board and dealers.

January futures declined to Rs 155.40 (Rs 159.79), February to Rs 158.29 (Rs 162.42), March to Rs 160.55 (Rs 165.06) and April to Rs 164 (Rs 168.11) for RSS 4, while May and June futures remained inactive on the National Multi Commodity Exchange. January futures closed at ¥265.3 (Rs 157.31) on the Tokyo Commodity Exchange.

Spot rubber rates Rs/kg were: RSS-4: 158 (159.50); RSS-5: 149 (151); Ungraded: 145 (147); ISNR 20: 156 (157.50) and Latex 60%: 135.50 (133.50).

Castorseed futures gain on overseas demand

Rajkot, Jan. 8: Castorseed futures increased on the back of fresh buying at lower levels following strong export demand for castor oil.

On the National Commodity and Derivatives Exchange, castorseed Jan contracts increased by Rs 105 to Rs 4,419 a quintal, with an open interest of 27,240 lots.

NCDEX castorseed Feb contracts gained Rs 113 or 2.58 per cent at Rs 4,498, with an open interest of 1,77,330 lots.

On the Rajkot Commodity Exchange, castorseed March contracts moved up Rs 106 to Rs 4,470. RCX spot castor decreased by Rs 70 to Rs 4,130.

Castor oil increased by Rs 5 to Rs 855/10 kg. About 21,000-22,000 bags of castorseed arrived in Gujarat and the price decreased by Rs 30 to Rs 825-835 for a *maund* of 20 kg.

Around 4,100-4,200 bags arrived in Saurashtra and price stood at Rs 780-824/maund.

Slack demand, selling pressure pound pepper

Kochi, Jan. 8: Pepper prices continued to fall on selling pressure amid slack demand. Only exporters who had overseas commitments bought.

Dealers from Bihar and Jharkhand also bought actively from primary markets “under self purchase bills” and on cash-and-carry basis, market sources told *Business Line*.

On the spot, 35 tonnes of pepper were traded. Inter-State dealers bought fresh pepper at Rs 490-500 a kg and old material at Rs 495-510 a kg.

Some of the upcountry buyers stayed away from the declining market hoping prices will fall further. On the NMCE, January contracts fell by Rs 405 to Rs 51,900 a quintal, while February contracts moved up by Rs 182 a quintal.

Turnover decreased by four tonnes to 11 tonnes.

Net open position declined by one tonne to 22 tonnes.

On the IPSTA, January and February contracts fell by the maximum permitted level to Rs 49,500 and Rs 48,518 a quintal, respectively. Spot prices fell by 300 a quintal to Rs 49,500 (ungarbled) and Rs 51,500 (garbled) a quintal.

Export prices were \$8500 a tonne c&f Europe and \$8750 tonne c&f for the US.

Export buying lends flavour to cardamom



Kochi, Jan. 8: Cardamom prices increased marginally on good export buying at auctions held last week. However, availability of export variety was limited as the size of the cardamom has fallen due to excess bearing of capsules in the pinnacles. Added to this, the change in weather conditions during the flowering and fruit setting stages have affected the crop, growers in Idukki said.

Exporters covered actively. They bought around 70 tonnes as they seemed to have good orders on hand, market sources told *Business Line*.

Besides, harvesting operations are nearing an end, they said.

Exportable variety is not available in sufficient quantity.

On Monday at the CPA auction in Bodinayakannur, arrivals were 47 tonnes and the maximum price was Rs 684 a kg.

The average price moved up to 549.17 from to Rs 532.95. But it was still lower than Rs 565 last week.

Arrivals continued to be higher, though they were around 500 tonnes.

Individual auction average continued remain below Rs 600 a kg during the week.

Arrivals this season ending July 31 were at 11,733 tonnes up to January 6 against 6,536 tonnes during the same period a year ago.

Sales were 11,443 tonnes compared with 6,219 tonnes.

The weighted average price as on January 6 was Rs 595.86 against Rs 771.64 a kg last year.

Total arrivals at the Sunday auction of the KCPMC increased to 88 tonnes from 85 tonnes the previous week.

The entire quantity was sold, said Mr P. C. Punnoose, General Manager, CPMC, Kumily.

He said the maximum price was down at Rs 817 from Rs 824 last week.

The overall auction average price was up marginally at Rs 566.32 against Rs 565 the previous week.

Prices of all graded varieties improved last week. Prices in (Rs/kg) during the weekend were: AGEB 705-715; AGB 590-600; AGS 550-560 and AGS-1: 530-540.

Weather conditions continued to remain favourable with fall in temperature in the growing areas of Kerala's Idukki district last week.

At \$282/t, Swiss firm's bid is highest for Indian wheat



Cancel tender and float a fresh one, say analysts

'India should reject these bids and float the tender again on short notice'

New Delhi Jan 8: Switzerland-based commodity trading Vitol Group placed the highest bid of \$282.62 a tonne for wheat offered for exports by State Trading Corporation (STC) from Mundra Port in the latest tender.

Louis Dreyfus Commodities was the second highest bidder at \$280.62. STC, which offered to sell 1.6 lakh tonnes, received seven bids.

These bids were higher than the floor price for exports of \$260.

The Government had reduced the floor price for exports from \$300 to \$260 on October 30 to boost shipments.

The highest price fetched by the Indian wheat so far is \$289.9, sometime in mid-November for shipments from Krishnapatnam port.

However, with international prices firming up as the winter crop in the US is threatened by cold snap, analysts said India should reject these bids and float fresh tender at a short notice.

"India would be underselling wheat at these prices as the market has firmed up in the recent past," said Tejinder Narang, grains trade analyst.

The Black Sea wheat is traded at \$305 on free-on-board (f.o.b.) basis, while the French and the US wheat are quoted around \$300 f.o.b. for the same quality.

At around \$283, Indian wheat would be at a discount of over \$20. "Indian wheat deserves a better price. The Government can reject the tender for letting the market know that it can't be taken for a ride" Narang said.

He further said that the Government should increase the floor price for exports to \$285 as at least seven tenders are set to come up in the next 16 days.

The Government should calibrate the floor price for exports in line with the market price to realise the maximum.

Wheat has rallied on concerns that cold snap in the US could affect the crop.

Also, the aggressive buying by countries such as Egypt and Algeria has lent support to the prices.

Over the past week, Egypt has bought 5.35 lakh tonnes from Ukraine, Russia and France at an average price of \$317 a tonne.

Algeria and Syria have bought five and two lakh tonnes respectively.

Chill returns to north-west as dense fog heads to East

Thiruvananthapuram, Jan. 8: Dense to very dense fog conditions have migrated to east India as part of a carrier western disturbance.

This is even as a follow-up western disturbance cooled its heels over north Pakistan on Wednesday. It is expected to cross in to north-west India by Thursday morning.

COLD AIR IN

Passing of the incumbent system to the east has let in cold north westerly Arctic air from beyond the border, lowering mercury in north-west India.

Ground frost (minimum temperature below 4 deg Celsius) has been observed in Punjab, Haryana, north Rajasthan and west Uttar Pradesh during 24 hours ending in the morning. A cold wave (night mercury falling by four deg Celsius) engulfed Punjab, Haryana, north Rajasthan and east Uttar Pradesh. Kanpur in east Uttar Pradesh recorded the lowest night temperature of 0.7 deg Celsius as clouds associated with the warmer western disturbance left it to the east.

This was reflected in the very dense to dense fog (itself a form of cloud, visibility below 200 m) over east India. The fog cover lay extended over Haryana, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, sub-Himalayan West Bengal, Sikkim, Assam and Tripura.

Shallow fog (low-lying fog that does not obstruct horizontal visibility at a level of six ft or more above the surface) spread out in Punjab and Delhi. Very dense fog (visibility below 50 m, which forces curtailment of air traffic) was confined mainly to east and North-East India.

US DEEP FREEZE

Fog-making western disturbances are essentially low-pressure waves and feature ascending motion of air in the front. Since low-pressure systems lead to precipitation, rain or snow could be the result depending on where they are active.

Western disturbances are perturbations of the polar jet stream (a high-speed and extreme cold band of winds circumnavigating the globe at the North Pole or Arctic Circle).

But in terms of sheer chill effect, they are poor and famished cousins of Big Brother polar systems since they pass at latitudes farther down (and, therefore, warmer) from the Pole.

This is quite unlike the situation in the US where proximity to the Pole brings about harsher winter compared to northern parts of India. Conditions have turned particularly harsh there with the polar system dipping from its normal bearing and pulling in bitter cold winds directly into the plains.

This explains the deep freeze, which matches only with conditions recorded 20 years ago.

Western disturbances too are known to dip into central and even peninsular India, bringing associated but non-seasonal wet weather in the affected area.

Lower input costs turn poultry-feed cheaper



Karnal, Jan. 8: Prices of a few poultry-feed products decreased by Rs 30-40 for 50-kg bag on Wednesday, following a continuous fall in cost of production in the last few days.

Lower input costs pulled poultry feed prices down, said Aditya Mishra, a commodity expert. Following cheaper inputs, prices of pre-starter mash and finisher products dropped by Rs 600 and Rs 800 a tonne, respectively, he said.

Feed prices may continue to rule around current levels without any fluctuation in the coming days, said trade experts.

In the physical market, soyameal dropped by Rs 50 to Rs 33,500 a tonne, while bajra improved by Rs 250 to Rs 13,500 a quintal.

Di-calcium phosphate was sold at Rs 34.70 a kg, while maize moved down by Rs 50 to Rs 1,440 a quintal. DRB was up by Rs 700 to Rs 8,000; rice bran oil was sold at Rs 53 a kg; MBM dropped by

Re 1 to Rs 38; while mustard de-oiled cake was unchanged at Rs 14,700 a tonne.

Feed products

Pre-lay mash was sold at Rs 1,010 for a 50-kg bag. "Layer concentrate 25 per cent" was sold at Rs 1,450 for a 50-kg bag, while "Layer concentrate 35 per cent" ruled at Rs 1,135 for a 50-kg bag.

Broiler concentrate was quoted at Rs 2,010 for a 50-kg bag, while broiler starter mash was sold at Rs 1,550 for a 50 kg bag.

Poultry Products

A downtrend was witnessed in the poultry products market on Wednesday.

Broiler dropped by Rs 4 to Rs 90 a kg; egg eased by 13 paise to Rs 3.72; and chick went for Rs 28, down Re 1 from the previous levels.

Winter deters upcountry coconut oil buyers



Kochi, Jan. 8: The coconut oil market witnessed panic sales as major corporates cut down on copra purchases from terminal markets in Tamil Nadu. Prakash B. Rao, President, Cochin Oil Merchants Association, said this resulted in a downtrend in prices in the last couple of days. Besides, upcountry buyers are keeping away from the market due to winter and this also contributed to lower demand.

Prices declined to Rs 106/kg in Kerala from Rs 108 last week, while it was down to Rs 104 in Tamil Nadu from Rs 107 a week ago. Copra prices dropped and were quoted at Rs 77 a kg in Kerala and Rs 74 in Tamil Nadu.

The drop in prices of palm oil and palm kernel oil also contributed to the bearish trend in coconut oil. Palm oil is selling at Rs 60 and while palm kernel oil at Rs 76 a kg, he said. Thalath Mahmood, Director of the merchants body, said the off-season in the copra market forced major companies to advertise in leading newspapers to procure quality copra from the domestic market. Traders expect the market to revive next month with the commencement of the copra season.

According to Bharat N. Khona, former Board Member of the association, the market is likely to witness further drop in the coming days due to Pongal holidays in Tamil Nadu. He said high prices are unlikely to sustain for long.

Lukewarm response to edible oil resellers' offerings



Mumbai, Jan. 8: Edible oil prices fell further on Wednesday by Rs 5 for 10 kg as the futures market declined and physical demand was low. Imported palmolein and soyabean refined oil dropped by Rs 5 each. Sunflower and rapeseed oil dipped by Rs 5 and Rs 3, respectively.

Groundnut oil and cotton oil ruled unchanged. Malaysian palm oil futures dropped near two-month low on worries that rising supplies may outstrip

global demand. Prices were pressured by continued weakness in the US and China soya markets, an analyst said. Meanwhile, Malaysian palm oil stocks in December is likely to have dropped for the first time in six months after monsoon rain and floods dented production in some parts.

Stockists came up with the fresh orders and bought about 750-800 tonnes of palmolein at levels of Rs 565 for delivery up till this month-end from local refineries. Resellers offered palmolein at Rs 563, but the response was lukewarm. Indigenous edible oils were under selling pressure. Towards the day's close, Liberty quoted palmolein at Rs 572, super palmolein at Rs 592, super deluxe palmolein at Rs 612, soyabean refined oil at Rs 650 and sunflower refined oil at Rs 700. Ruchi quoted palmolein at Rs 568 for January 15; Rs 570 for January 16-31; and Rs 570 ex JNPT.

Soyabean refined oil was quoted at Rs 640 and sunflower refined oil at Rs 670. Allana quoted palmolein at Rs 568-570, soyabean refined oil at Rs 645 and sunflower refined oil at Rs 670. Resellers were quoting palmolein at Rs 562 -563 ex JNPT.

In Rajkot, groundnut oil further declined by Rs 10 to touch Rs 1,220 (Rs 1,230) for *telia* tin and Rs 780 (Rs 780) for loose (10 kg). Mustard arrivals were 65,000 bags and prices were Rs 3,250-3,650.

Malaysia BMD crude palm oil February contracts settled lower at MYR 2,529 (MYR 2,542); March settled at MYR 2,547 (MYR 2,561); and April at MYR 2,556 (MYR 2,569).

The Bombay Commodity Exchange spot rates (Rs/10 kg) were: groundnut oil 790 (790), soya refined oil 640 (645), sunflower exp. ref. 615 (630), sunflower ref. 670 (675), rapeseed ref. oil 732 (735), rapeseed expeller ref. 702 (705) cottonseed ref. oil 605 (605) and palmolein 565 (570).

Vikram Global Commodities (P) Ltd quoted Rs 610/10 kg for Malaysia super palmolein January delivery.

Facing cash crunch, sugar mills resort to aggressive sales



Mumbai, Jan. 8: Sugar prices on the Vashi wholesale market dropped sharply on Wednesday as mills sold aggressively to raise cash. Spot prices for the small grade sugar fell by Rs 25-42 a quintal and medium grade declined by Rs 10-30. Routine demand and resales keep naka rates unchanged, but mills sold Rs 10-20 cheap on lower than expected offtake.

Weak physical demand pulled down prices in the futures market by Rs 20-25. The temperature has fallen below normal in many parts of the country and demand for sugar from bulk consumers such as ice-cream and cold-drink makers usually drops at this point of time. On the other hand, retail demand also eased. In the absence of Government's financial support for raw sugar exports and with world market continuing to be bearish, domestic producers have started selling desperately in local markets. Being a large producer of sugar, Maharashtra faces stiff competition from other producing States. Arrivals at the Vashi market were 60-61 truckloads (each 100 bags), while local dispatches were 58-60 loads. On Tuesday, about 14-15 mills sold 38,000-40,000 bags at Rs 2,620-2,710 (Rs 2,630-2,730) for S-grade and Rs 2,730-2,900 (Rs 2,730-2,920) for M-grade.

The Bombay Sugar Merchants Association's spot rates were (Rs/quintal): S-grade Rs 2,800-2,950 (Rs 2,842-2,975) and M-grade Rs 2,941-3,092 (Rs 2,950-3,122). **Naka delivery rates were:** S-grade Rs 2,760-2,865 (Rs 2,760-2,865) and M-grade Rs 2,810-3,055 (Rs 2,810-3,055).

Uttar Pradesh rates were: Muzzafarnagar Rs 3,170.

Tur set to drop more on higher arrivals



Indore, Jan. 8: Pulse seeds and pulses ruled flat on poor off-take on Wednesday. The sluggish trend continued in tur on higher arrivals from Maharashtra.

Tur (Maharashtra) ruled at Rs 4,350 a quintal (down Rs 100-150 from last week), while tur (Madhya Pradesh) was quoted at Rs 3,800-3,900 a quintal, and tur (lemon) ruled at Rs 3,975 a quintal. Notwithstanding the higher arrivals, demand in tur continues to be lower with millers and traders not showing

interest in buying on account of *malmaas* (inauspicious month), according to traders.

Mandis here are also witnessing scattered arrival of new tur from parts of Madhya Pradesh. Once the arrival of tur from the new crop in Madhya Pradesh gains steam early next month, tur prices are expected to decline further in the coming days, said Prakash Vora, a local trader.

Better crop prospects in domestic and foreign markets such as Myanmar, any rally in tur is unlikely.

Tur dal, on the other hand, ruled stable on poor demand, with tur dal (full) ruling at Rs 6,000-6,400 a quintal; tur dal (sawa no.) at Rs 5,600-5,800 (down Rs 200 from last week); and tur marka ruled at Rs 6,700-6,900 (also down Rs 200 from last week). Weak arrival and improved demand lifted urad prices in the Indore mandis by about Rs 150-200 in the last one week, with urad (bold) now being quoted at Rs 4,450-4,500 a quintal; urad (medium) ruled at Rs 3,800-4,200.

A rise in spot urad also lifted dal with urad dal (medium) quoted at Rs 4,900-5,000 a quintal; urad dal (bold) was quoted at Rs 5,000-5,100, while urad mongar ruled flat at Rs 5,500-5,900, respectively.

Moong also gained Rs 200 in the last one week on improved demand from millers, with moong (bold) today being quoted at Rs 6,400-6,600, while moong (medium) ruled at Rs 5,500-6,000 (Rs 5,400-5,700 last week).

Moong dal also gained Rs 200 on the rise in spot moong, with moong dal (medium) on Wednesday quoted at Rs 7,100-7,400 a quintal (Rs 6,900-7,200 last week); moong dal (bold) was quoted at Rs 7,500-7,600 (Rs 7,300-7,400 last week).

Turmeric may rise further on upcountry demand



Erode, Jan. 8: Prices of turmeric in Erode markets increased on Wednesday as traders continued to get orders from the North and other parts of the country.

“Turmeric prices increased due to demand as traders have received more upcountry orders. The current demand is likely to increase and prices may rise further,” said R. K. V. Ravishankar, President, Erode Turmeric Merchants Association.

He said the current price of Rs 6,500 a quintal is remunerative for farmers. The arrival of fine variety has resulted in sales increasing. On Wednesday, 5,500 bags of turmeric arrived and 80 per cent was sold.

Muthuswamy, a grower, said he expects the price to go up further.

Traders said if quality turmeric arrives for sale, they may quote a higher price.

The hybrid finger variety was quoted at Rs 7,299 a quintal on Wednesday. At the Erode Turmeric Merchants Association sales yard, the finger variety fetched Rs 4,590-6,434 a quintal and the root variety Rs 4,296-6,014.

Salem Hybrid: The finger variety was sold at Rs 5,691-7,299, the root variety Rs 5,364-6,399. Of the 1,158 bags that arrived for sale, 612 were sold.

At the Regulated Market Committee, the finger variety fetched Rs 5,659-6,539, the root variety Rs 5,299-6,150. Of 1,226 bags on offer, 1,116 were picked up.

At the Erode Cooperative Marketing Society, the finger variety was sold at Rs 5,450-6,539 and the root variety Rs 5,089-6,199. Of the 1,347 bags put up for sale, 1,332 found takers.

At the Gobichettipalayam Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Society, the finger variety quoted at Rs 5,211-6,371, the root variety Rs 5,011-5,965. All 147 bags that arrived were sold.

Business Standard

Guarseed hits daily upper limit

Guarseed prices firmed up to hit their daily upper circuit of 3 per cent in futures trading today on brisk buying by traders in line with firm overseas and domestic market cues.

Marketmen said the commodity remained in keen demand on frantic buying by [guar gum](#) makers and restricted arrivals from growing regions.

Strong export demand, driven by weak rupee against dollar, also helped in boosting the trading sentiments, they added.

India is the leading producer and exporter of guarseed and guar gum.

At the National Commodity and Derivatives Exchange, guarseed prices for second last March month contract spurted to hit daily upper limit of 3 per cent or Rs 150 at Rs 5,155 per quintal, clocking an open interest of 2,410 lots.

The January contract also hit daily upper limit of three per cent, or Rs 145, at Rs 4,995 per quintal with an open interest of 6,408 lots.

February guarseed, the most active contract, surged by the same margin of Rs 145, or 2.95 per cent, to Rs 5,065 per quintal with an open interest of 14,267 lots.

Cardamom up 0.6% as demand improves

[Cardamom](#) prices rose by 0.61% to Rs 721.50 per kg in futures trade today after speculators enlarged positions on good buying in spot markets.

Sentiments improved further as a result of firm demand in the spot market against restricted arrivals from producing belts.

At the [Multi Commodity Exchange](#), cardamom for February contracts rose by Rs 4.40, or 0.61%, to Rs 721.50 per kg, with a trading volume of 367 lots.

The spice for delivery in January was trading up by Rs 2.10, or 0.29%, to Rs 708 per kg, with a business volume of 27 lots.

Traders said rising export and spot demand against restricted arrivals from producing regions mainly influenced cardamom prices at futures market.

Maize down 1.2% on selling pressure

[Maize](#) prices dipped by Rs 16 to Rs 1,245 per quintal in futures trading today following selling pressure in line with weak physical market sentiments.

Marketmen said increased selling, driven by weak physical market sentiments, where prices remained under pressure due to increased arrivals and reduced offtake, caused the fall in prices.

Lower trend in overseas markets also dampened the trading sentiments.

At the [National Commodity and Derivatives Exchange](#), maize prices for March contract fell by Rs 16, or 1.27%, to Rs 1,245 per quintal, with an open interest of 3,560 lots.

Current January month contract also dropped by Rs 12, or 0.99%, to Rs 1,206 per quintal, with an open interest of 13,280 lots.

Palm oil down 0.3% on global cues

[Crude palm oil](#) prices declined by Rs 1.80 to Rs 543.20 per 10 kg today as speculators offloaded positions amid a weakening global trend.

At the [Multi Commodity Exchange](#), crude palm oil for delivery in February declined by Rs 1.80, or 0.33%, to Rs 543.20 per 10 kg in business turnover of 50 lots.

Likewise, the oil for delivery in January shed Rs 1.50, or 0.27%, to Rs 538.30 per 10 kg in 53 lots.

Market analysts said offloading of positions by speculators in tandem with a weakening global trend mainly led to the fall in crude palm oil prices at futures trade.

Meanwhile, palm oil for March delivery lost 0.80% to 2,540 ringgit (USD 775) a tonne on the Bursa [Malaysia Derivatives Exchange](#) after it fell for the fifth day to the lowest level in almost two months on concern that demand for the tropical oil used in everything from food to fuel may shrink on increasing supplies of soybean oil.

Chana down 0.4% on profit-booking

[Chana](#) prices fell by Rs 12 to Rs 2,978 per quintal in futures trade today on profit-booking by speculators due to large stocks from the old crop and expectations of higher production.

Sentiment is low because stocks from the old crop are high. Demand is also weak in the local market on higher carry forward stocks and prospects of higher production, traders said.

At the National Commodity and Derivative Exchange, chana for January delivery declined by Rs 12, or 0.40%, to Rs 2,978 per quintal, with an open interest for 46,330 lots.

Similarly, chana for February delivery fell by Rs 9, or 0.29%, to Rs 3,047 per quintal with an open interest of 70,210 lots.

Potato up 0.4% on pick-up in spot demand

[Potato](#) prices moved up by Rs 4.50 to Rs 957.40 per quintal in futures trade today on increased spot demand against restricted arrivals.

Trading sentiment improved further as traders enlarged holdings driven by surge in demand in the spot market.

At the [Multi Commodity Exchange](#), potato for delivery in March rose by Rs 4.50, or 0.47%, to Rs 957.40 per quintal, with trading volume of 315 lots.

Potato for delivery in April also moved up by Rs 2.60, or 0.27%, to Rs 942 per quintal with a trade volume of 43 lots.

Analysts said increased demand in the spot market against tight supplies from producing regions mainly pushed up potato prices at futures trade.

UP eyes 35% increase in potato production

[Uttar Pradesh](#) is looking to augment [potato production](#) by 35 per cent to achieve 18 million tonnes (MT) of produce.

Likewise, potato acreage would be increased by almost 25 per cent to 6,75,000 hectares.

To achieve these ambitious goals, the state government is giving final shape to the proposed UP [Potato Development Policy](#), 2014, aimed at increasing farm income.

The current level of state potato production and acreage stands at 13.3 MT and 5,48,000 hectares, respectively. UP Chief Secretary Jawed Usmani had recently directed officials to speedily formulate the proposed policy.

The government would set up a centre of excellence for potato, while potato farmers would be facilitated to avail of bank credit facilities based on the proposed 'warehousing receipt system.'

The mandis situated in potato belts would be converted to 'potato mandis' to boost inter-state trade. Exhibitions/buyers-sellers meets would also be organised in other states to facilitate tie-ups between local buyers and UP's potato producers.

Besides, Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority ([APEDA](#)) and state mandi parishad would be roped in for branding of state potato and export promotion.

Training programmes would be organised at the district, block and village levels to disseminate latest technical knowledge about potato cultivation.

The state government had already speeded up efforts to ramp up [warehousing capacity](#) by over 1.8 MT under Private Entrepreneur Guarantee (PEG) Scheme, 2008, under which UP State Warehousing Corporation (UPSWC) would set up warehousing capacity of almost 1.67 MT, followed by the Food Corporation of India and Central Warehousing Corporation at 1.85 MT and 6,500 tonnes, respectively.

The state needs more cold storage and warehousing capacity for efficient post harvest management of crops and food grain. The lack of proper warehousing leads to colossal wastage of agricultural crops, especially during the agricultural marketing seasons.

At present, there are 1,522 functional cold storages in the state with a combined capacity of about 11.13 MT.

UP has emerged as a hub for fruits and vegetables with compounded annual growth rate of over 15 per cent. The fresh arrival of vegetables to the wholesale markets rose from 2.8 MT in 2008-09 to over 4.3 MT in 2011-12, according to a study by Assocham.

Guava, litchi, mango and pomegranate are leading fruits produced in UP. While, brinjal, cabbage, cauliflower, onion, peas, tomato, potato and sweet potato are the leading vegetables produced in the state. Over 18.5 MT of vegetables are produced in UP annually and the state commands second highest share of 12 per cent out of 150 MT vegetables produced in the country.

Coriander down 1.2% on profit-booking

[Coriander](#) prices fell by 1.22% to Rs 8,171 per quintal in futures trade today as speculators booked profits at existing higher levels amid fall in spot market demand.

At the National Commodity and Derivatives Exchange, coriander prices for delivery in February fell by Rs 101, or 1.22%, to Rs 8,171 per quintal with an open interest of 25,560 lots.

The price for January delivery declined by Rs 53, or 0.66%, to Rs 7,895 per quintal with open interest of 12,720 lots.

Market analysts said besides profit-booking by speculators at existing higher levels, sluggish demand in the spot market led to the fall in coriander futures prices.
