

Salem Aavin facing tough time



Salem is the biggest milk supplier to Chennai. Another reason for the drop is farmers are selling milk to private dairies

SALEM, March 12, 2014 - Aavin in Salem that tops all the 17 Aavin plants across the state in terms of milk production is facing a tough time.

This has been fuelled by the increasing demand for milk in Chennai, drop in the domestic sale of milk and stopping production of value added products. Daily milk supply to Chennai was 90,000 litres to 1.2 lakh litres in September 2013. "It has increased to two lakh litres during the last three weeks.

Salem is now the biggest milk supplier to Chennai – at the cost of forcibly reducing domestic supply – due to heavy pressure from our higher authorities, in Chennai, who are concerned about the market there", Aavin officials said.

"Demand for Aavin milk in Chennai is high as we sell milk for Rs. 31 a litre. Private dairies sell it for Rs. 40", an Aavin official said. They noted that domestic milk sale in Salem and Namakkal was 1.97 lakh litres. There is demand for 2.25 lakh litres in the domestic market. "But we are able to supply only 1.9 lakh litres here as we are forced to supply more to Chennai", officials added.

"Consumers here should be considered equally important as consumers in Chennai. We are buying milk at a higher price from private vendors", laments consumer A.B. Anisha Christin of Fairlands. On the other hand the situation has worsened due to heavy drop in milk procurement. "Aavin's daily milk procurement was 4.87 lakh litres a few months ago. It dropped to 4.1 lakh litres due to unavailability of fodder for cows.

Another reason for the drop is because farmers are selling milk to private dairies for a better price", milk producers added.

"This has forced Aavin here that made a profit of Rs. 1.5 crore a month to incur a loss of Rs. 1.75 crore in January 2014. If these situations continue the loss will be worse," Aavin officials and milk producers lamented.

☐ ***Salem is the biggest milk supplier to Chennai***

☐ ***Another reason for the drop is farmers are selling milk to private dairies***

Fishermen advised to dial 1093 for emergency assistance

PUDUKOTTAI, March 12, 2014 - Security awareness meet organised by Coastal Security Group

During emergencies, fishermen should contact coastal security toll free phone number 1093 for getting emergency assistance and security details, said C.Manoharan, Collector. He was speaking at a coastal security awareness meeting organised by the Coastal Security Group (CSG) at Manamelkudi near here on Tuesday. Fishermen of Pudukottai district, which accounts for 33 coastal villages, must go in groups while venturing into the sea, Mr.Manoharan said. They should positively carry their identity cards and should install global positioning system and VHF equipment in their boats. They should ensure that all boats are insured; he said and urged them to engage in regulated fishing as per rules and regulations prescribed by the government for their own safety and security. They should not harm endangered sea species and should extend a helping hand in protecting the environment and wealth of the sea, Mr.Manoharan said. K.Chockalingam, Inspector General of Police, Coastal Security Group, urged the fishermen to keep life saving equipment in their boats. He sought their cooperation in search and rescue operation during times of distress. E.S.Uma, Superintendent of Police, Durai, Revenue Divisional Officer, Tirunavukkarasu, assistant director of fisheries, and police officials and representatives of various fishermen associations participated in the meeting.

☞ ***'Carry ID cards, install global positioning system and VHF equipment in your boats'***
☞ ***'Follow rules and regulations prescribed by government for your own safety and security'***

Rubber procurement yet to gain momentum

KOCHI, March 12, 2014 - *Rubbermark has procured three tonnes so far; Marketfed drive began only on Monday*

More than a week after it was launched, a procurement drive aimed at shoring up falling natural rubber price has not picked momentum, having been caught in technical issues. Sources in the Kerala State Rubber Marketing Federation (Rubbermark), one of the two State agencies entrusted with procuring rubber at Rs.2 higher than the market rate, said that all outstanding issues had been cleared and that the agency had procured three tonnes so far.

Kerala State Marketing Federation (Marketfed) sources said that though the issues had been cleared it had entered the market only on Monday. Procurement is expected to pick momentum within a day or two.

Trading companies under the Rubber Board have not entered the market yet, board sources said.

Production down

Meanwhile, data released by the Rubber Board showed that rubber production in the country dropped nine per cent between the April 2012-February 2013 period and April 2013 and February 2014 period. Rubber production during the 11 months during 2012-13 was 8.60 lakh tonnes, compared to the 7.83 lakh tonnes during the current financial year. Between these periods, consumption had fallen by less than half-a-per cent. Consumption during the first 11 months of the last financial year stood at 8.92 lakh tonnes while it was 8.88 lakh tonnes during the 11 months in the current financial year.

Rubber Board has put production (provisionally) during February 2014 at 60,000 tonnes, compared to the 62,000 tonnes during February 2013. Consumption for the month stood at 74,175 tonnes in 2013 and at 78,000 tonnes for 2014.

Import of natural rubber has seen a marked difference. The board figures showed that India imported 2.98 lakh tonnes of rubber between April 2013 and February 2014, nearly a lakh tonne more than the previous year period when India imported 2.07 lakh tonnes of rubber. While stock at the end of February 2013 stood at 2.66 lakh tonnes, it was 2.46 lakh tonnes at the end of February 2014, board data said.

Meanwhile, spot rubber closed at Rs.147 a kg for RSS4 in the Kottayam market, marginally moving up from Monday's rate of Rs.146.50 a kg. The week had opened with RSS4 ruling at Rs.150 a kg.

Cotton price

Forwards Markets Commission, MCX and Indian Cotton Federation will conduct a programme on 'Safety net against cotton price fluctuations' at The Residency at 11 a.m.

Farmers demand compensation for crop loss

Grapes worth Rs. 900 crore damaged in hailstorm, says farmers' body; Horticulture Minister visits affected districts



With the City Corporation authorities winding up the gruel centre in Mundargi locality, the victims of the unseasonal rain fury have been left to fend for themselves.

BIJAPUR/ RAICHUR/ BELLARY, March 12, 2014 - In support of their various demands, including compensation of Rs. 1 lakh per acre for crop loss due to the

recent rains and waiving off of loan and interest borrowed by the farmers from various banks, the members of Karnataka State Grape Growers' Association took out a rally and submitted a memorandum to the government in Bijapur on Tuesday. President of the association Abhaykumar Nandrekar said that the recent untimely rains coupled with heavy hailstones destroyed almost all of the standing grape crop in the grape-growing districts of north Karnataka, including Bijapur, Bagalkot, Gulbarga, Yadgir, Bidar, Gadag and Belgaum. More than Rs. 900 crore worth of crop has been damaged due to hailstorms, Mr. Nandrekar said. Almost Rs. 650 crore worth of crop has been damaged in Bijapur district alone followed by Bagalkot where the crop damage is estimated at Rs. 195 crore, he said.

Pest attack

Extensive pest attack was also adding to the woes of the grape farmers who are finding it hard even to recover the cost of cultivation leave alone the profit, he said.

Considering the problems of the grape farmers, he demanded that the government waive off the loan and the interest on it. He also urged the government to issue an order to the banks directing them not to ask the farmers to repay the loan as the financial position of the grape farmers was very weak.

Meanwhile, Horticulture Minister, Shamanur Shivashankarappa visited some rain affected areas of Bijapur district on Tuesday.

He interacted with the some of the farmers , however he could not give any assurance because of the poll code of conduct in place. The Minister on Monday had visited Bagalkot district to assess the damage.

Farmers under the banner of Karnataka Rajya Raitha Sangha (KRRS) also staged a similar demonstration in Raichur on Tuesday. "The hailstorm and downpour on last Thursday have washed away the standing crops in hundreds of villages across the district. Cotton, groundnut, tobacco, onion, paddy, vegetable, maize and horticulture crops have been completely destroyed. Number of cattle death incidents have been reported from different parts of the district. Mud houses and huts have been collapsed in many villages," Lakshmangowda Kadagamdoddi, district president of KRRS said. He demanded compensation of Rs. 30,000 to Rs. 35,000 an acre for crops.

"We demand for scientific compensation for horticulture crops such as papaya, pomegranate and banana. Officials should estimate the loss by discussing with each individual farmer before deciding the amount of compensation," Mr. Kadagamdoddi said.

Indefinite strike

He warned that his organisation would have to launch indefinite demonstration outside the office of the Raichur Deputy Commissioner if the proper compensation was not paid within a week.

Meanwhile in Bellary, the loss to private and public properties caused during the recent unseasonal rain, accompanied by hail storms, has been estimated at Rs. 15.48 crore, according to Deputy Commissioner Amlan Aditya Biswas.

As many as 365 houses were damaged, of which 15 were fully damaged, causing a loss of Rs. 88.5 lakh.

A joint survey by officials of the department of agriculture and revenue has revealed that crops in over 15,391 hectares have been damaged in the recent hail storms in the district. Officials are yet to assess the monetary value of the loss.

The total rainfall in the district over seven days has been around 250 mm. Rainfall continued to affect some areas in Bhalki and Aurad taluks on Monday. Jowar has suffered damage on 8,230 hectares, Bengal gram on 2,972 hectares, wheat on 1,099 hectares, sugarcane on 746 hectare and other crops on around 2,344 hectares.

A joint survey is still on to evaluate the losses, G. T Puthra, joint director of agriculture said. Ishwar Khandre, MLA, and the Bidar Chamber of Commerce and Industries have asked the government to release compensation immediately.

Water level

The water level in Periyar dam stood at 111 feet (permissible level is 136 feet) on Tuesday with an inflow of 15 cusecs and a discharge of 200 cusecs. The level in Vaigai dam was 32.07 feet (full level is 71 feet) with no inflow and a discharge of 40 cusecs. The combined storage in Periyar credit was 854 mcft. There was no rainfall recorded during the 24 hours ending at 8.30 a.m. on Tuesday, PWD officials here said.

Water level in the Papanasam dam on Tuesday stood at 51.30 feet (maximum level is 143 feet). The dam had an inflow of 136.46 cusecs and 54.75 cusecs of water was discharged from the dam.

The level of Manimuthar dam stood at 73 feet (118 feet). The dam had an inflow of 39 cusecs and no water was discharged.

Kanyakumari - The water level in Pechipparai dam stood at 7.60 feet, 38.35feet in Perunchani, 3.12 feet in Chittar I, 3.21 feet in Chittar II, 3.30 feet in Poigai and 42.24feet in Mamabazhathuraiyaru.

Weather

Chennai - INDIA

Today's Weather



Partly Cloudy

Wednesday, Mar 12

Max 30° | Min 25°

Rain: 0

Humidity: 74

Wind: normal

Sunrise: 06:19

Sunset: 06:19

Barometer: 1012

Tomorrow's Forecast



Sunny

Thursday, Mar 13

Max 30° | Min 25°

Extended Forecast for a week

Friday Mar 14	Saturday Mar 15	Sunday Mar 16	Monday Mar 17	Tuesday Mar 18
30° 25° Clear	30° 24° Partly Cloudy	32° 24° Partly Cloudy	32° 24° Partly Cloudy	26° 22° Cloudy

THE HINDU Business Line

36% tea unsold at Coonoor sale

Coonoor, March 11: Due to slack demand, 36 per cent of the 13.09 lakh kg offered at Sale No: 10 of Coonoor Tea Trade Association auction remained unsold last week.

Homedale Estate tea, auctioned by Global Tea Brokers, topped CTC market when Mittal Tea Co bought it for Rs. 242 a kg. Crosshill Estate got Rs. 226, Vigneshwar Estate got Rs. 222, Deepika Supreme Rs. 192 and Shanthy Supreme Rs. 191. Among orthodox teas, Chamraj topped at Rs. 266 a kg followed by Kairbetta Rs. 232, Kodanad Rs. 230, Havukal Rs. 223, Prammas Rs. 208 and Highfield Estate Rs. 207.

Quotations held by brokers indicated bids ranging Rs. 56-60 a kg for plain leaf grades and Rs. 110-180 for brighter liquoring sorts. They ranged Rs. 66-71 for plain dusts and Rs. 130-190 for brighter liquoring dusts.

Export purchase was limited to plainer less-priced teas. The war-like situation in Ukraine-Russia belt restricted trade with the CIS. Some purchase for this market was done at Rs. 64-110 a kg. Pakistan bought for Rs. 61-82. Prolonged snowfall is upsetting trade in the US, Europe and Japan.

“Although it is already March, we have repeat snowfall here obstructing tea mobility to neighbourhood stores”, Pragma Jain, patron of Nilgiri tea at Maryland, US, told *Business Line*. Upcountry buyers bought brighter-liquoring teas in a less-competitive market.

Spot rubber edges higher

Kottayam, March 11: Spot rubber prices were up marginally on Tuesday.

According to observers, market activities were dull as there were no genuine buyers or sellers to trigger any specific trend. Traders were hesitant to enlarge their commitments, possibly since the end of the current financial year is imminent.

Sheet rubber inched up to Rs. 146.50 (Rs. 146) a kg, according to traders. The grade increased to Rs. 147 (Rs. 146.50) and Rs. 144 (Rs. 143.50) respectively, as reported by the Rubber Board and dealers.

March futures closed at Rs. 143.60 (Rs. 143.91), April at Rs. 149.20 (Rs. 148.91), May at Rs. 152.20 (Rs. 153.34), June at Rs. 154.55 (Rs. 153.31) and July at Rs. 155.26 (Rs. 158.60) on the National Multi Commodity Exchange. RSS 3 (spot) improved to Rs. 136.07 (Rs. 135.21) at Bangkok.

Rubber futures rebounded to a six-week high on the Tokyo Commodity Exchange as investors looked for bargains after three straight sessions of falls.

March futures closed at ₹241.9 (Rs. 142.75) on the Tokyo Commodity Exchange. Spot rubber rates (Rs. /kg) were: RSS-4: 146.50 (146) RSS-5: 144 (143.50) Ungraded: 141.50 (141.50) ISNR 20: 142.50 (143) and Latex 60%: 112.50 (113).

Sugar rules firm as stockists delay buying in bulk

Mumbai, March 11: Sugar prices continued to rule firm at upper level with rise of Rs. 30-60 for fine variety on Tuesday. Some producers sold the commodity even at higher rates. On the Vashi wholesale market, routine local demand kept prices for S-grade unchanged, while M-grade rose by Rs. 4-10 a quintal.

Naka prices were steady. Arrivals at Vashi market were about 64- 65 truckloads (of 100 bags each) and the local dispatches were 63-64 truckloads.

On Monday evening, 18-19 mills offered tenders and sold about 65,000 bags at Rs. 2,700-2,820 (Rs. 2,650-2,760) for S-grade and Rs. 2,880-2,980 (Rs. 2,850- 2,940) for M-grade.

Bombay Sugar Merchants Association's spot rates were: S-grade Rs. 2,860-2,932 (Rs. 2,860-2,932) and M-grade was Rs. 2,980-3,092 (Rs. 2,976-3,082).

Naka delivery rates were: S-grade Rs. 2,860-2,950 (Rs. 2,860-2,950) and M-grade Rs. 2,950-3,060 (Rs. 2,950-3,060).

A Vashi based wholesaler said: "Stockists held back new bulk purchases as mills' prices are higher and market prices are not matching resulting in disparity. However, all are optimistic about higher demand in coming months as production season ends comes nearer.

On the other hand, producers are not willing to sell at lower prices as prices in Uttar Pradesh ruling higher. The undercurrent of the market remained positive. Buying enquiry from neighbouring States also started increasing in Maharashtra this will lead to a higher demand coming days."

Unseasonal rain damages wheat crop



Harvest will be delayed, but too early to quantify loss, say Govt officials, traders

Dampened hopes A farmer looks at the damage caused to wheat crops in a field after a hailstorm struck across a vast landscape on the outskirts of Bhopal in Madhya Pradesh. AM Faruqui

New Delhi, March 11: Unseasonal rains across North and Central parts of the country are likely to delay wheat harvest – the main rabi crop in the region – besides possibly shrinking the crop size. Both trade and Government officials believe that the rains could push back

the harvest by at least a couple of weeks.

Wheat harvest normally starts at the end of March or early in April in Punjab, Haryana and Uttar Pradesh. The Government has projected a record crop of 95.6 lakh tonnes this year. However, in Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra, the standing crop ready for harvest has been damaged by the recent hailstorm in the region.

“Definitely the crop has been affected. It is too early to assess the loss,” said Agriculture Commissioner BS Sandhu. He told *Business Line* that a team from the Centre would be soon visiting these States to assess the impact.

Loss in MP

Meanwhile, Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan said in Bhopal on Tuesday that farmers in the State have suffered extensive damage due to the unseasonal rains and hailstorm. He has pegged the losses at Rs. 13,000 crore.

According to agency reports, rabi crops in Madhya Pradesh have been damaged in some 26 lakh hectares. Wheat crop loss in the central State has been estimated at 20 lakh tonnes, while chana’s (gram) loss at 10 lakh tonnes.

Output target

The Centre had set a wheat production target of 92.5 million tonnes for the current rabi season, while it forecast a higher output of 95.60 mt on account of higher acreage.

The country has 124 per cent excess rains in the week ending March 5 since the beginning of the year. Sandhu said the wheat crop was in grain filling stages in Punjab, Haryana and UP and it would take at least a month to harvest.

Indu Sharma, Head of the Karnal-based Directorate of Wheat Research, said that there were reports of logging – crop falling flat -- in areas such as Yamuna Nagar, Jabalpur and Kota among others.

Logging

As long as there was no logging, the impact will not be severe, Sharma said, adding that strong winds and hailstorms were a cause of worry. She declined to quantify the losses.

Adi Narayan Gupta, former president of Roller Flour Millers Federation, said unseasonal rains in Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan had hit the quality of grains, while it would delay the harvest in Uttar Pradesh, Haryana and Punjab by a month. “There has been some discoloration,” Gupta said, adding that it was too early to assess the crop loss.

Wheat may steady as supplies match demand



Karnal, March 11: WHEAT MAY RULE STEADY

Dara wheat and flour prices may rule around current levels on account of steady demand and ample stocks in the coming days, said trade experts. A positive tone was witnessed in wheat futures, while dara wheat eased marginally in the physical market on Tuesday. In the physical market, dara wheat eased marginally by Rs. 5 to Rs. 1,610-15 a quintal. Around 800 bags of wheat arrived and stocks were directly offloaded at the mills. Mill delivery was at Rs. 1,610 while delivery at the chakki was at Rs. 1,615. Despite a marginal fall in wheat, flour remained unchanged and sold at Rs. 1,850. Similarly, Chokar remained unchanged at Rs. 1,350 a quintal. Our Correspondent

Business Standard

Cardamom up 0.3% on rising demand



[Cardamom](#) futures remained higher and prices added 0.33% to Rs 792 per kg today as speculators enlarged their positions on rising demand in the spot market.

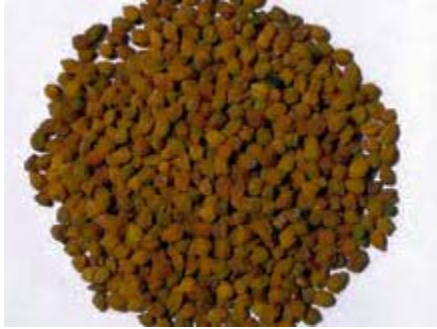
Besides, tight stocks position in the physical market due to restricted arrivals from producing belts further fuelled the uptrend.

At the [Multi Commodity Exchange](#), cardamom for delivery in March added Rs 2.60, or 0.33%, to Rs 792 per kg in a business turnover of 3 lots.

However, the spice for delivery in April traded lower by Rs 2, or 0.24%, to Rs 831.50 per kg in 373 lots.

Analysts said besides rising demand in the spot market, restricted arrivals from producing regions kept cardamom prices higher at futures trade.

Chana down 0.1% on profit-booking



[Chana](#) prices traded lower by 0.15% to Rs 3,429 per quintal in futures trading today as participants booked profits driven by sluggish demand in the spot market.

At the National Commodity and Derivative Exchange, chana for delivery in May declined by Rs 5, or 0.15%, to Rs 3,429 per quintal with an open interest of 42,610 lots.

Similarly, the commodity for delivery in April shed Rs 4, or 0.12%, to Rs 3384 per quintal in 95,330 lots.

Analysts attributed the fall in chana prices at futures to profit-booking by speculators at prevailing levels and sluggish demand in the spot market.

Retailers in Kerala hit hard by rising coconut prices



[Coconut](#) and coconut oil prices in Kerala are on an increasing spree due to acute shortage.

The price of a large, un-husked coconut has now increased to Rs 20-22, in major producing centre while this is Rs 35 in the High Range districts like Pathanamthitta and Kottayam.

Even smaller coconuts are having a price tag of Rs 20-22 in retail trading in these districts. This affects the family budget of an average Keralite as coconut is an essential ingredient in most recipes. Although Kerala is now in the midst of coconut season, production is rather low this time due to various reasons.

As the price was very low during the last couple of years, coconut plantations have been abandoned in the central districts. This coupled with transforming coconut plantations into housing areas reduced the acreage. There is also serious shortage of labourers to climb the trees and drop ripe coconut.

The wage for climbing trees has increased to Rs 40 each tree. According to KV Paul, a farmer in Ernakulam district, labour shortage is a severe problem and at least 20 per cent of the production is being lost due to this.

In the Malabar region also, production had dropped 40 -50 per cent during this season and the summer heat was affecting plantations. He said coconut production was likely to pick up by June, in tandem with the monsoon. So, prices may continue to be on the higher side till May, he added.

Thalath Muhammed, a coconut oil dealer in [Kochi](#), told Business Standard coconut prices were on an upward trend and expected a change in trend in April, when the season starts in [Tamil Nadu](#).

Even in Tamil Nadu, the largest producing state in India, production was rather low. Coconut oil price at the wholesale level almost doubled during this month. It was at Rs 7,000 per quintal in January 2013.

On Tuesday, the Cochin Oil Merchants Association quoted Rs 12,500 a quintal, while it was at Rs 11,450 last month. The sharp rise in the price of coconut oil has fuelled the price of palm oil, also used in cooking. Retail price of palm oil has now increased to Rs 80 a kg, from Rs 65 a month ago.

Selvaraj, a retail coconut oil dealer, said there was an apparent shift in the consumption towards palm oil, as the retail price of coconut oil was Rs 140 a kg.

He also said the adulteration of coconut oil was on the rise due to the current price rise. This is a common phenomenon when price rises, he added.

Palm kernel oil, which is very cheap in markets, is mixed with coconut oil for retail trading. Thalath said coconut oil price in Tamil Nadu was ruling high due to serious shortage. In Kankayam, the largest coconut oil market in India, coconut oil price is Rs 12,500 a quintal in wholesale trading.

Under these circumstances, supply from Tamil Nadu had slowed down.

Normally, the price in Kankayam is lower by Rs 100 a quintal than the prevailing Kochi market. Now, both the markets are on a par, he added.

Palm oil down 0.4% on sluggish demand, global cues



[Crude palm oil](#) prices declined by 0.44% to Rs 608.60 per 10 kg in futures trading today as speculators reduced holdings amid sluggish spot demand.

At the [Multi Commodity Exchange](#), crude palm oil for delivery in March moved down by Rs 2.70, or 0.44%, to Rs 608.60 per 10 kg in a business turnover of 676 lots.

Similarly, the oil for delivery in April declined by Rs 2.30, or 0.38%, to Rs 608 per 10 kg in 997 lots.

Market analysts said speculators reduced holdings on sluggish demand in the spot market amid weak global trend that mainly kept pressure on crude palm oil at futures trade.

Meanwhile, palm oil for May delivery retreated 1.1% to USD 876 per tonne, the biggest decline since February 27 on the Malaysia Derivatives Exchange.

Soybean arrivals decline in MP market

[Soybean](#) supplies in [Madhya Pradesh](#) have been almost reduced to half in a month as [farmers](#) are concentrating more on [Rabi crops](#), traders say.

"Last month, during this time, the average daily arrivals in the state were around 90,000-

1,00,000 bags of 100 kg each which currently stands at 50,000-55,000 bags," P Goyal, a soybean trader in Indore, said.

Madhya Pradesh is the largest producer of soybean in the country followed by Maharashtra and Rajasthan.



Traders feel arrivals are down as farmers are concentrating more on marketing Rabi crops like wheat and chana. Also, many farmers are holding back in expectation of better prices in the coming days, said traders.

"Many are hoping for better prices in the coming days as domestic markets may get support from overseas markets due to weather concerns in South America and Malaysia," Prakash Jain, a soybean trader in Indore, said.

After USA, South American countries Brazil and Argentina are the two largest soybean producers in the world.

Malaysian palm oil prices affect the soyoil prices in India as the two products are considered substitute products.

India is one of the leading soymeal suppliers to the southeast Asian countries and among the major consumers of vegetable oils.

April-January jeera exports exceed 100,000 tonnes



During April 2013-January 2014, jeera (cumin) exports exceeded 100,000 tonnes, owing to low prices and good quality. In 2012-13, these were 79,900 tonnes; in 2011-12 45,500 tonnes and 2010-11 32,500 tonnes.

Traders estimate in 2013-14 crop will rise 20 per cent on 2012-13, owing to good sowing and weather conditions.

"By the end of January, India has exported more than 100,000 tonnes and export demand is still there," said Yogesh Mehta, director, Indian Spice and Foodstuff Exporters Association ([ISFEA](#)). This year, demand has increased from across the world, as production in Turkey and Syria has been low. Also, the Indian crop is cheaper. Mehta said in 2013-14 production would be 360,000 tonnes against 302,500 tonnes in 2012-13.

LOOKING UP

- Jeera has been traded at Rs 1,720-2,150 a 20 kg through the month. At the market, daily arrivals are 26,000 bags (55 kg each) against 5,000 a month ago
- A trader at the Unjha market in Gujarat's Mehsana district said the [EU](#) and the US were buying from India

A trader at the Unjha market in north Gujarat's Mehsana district said, "The European Union

(EU) and the US are buying from India. As a result, there is a rise in exports." In two weeks, the new crop has starting arriving and it is expected the arrivals will increase gradually.



Vice-Chairman Nimish Vora said, "Prices may decline further." Jeera has been traded at Rs 1,720-2,150 a 20 kg through the month. At the market, daily arrivals are 26,000 bags (55 kg each) compared with 5,000 a month ago. According to an [Angel Commodities](#) report, area in Gujarat was 455,000 hectares compared with 335,200 hectares last year. In Rajasthan, it was 390,000

hectares.

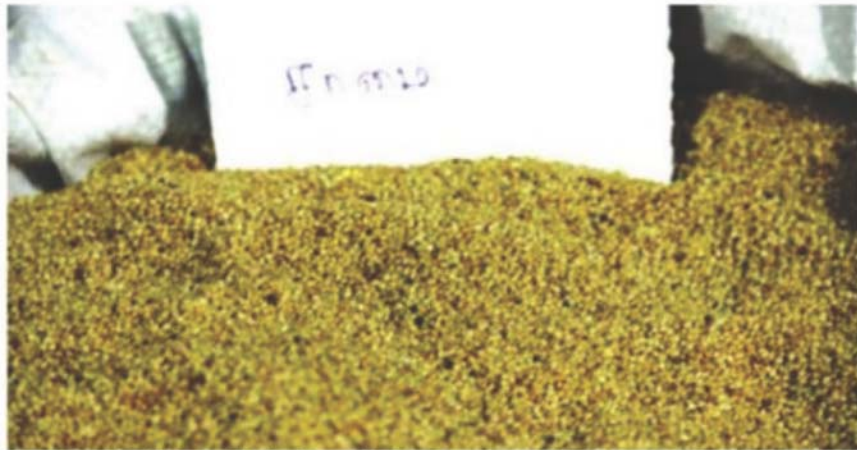
THE NEW INDIAN EXPRESS

Farmers' Assn to Help Fetch Higher Prices for Millets

by M Niyas Ahmed

Dharmapuri: Dharmapuri, a low-rainfall district, is known for minor millets like ragi, samai, varagu, thina and kuthirai vali, which are cultivated widely. So far, owing to the poor market, farmers here had to sell them cheap. Now, they have formed a Minor Millet Farmers Association to sell their produce in the metros at higher prices and to export them.

"Elite groups in Chennai and Bangalore have good awareness about millets. The prices there for millets is good in the metros, but middlemen procure our produce for low prices and sell them for high prices there. So we decided to form an association to get higher prices for them," said R Sivalingam, secretary, Dharmapuri Minor Millets Farmers Association.



Samai, a variety of minor millets kept for sale in Dharmapuri market | EXPRESS

Over 200 farmers have joined the association. The farmers have also decided to process the millets as value-added products fetch higher prices. A small-scale unit will be set up to make millet products.

Sivalingam thanked Assistant Director of Agricul-

ture Mathubalan for his efforts to create the organisation, describing him as the "backbone of the millet association."

Mathubalan himself credited the government schemes. "The government has announced several schemes for the promotion

of millets, especially the 'Initiative for Nutritional Security through Intensive Millets Promotion' (INSIMP). Under this scheme, fertilisers and pesticides are given free of cost to cultivate millets. The farmers are also given subsidies," he told *Express*.