

Organic farmers' initiative

In an effort to propagate zero-budget farming, Poshak, a group of organic farmers, will distribute superior quality cows of 'Gir' variety from Gujarat, to farmers in Kerala. For details, contact phone: 9447106992 or 9961767481, a press release said.

B. Sc. Agriculture, veterinary science have excellent job scope, says expert



Civil engineering, electrical and electronics engineering (EEE), computer science and engineering (CSE) and information technology (IT), medicine, B.Sc. Agriculture and Bachelor of Veterinary Science (B.V.Sc.) have excellent job opportunities in the near future, said A. Jayaprakash Gandhi, career guidance consultant from Salem.

Addressing the class X-appeared, and XII standard and Plus Two-passed students at a career guidance programme organised by the School Education Department at Voorhees College here on Tuesday, Mr. Gandhi advised the students to choose a reputed college where companies conduct campus interviews whether they take engineering, medicine or an arts and science course, since the companies selected institutions based only on the quality of education offered by them and not on the cities where they were located.

The career guidance consultant said that since the Government of India has sanctioned elevated expressway projects for a length of 6000km in the latest 5-year plan (of which only 292km have been completed), students who choose civil engineering would have good scope for employment when they completed their course.

“At present, there is a big gap between the syllabus and the industry requirements. You should therefore update your skills based on industry requirements in order to become employable,” he said. With the oil industry going in for undersea liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) storage plants in Visakhapattinam, and the possibility of floating airports coming up in Kuwait, civil engineers who go in for specialisation in ocean engineering at the postgraduate level would have good employment opportunities in India and abroad. Besides, with the infrastructure developers the world over going in for earthquake-resistant buildings, specialisation in earthquake engineering at the PG level would enhance the employability of civil engineers in the near future, he said.

Between EEE and Electronics and Communication Engineering (ECE), EEE has the largest scope for employment in view of the Central and State governments going in for massive power generation projects in the conventional and non-conventional fields such as solar and wind energy in the backdrop of the power crisis faced by many States, Mr. Gandhi said.

On the other hand, there are very limited opportunities for ECE graduates in the telecommunication sector in view of the saturation attained in this field, and the consequent closure of many cell phone companies in India. ECE graduates would have to go only for IT jobs, he said. Mr. Gandhi advised those who take EEE to prepare for GATE (General Aptitude Test in Engineering) from the second year since specialisation in PG would enhance their employment opportunities. He advised CSE and IT students to learn Big Data which is required very much by the IT industry today.

The career consultant said that as far as those in the biology stream were concerned, next to medicine, they can opt for B.Sc. Agri. in view of the fact that the government as well as private companies have invested a lot on agriculture. They can also choose B.V.Sc. since there was a good demand for veterinarians. He dissuaded students from taking up aeronautical engineering or biotechnology which have no scope in India.

Later Mr. Gandhi answered many questions from the students. P. Subramani, Chief Education Officer presided. Rajavelu, chartered accountant spoke of the immense employment opportunities for those who do C.A. District Education Officer, Vellore, D. Manoharan welcomed the gathering.

SAMETI to house AP's Agriculture Directorate after bifurcation

The State Agricultural Management and Training Institute (SAMETI) at Malakpet here will house the office of the Agriculture Commissioner/Director for Andhra Pradesh after the bifurcation of the existing office at Gunfoundry. The same premises will accommodate the office for Telangana State.

The process for bifurcation of the Agriculture Directorate, which is on in full swing, is a smooth exercise unlike some departments where there is confusion about the number of employees to be divided. "We have commenced bifurcation work including segregation of files early so that the work related to the kharif season is not affected," Commissioner of Agriculture M. Madhusudhana Rao told *The Hindu* .

Most of the field work in the Agriculture Department is directly executed by its offices in districts, the Commissioner's office has been only a policy-making and supervisory body.

Different wings in the Directorate including the National Food Security Mission (NFSM), Agricultural Technology Management Agency (ATMA), fertiliser wing, farm mechanisation section, seed regularisation cell, planning and extension sections, Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojna, Natural Resource Management, bio-pesticides testing,

seed testing, soil testing and biological control laboratories, AP Water Sector Improvement Project, River Valley Project, National Watershed Development Project for Rain-fed Areas and others are being divided between the two States.

“As most of the functions of the department are field-oriented they are performed by the district-wise offices including the preparation of action plans. The work of Commissionerate is supervisory in nature and the 534 staff in the office are being divided in the 58:42 ratio to AP and Telangana,” Mr. Madhusudhana Rao stated. All the guidelines and procedures for division of the staff were sent by the government to make the task easy for the Commissionerate, he noted. Every process of bifurcation will be completed before the May 25 deadline fixed by the government and the trial run will commence on May 26, the Commissioner said.

Fisherfolk go all out for Milkfish seeds

Barely a month after the commencement of the breeding season of marine and brackish water fish species, local communities are collecting seeds of Milkfish, known as ‘Chanos Chanos’ in the estuaries and lagoons of the Bay of Bengal, to be exported to various parts of the country.

Fisherfolk sell the seeds to local agents who export them mostly to Kerala. The breeding season began in March, and the seeds are collected using the traditional hand-net method. “We directly sell it to agents who have business networks in Andhra Pradesh and other states. Farmers engaged in brackish water aquaculture in Krishna-Godavari districts are also buying the seeds for their fields,” said G. Raju of Krutthivenu mandal in Krishna district, who collects the seeds near mangroves and lagoons. According to aquaculture farmers, a seed gains up to a half a kilogram within four months in brackish water ponds. It has a good domestic market where it fetches Rs. 110 a kg. Places with abundant quantity of Milkfish seeds include Eelachetladibba, Tallapalem and near the confluence of river Krishna and the Bay of Bengal in Nagayalanka mandal in Krishna district. Recently, the Department of Fisheries imposed the 45-day ban on fishing. However, the

fisherfolk and local communities are allowed to collect fish seeds from lagoons and estuaries, as it will not disturb the breeding season of other marine fish species.

The seeds, collected using the traditional hand-net method, are sold to local agents who export them mostly to Kerala

Vaigai dam level rises by one foot in a day

Thanks to rain in catchment area, Western Ghats

The water level in Vaigai dam rose by one foot on Tuesday, thanks to the increase in inflow and moderate showers in the dam site and on the Western Ghats on Monday night, according to PWD officials.

The water level in the dam stood at 29.66 feet (it was 28.55 feet on Monday) with an inflow of 507 cusecs and a discharge of 40 cusecs. The storage was 355 mcft.

There was no change in the storage level in Periyar dam as the quantum of inflow and the discharge was the same at 500 cusecs. The entire inflow was discharged to improve storage level in Vaigai dam. The level stood at 114.80 feet in Periyar dam. The storage was 1,694 mcft.

The combined storage in Periyar credit was 1,400 mcft. Torrential showers rocked Uthamapalayam and Shanmuganathi dam area on Monday night, uprooting several trees and electric posts.

The rainfall recorded in the region during the 24 hours ending at 8.30 a.m. on Tuesday was (in mm): Periyar dam – 4.4, Thekkadi 10.4, Gudalur – 5.4, Shanmuganadhi dam – 27, Uthamapalayam – 62, Veerapandi – 13, Vaigai dam – 10, Peranai – 5.4, Kuppanampatti – 11, Andipatti – 8, Madurai – 9, Sathiyar dam – 19, Mettupatti – 15, Melur – 8.6, Idayapatti – 17 and Viraganoor recorded 28.4 mm of rainfall.

Water level increases

The water flow into Stanley Reservoir at Mettur has increased to 3,162 cusecs on Tuesday morning. PWD officials said that the water level was 34.80ft, against the full reservoir level of 120ft. The storage was 9.569 tmc ft against the capacity of 93.470 tmc ft. The outflow was 500 cusecs.

Water level

Mettur

The water level in the Mettur dam stood at 34.94 feet on Tuesday against its full level of 120 feet. The inflow was 3,005 cusecs and the discharge 500 cusecs.

TIRUNELVELI,

The water level in Papanasam Dam on Tuesday stood at 53.85 feet. The dam had an inflow of 259.07 cusecs and there was no discharge. The level in Manimuthar Dam stood at 67.64 feet. The dam had an inflow of 64 cusecs and the discharge was nil.

Kanyakumari

The water level in Pechipparai dam stood at 19.10 feet, 44.20 feet in Perunchani, 7.74 feet in Chittar I, 7.84 feet in Chittar II, 6 feet in Poigai and 54 feet in Mamabazhathuraiyaru dam.

Chennai

Chennai - INDIA

Today's Weather



Wednesday, May 14

Max Min

Sunny

36° | 28°

Rain: 0

Sunrise: 05:43

Humidity: 66

Sunset: 06:26

Wind: normal

Barometer: 1007

Tomorrow's Forecast



Thursday, May 15

Max Min

Partly Cloudy

38° | 28°

Extended Forecast for a week

Friday	Saturday	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday
May 16	May 17	May 18	May 19	May 20
38° 28°	35° 28°	36° 29°	34° 29°	35° 29°
Partly Cloudy	Sunny	Partly Cloudy	Partly Cloudy	Partly Cloudy

Airport Weather

Delhi

Rain: 0

Sunrise: 05:31

Humidity: 88 Sunset: 07:03

Wind: normal Barometer: 1009



Sops for raw sugar exports cut by Rs. 1,000 a tonne

The Centre has cut the incentive for raw sugar exports by over Rs. 1,000 a tonne to Rs. 2,277, drawing protests from millers.

In a notification issued last week, the Centre reduced the incentive from Rs. 3,300, aimed at encouraging exports of raw sugar in order to overcome glut in the domestic market. While fixing the incentive at Rs. 3,300, the Food and Consumers Affairs Minister KV Thomas had said that the facility would initially be extended for two months (February and March) and then, it would be recalculated every two months taking into account the average exchange rate of the rupee.

According to the notification, the revised incentive will be valid till May 31.

Mills disappointed

Expressing surprise over the move, Indian Sugar Mills Association Director-General Abinash Verma, in a letter to the Food Secretary, said that the industry is disappointed over the cut in the incentive rate.

Pointing out to the Gazette notification issued on February 28, Verma said the average exchange rate of rupee was to be calculated based on the dollar price during the seven days preceding April 1.

When the incentive was approved by the Government, the rupee traded at 62.44 against the dollar. Since then, the rupee has gained and ruled at 60.32 in the last week of March. Therefore, the rate should have been Rs. 3,800 and not Rs. 2,277, Verma said.

“Since there is no other criteria prescribed in the Gazette Notification of February 28, there cannot be any other position whatsoever than to either retain the original rate of Rs. 3,300 or to increase it. Therefore, the notification of May 7, reducing the incentive rate is not as per the law, prescribed by the Ministry,” the ISMA official said in the letter.

Based on the notification, exporters and buyers from other countries had entered into sugar deals in the belief that the incentive of Rs. 3,300 a tonne holds for raw sugar exports. But a sudden change in the Government’s stand without any notice was in contravention to the provisions of the February 28 notification. It has created confusion in the market and millers were feeling betrayed. The Government’s action to cut the incentive was wrong especially when there was sugar surplus, which need to be exported.

In a quandry

Sugar prices have dropped in the last one month and continue to rule below the cost of production, Verma said, adding that cane arrears to farmers have surged to over Rs. 12,000 crore.

The ISMA official wondered how the Government arrived at the figure of Rs. 2,277 and sought to know the reason for the cut in the incentive.

“What will happen to sugar mills which have dispatched or exported sugar after April 1 considering the Gazette Notification of February 28, which is the only rule or order of the Government in public domain till now, and have done so on the clear understanding that the incentive rate would be Rs. 3,300/tonne. Who will compensate the losses to these sugar mills?,” asked Verma.

On April 20, PTI, quoting official sources, said that the Government had decided to continue the incentive for raw sugar exports at Rs. 3,300 a tonne during April-May.

Surging stocks

Some four lakh tonnes of sugar were expected to be exported during April-May with some consignments already reaching the destination or on the way.

The issue has also figured at the World Trade Organisation with countries such as Australia questioning the move to offer incentives for exports. However, India has held firm and said that there was no going back on its commitment to encourage raw sugar exports. The Government came up with the incentive to cut production of white sugar. White sugar stocks in the country have been on the rise.

At the beginning of the current sugar year (October-September 2013-14), stocks were 8.8 million tonnes. Sugar output in the on-going year is expected to be 23.8 million tonnes, according to industry estimates, against a domestic demand of 22 million tonnes. The stocks are expected to go up and to combat a glut situation, the Cabinet cleared the Food Ministry's proposal to allow exports of raw sugar.

Ethiopia to host food and nutrition security meet

A global conference on 'Building Resilience for Food and Nutrition Security' will try to find solutions for ending hunger and poverty globally.

Organised by the International Food Policy Research Institute, over 800 experts and practitioners from around the world from food, nutrition, health, agriculture, humanitarian and related development sectors will assemble in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, to discuss ways to improve policies, investments and institutions to strengthen resilience in achieving food and nutrition security.

“The concept of resilience is currently the subject of wide attention in the development community, but in the context of food and nutrition security, it is less widely discussed,” said IFPRI Director-General Shenggen Fan.

The conference will be inaugurated by Prime Minister of Ethiopia and the chairperson of African Union Commission on May 15.

Over 50% turmeric unsold

Spot turmeric prices decreased in Erode markets on Tuesday for want of quality produce and slack upcountry orders. “Traders received very negligible upcountry orders. So, they purchased limited quantity. But stockists procured 800 bags. Expecting good price, farmers brought 3,700 bags but only 1,800 were sold,” said RKV Ravishankar, President, and Erode Turmeric Merchants Association.

At the Erode Turmeric Merchants Association sales yard, the finger variety was sold at Rs. 4,596-7,112 a quintal; the root variety Rs. 4,339-6,685.

The finger turmeric of Salem Hybrid fetched Rs. 6,019-7,214 and the root variety Rs. 5,964-6,715. Of the 765 bags that arrived, 298 were sold.

Spot rubber stretches gains on new enquiries

Physical rubber prices gained further on Tuesday.

According to observers, there were fresh enquiries from the tyre sector.

Latex continued to rule steady on low demand.

Sheet rubber improved to Rs. 141 (Rs. 140) a kg, as quoted by traders. The grade increased to Rs. 140.50 (Rs. 139.50) and Rs. 137.50 (Rs. 136.50) respectively, according to the Rubber Board and dealers.

May futures closed at Rs. 140.50 (Rs. 139.42), June at Rs. 142.50 (Rs. 142.70), July at Rs. 144.02 (Rs. 144.63) and August at Rs. 143.90 (Rs. 144.64) while the Rubber mini

May futures firmed up to Rs. 140 (Rs. 136.50) on the National Multi Commodity Exchange.

RSS 3 May futures weakened to ¥195.7 (Rs. 114.38) on the Tokyo Commodity Exchange.

Spot rubber rates (Rs. /kg) were: RSS-4: 141 (140); RSS-5: 138 (136.50); Ungraded: 134 (133); ISNR 20: 132 (130.50) and Latex 60%: 112 (112).

Groundnut oil rules flat on slack demand

GROUNDNUT OIL RULES FLAT

Groundnut oil was unchanged as demand was normal, while cotton oil edged up on the back of increasing buying activity at the lower level. Retail price of both the oils were unchanged. Groundnut oil loose ruled at Rs. 700-705 for 10 kg, Jamnagar line *telia* was traded at Rs. 1,098-99 for 15 kg. Groundnut oil new tin stood at Rs. 1,285-90 for 15 kg. Some 5-7 tankers of groundnut oil were traded by Saurashtra's mills. Traders said that demand in groundnut oil was normal at the current price level. Price may not gain as supply is ample and demand limited in retail markets. On the other hand, cotton oil price moved up as demand increased amidst short supply of raw material for crushing. Washed cottonseed oil gained Rs. 3 at Rs. 620-623 for 10 kg and cotton oil new tin was traded at Rs. 1,090-1,110 for 15 kg. About 60-70 tankers of cotton oil were traded here. Our Correspondent

Business Standard

Blossom showers raise hopes of higher coffee production



Widespread [blossom showers](#) in major [coffee](#)-growing regions in south India have raised hopes of a better crop this year. Most of the growing regions in Chikmagalur, Kodagu and Hassan districts of Karnataka, which account for 70 per cent of India's coffee production, received good rain in March and April.

Planters say satisfactory blossom showers in these two months is crucial for a good crop, adding the growing regions, except parts of south Kodagu, received 20.3-25.4 cm of rains. Going by current trends, the 2014-15 coffee crop could stand at about 310,000 tonnes, a 10-11 per cent rise compared to last year.

While the Karnataka Planters Association ([KPA](#)), an organisation of coffee growers, has estimated the harvested crop for 2013-14 at 280,000 tonnes, coffee traders have estimated it at 290,000 tonnes. The Coffee Board is yet to come out with its estimate for the harvested crop.

“The growing regions have, more or less, received satisfactory rains. Currently, the plantations are in the pinhead development stage. The conditions are favourable for the **robusta** crop and, compared to last year, when we witnessed very high temperatures during April and May, the situation is better this year,” said Nishant R Gurjer, a coffee grower and former chairman of KPA.

He added though it was premature to estimate the production for this year, current conditions pointed to a better crop than last year. Production for 2014-15 could be about 310,000 tonnes, he said, adding what had dampened the picture was a white stem borer pest attack at many growing regions.

COFFEE OUTPUT			
(In tonnes)			
Year	Arabica	Robusta	Total
2007-08	92,500	169,500	262,000
2008-09	79,500	182,800	262,300
2009-10	94,600	195,000	289,600
2010-11	94,140	207,860	302,000
2011-12	101,500	212,500	314,000
2012-13	98,600	219,600	318,200
2013-14*	90,000	190,000	280,000
2014-15**	80,000	230,000	310,000

*Harvest estimates by Karnataka Planters' Association (KPA)
 **Predictions by KPA for 2014-15
 Source: Coffee Board and KPA

“As this year is an ‘on-year’ for coffee, robusta production could stand at 230,000 tonnes, while the output of **arabica** will be about 80,000 tonnes,” Gurjer said.

Analysts say a better crop in India will not have any significant impact on Global prices. Usually, Brazil, which

accounts for the majority of global coffee production, dictates global prices. For this year, the prospects of a worse-than-expected crop in Brazil, owing to prolonged dry weather in that country, have led to an upward momentum in prices. Arabica prices for July delivery stand at 183.90 cents a pound, compared with 125.97 cents a pound in December 2013, a rise of 46 per cent.

“The price impact will be negligible, as coffee prices are dictated by Brazil. Indian coffee

growers have already seen a price rise of about 50 per cent to Rs 11,000 a bag (ex-farm gate) since Brazil reported its crop for 2014 would be lower than expected. Higher production in India will not have any significant impact except the fact that exporters will have a little more to export than last year,” Gurjer said.

Govt announces 32% cut in sugar export subsidy



The Union Ministry of Agriculture on Tuesday notified a fixed [sugar export subsidy](#) of Rs 2,277 a tonne for April and May, a 32 per cent fall from the previous level of Rs 3,300 a tonne. Producers and exporters have, however, protested against the cut, saying it will discourage exports.

Currently, the market is facing oversupply of about five million tonnes (mt), of which the government has allowed two mt to be exported this year.

Citing the draft of the gazette notification dated February 28, the Indian [Sugar Mills Association \(Isma\)](#) said, “The incentive shall be Rs 3,300 a tonne for February and March 2014 and thereafter, recalculated every two months after taking into account the average exchange rate of the [rupee](#) vis-à-vis the [dollar](#) during the seven days immediately preceding April 1, June 1, and August 1, for April-May, June-July and August-

September, 2014, respectively.”

When Rs 3,300 a tonne of export subsidy was approved, the rupee stood at 62.44/dollar. Since then, it has appreciated to 60.32/dollar. Therefore, the subsidy rate should have been scaled up to about Rs 3,800 a tonne. As there was no criterion prescribed in the gazette notification of February 28, there couldn't be any other position than to either retain the original rate of Rs 3,300 a tonne or increase it. Therefore, the downward revision in export subsidy was in violation of law, said Abinash Verma, director-general of Isma.

According to the notification, sugar mills entered into contracts with foreign buyers for export and import of the commodity and exported substantial quantities, expecting Rs 3,300 a tonne as the incentive on raw sugar exports. A change in position by the government, without any notice, was in contravention to the provisions of the gazette notification and led to confusion in the market and a sense of betrayal among millers, Verma added. The reduction in export incentives at a time when the domestic market was recording oversupply, would further deteriorate the condition of sugar mills, which had seen selling prices fall below production costs.

“Exports at Rs 2,277 a tonne of incentives will not be viable. While existing contracts will be executed, no new contracts will be signed for sugar exports,” said Narendra Murkumbi, managing director of Shree Renuka Sugars. This will lead to a rise in arrears, which stand at about Rs 10,000 crore across the country; of this, Rs 8,000 crore is accounted for by sugar mills in Uttar Pradesh alone.

Sugar falls 0.39% on sluggish demand, adequate supply



[Sugar](#) prices drifted by 0.39 per cent to Rs 3,037 per quintal in futures trade today as speculators trimmed positions amid sluggish demand in the spot market.

However, a likely drop in output restricted the losses.

At the National Commodity and Derivatives Exchange, sugar for delivery in June fell by Rs 12, or 0.39 per cent to Rs 3,037 per quintal with an open interest of 55,950 lots.

The sweetener for delivery in July declined by Rs 10, or 0.33 per cent to Rs 3,058 per quintal in 16,400 lots.

Market analysts said besides sluggish demand in the spot market, adequate supplies from millers, put pressure on sugar prices at futures trade here.

[Refined soya oil tad higher as demand picks up](#)

Amid pick up in spot demand and restricted arrivals from producing regions, [refined soya oil](#) prices traded a shade higher at Rs 697 per 10 kg in futures trade today as speculators created fresh position.

At the National Commodity and Derivatives Exchange, refined soya oil for delivery in

June edged up by Rs 1.50, or 0.22 per cent to Rs 697 per 10 kg with an open interest of 1,53,150 lots.

Similarly, the oil for delivery in May traded up by Rs 1.10, or 0.15 per cent to Rs 719 per 10 kg in 58,710 lots.

Market analysts said fresh positions build-up by speculators triggered by rising demand in the spot market amid lower arrivals from producing regions, supported the upside in refined soya oil prices at futures trade.

Chana gains 0.7% on spot demand



[Chana](#) prices moved up by 0.70 per cent to Rs 3,010 per quintal in futures trade today as speculators created fresh positions, tracking rising demand in the spot market.

At the National Commodity and Derivatives Exchange, chana for delivery in May contracts rose Rs 21, or 0.70 per cent to Rs 3,010 per quintal with an open interest of 5,060 lots.

In a similar fashion, the commodity for delivery in June contracts gained Rs 9, or 0.29 per cent to Rs 3,079 per quintal in 1,58,970 lots.

Analysts said fresh positions built-up by speculators on the back of rising demand in the spot market against restricted arrivals from producing regions, mainly attributed rise in chana prices at futures trade.



Chilli prices to firm up

Chilli prices are likely to firm up in the second half of the year on lower availability. The market is already firm due to rapid decline of stocks and good demand. Possibility of less than normal monsoon rain is likely to compound the sentiments, traders said. India is the leading producer of chilli, contributing close to 45% with annual production of 13-14 lakh tonne.

“Stocks are currently on the lower side and the possibility of lower production in the coming season would add to the positive sentiments. Farmers are most likely to switch to cotton as it gives better returns and is less sensitive to rain,” veteran chilli trader Peraiah Ravipati from Bellary told FE. Spot price of chilli at the NCDEX counter on Tuesday evening stood lower at R6123.35 per quintal.

Good returns from chilli farming in the past few years and a chain of cold storages have prepared the farmers to hold stock and sell when it suits them.

Consumption of chilli is increasing substantially, with branded powder sales growing at a compound annual growth rate of 11% while the spices mix category is growing at a CAGR of 7%, a Spices Board report said.

“We will get a clearer picture only after sowing season starts but it looks pretty sure that it will be lower when compared to normal. Good stocks in the pipeline was a major reason for the commodity market to stay bearish but currently stocks are also on the lower side and we can safely say the market will remain steady and move up based on the actual monsoon,” Ravipati added.

Indian chilli exports also depend on the production of spices in China. In the past few years, India has benefited a lot from shorter Chinese crop. Higher exports always translate into higher domestic prices due to lesser availability of the commodity.

THE TIMES OF INDIA

PAU scientist help farmers establish agro processing complex

LUDHIANA: Punjab Agricultural University (PAU) has set up an an agro-processing complex "Bindi Agro Food Processing Model" at Kotshamir village in Bhatinda district.

Spokesperson for PAU said that the complex, owned by Binder Singh, Gurmail Singh and Mahima Singh, has been set up with the active support and technical guidance from PAU scientists under the aegis of All India Coordinated Research Project (AICRP) on Post-Harvest Technology. He added that the processing plant has wheat flour milling unit, oil expeller with filter press.

M S Alam, Incharge said that under AICRP project, University promotes for value addition of the agricultural produce. He added that such plants help in the processing of produce at farm gate itself; minimizing post harvest handling and transportation losses; thus, making the local availabililty of quality processed products at a nominal rate.

Ashok Kumar, additional director of research (FSNE) appreciated the efforts made by M S Alam and his team. He added that seven such complexes were established under the guidance of PAU in the year 2013 and this is the third such complex established during 2014.

Collector urges farmers to avail help to get seeds

AURANGABAD: The district collector along with the agriculture department on Tuesday urged farmers to register themselves in groups with the Agriculture Development Officer (ADO) concerned for getting seeds and fertilizers delivered at their doorsteps at dealer rates.

The district administration has started the facility and over 600 groups have already been registered.

District collector Vikram Kumar said, "Orders have been given for conducting strict checking at the seed shops to ascertain whether there is circulation and sale of non-certified seeds in the market. The ADO has been asked to monitor the flying squads to keep a check on any misconduct in the seeds market. We have also launched a toll free helpline number, 1800-2334000, which anyone may use to bring the incidents of selling seeds and fertilizers at higher rates or any other unethical practice to the notice of the ADO."

He also said as of now there is neither a shortage of seeds nor of fertilizers.

Kumar said, "If the farmers in the district register themselves with the ADO, then they may place a bulk order of the seeds and fertilizer they need and they will receive the seeds and fertilizers at the rates that are received by the dealers."

Agri department officials said that the license fees is Rs 450 and the farmers may even apply online. As of now 693 groups have registered themselves with the ADO. Officials said the district administration along with the agriculture department is well equipped for the Kharif sowing, which is expected to be 114% this year, compared to 113% last year.

The district has 6.3 lakh hectares under kharif cultivation. In the year 2013-14 except sugarcane, the Kharif was sown at 7.12 lakh hectares, while this year it is expected that the kharif would be sown at over 7,018 lakh hectares.

Officials also said that this year makka is expected to be sown at over 1.8 lakh hectares. Agri officials maintained that for the past couple of years the supply of fertilizer in the district is adequate and this year the agriculture commissioner has approved 235 metric tonnes of fertilizer for the district, of which around 25% has already been received.

THE ECONOMIC TIMES

Rubber imports jump over 80 per cent in April



MUMBAI: Imports of natural rubber into India jumped more than 80 percent in April as lower prices in international markets prompted tyremakers to increase purchases, the state-run Rubber Board said.

April shipments rose to 26,445 tonnes from 14,396 tonnes in the same period last year, the Rubber Board said in a statement. Production fell 3.8 percent to 51,000 tonnes in April.

Domestic consumption fell to 81,500 tonnes in April from 82,980 tonnes.

India imports the commodity from Indonesia, Vietnam, Malaysia and Thailand.

Sugar ends steady in thin trade



NEW DELHI: In thin trading, sugar prices closed steady in the national capital today on scattered demand from retailers and bulk consumers.

Marketmen said absence of necessary buying support from retailers and bulk consumers, mainly kept sugar prices unchanged at previous levels.

Potato futures down 0.97 per cent on higher supply



NEW DELHI: Potato prices fell by 0.97 per cent to Rs 1,336 per quintal in futures trade today as speculators offloaded their positions amid higher supplies in the spot market.

At the Multi Commodity Exchange, potato for June delivery fell by Rs 13.10, or 0.97 per cent, to Rs 1,336 per quintal, with a business volume of 32 lots. On the similar lines, potato for delivery in May contracts, traded lower by Rs 12.20, or 0.92 per cent, to Rs 1,311.20 per quintal, with a trading volume of 20 lots.

Marketmen said fall in potato prices was mostly due to offloading of positions by speculators triggered by increased supplies in the spot market.



Jackfruit Contains Anti-ageing Flavonoids, Rich in Nutrients

Jackfruits are rich in nutrients and can be used to make a variety of delicacies, say experts.

In spite of its huge production, its utilisation as food is less than 40 per cent and the rest goes waste, which amounts to approximately `2,000 crore per annum. Jackfruit must be popularised both as a fruit as well as a vegetable because the whole tree has huge value and can bring economic benefits, they said.

Dr Shyamala at the Dept of Biotechnology in the University of Agricultural Sciences (UAS), Bangalore, said jackfruit is rich in vitamin A and C, potassium, phosphorus and calcium. It has 10-12 per cent carbohydrate content, 6-7 per cent protein and 2-3 per cent fibre in every 100 grams. It also contains flavonoids that fight free radicals responsible for ageing.

Vice-Chancellor Prof Narayana Gowda said UAS, Bangalore has carried out identification of elite jackfruit genotypes from 1990s, resulting in the establishment of a jackfruit germplasm block and the release of an elite variety in 2009 called ‘Swarna Halasu’.

Shyamala said a total 10 good varieties of jackfruit have been identified, and will be showcased at an upcoming international symposium. The Dept of Biotechnology, Government of India has sanctioned a multi-institute project on jackfruit and its value-added products from 2012 with a funding of `4.65 crore. The project also involves Assam, Tripura and Meghalaya along with Kerala and Karnataka.

Several value-added products such as squash, chips, papad, peda, wine, juice, muffins, jackfruit flour etc. have been developed and standardised by the Post Harvest Technology Department of UASB. These products are now ready for international markets, Shyamala said.

The V-C said jackfruit trees can grow both during droughts and floods, and all its parts are useful as feed, fuel, timber, vegetables and fruits. “It is aptly called the second ‘kalpavruksha’, next only to coconut,” he said.

Symposium

UASB and DBT, New Delhi will hold an international symposium on Jackfruit and Breadfruit of the Tropics: Genetic Diversity, Management, Value Addition and Marketing Strategies on Thursday and Friday at the Kuvempu Sabhangana in GKVK Campus.

Vegetable Buyers Burn Their Fingers



If you are a ‘beans buff,’ this is just not good news. The price of the creeper vegetable has shot up by Rs 30 in a week’s time. And beans is not alone. Vegetable prices in general have rocketed in the city thanks to the heavy summer showers of the past few weeks, hitting the monthly household budgets hard.

The prices have shot up mainly for creeper vegetables like beans and cowpea brought from Mysore and Mangalore. The price of beans has gone up from Rs 50 two weeks ago to Rs 80. The price of green chilli has risen from Rs 40 to Rs 60. Vendors at the Chalai market blamed the intense summer showers for the spiralling prices. The flowering of these crops had been delayed due to the untimely rains, they said.

Extreme shortage has triggered the price hike in the case of snake gourd and cucumber. Snake gourd had cost Rs 26 a kg two weeks back, but now you would have to dole out Rs 45. The price of cucumber has increased from Rs 16 to Rs 40. Similar is the case with lady’s finger with the price shooting up to Rs 30. The sad picture of diminished sales is very much evident in the Chalai market, the hub of the capital’s vegetable sales.

Vikraman, a retail seller, said that the sales had been largely disrupted due to the rains and the resultant shortage of supplies. Sellers like him depend on supplies from

neighbouring states like Tamil Nadu and Karnataka. “The incessant rains had hit crop yield in those states. So we received less supplies,” he said.

Rajendran, owner of NSR Wholesale Market, believes that the present situation is nothing but an “apparent price hike” created by the media. He said that the vegetables prices increased only last Friday and Saturday following heavy rains.

Homemaker Kavitha said: “The price hike has largely affected the commoners. Though the price of fish has also increased, it is not felt much, but vegetables are an unavoidable part of our daily diet.” The opinion is no different for Parthasarathy, a frequent customer in the Chalai market.

In spite of the soaring prices, people are forced to buy as they don’t have an alternative. As the rains have subsided, the prices are expected to fall in the coming days.