

DK farmers may soon get identity numbers



About half a lakh farmers in Dakshina Kannada may get unique identity numbers if a project of the State government, launched on a pilot basis in the district from this month, is successful.

The Department of Agriculture here began collecting data of farmers in five ‘kasba hoblis’ in the district, under Karnataka Krishi Information Service and Networking (K-Kisan) project from May 5 to generate unique identity numbers, according to H. Kempe Gowda, Joint Director of Agriculture, Dakshina Kannada.

A ‘kasba hobli’ is a revenue area including taluk headquarters with villages on its outskirts having identified boundaries. The five ‘kasba hoblis’ are Mangalore, Bantwal, Belthangady, Puttur and Sullia. These ‘kasba hoblis’ would have about 40,000 to 50,000 farmers, he told *The Hindu* .

Data being collected by farmer facilitators (temporary staff of the department) included complete address of a farmer; extent of agriculture land holding, details regarding crops, bank account number etc.

He said that the data collected would be fed to software at Raita Samparka Kendras. Each hobli had a Raita Samparka Kendra. Feeding of data to computers would begin from next month. Initially they would be issued with slips having the numbers. There would be no photographs.

Depending on the success of the pilot project it would be extended to other hoblis. The district has 17 hoblis with about two lakh farmers, he said.

He said that farmers on their own could visit the 'kendras' and give the details in the prescribed format without waiting for the farmer facilitators visiting them.

Subsidy

Mr. Gowda said that once the unique number was given to a farmer, he should refer the same to avail any agriculture-related service from the department in future. It included for availing government subsidy for the purchase of agriculture equipment and machinery, pesticides, fertilisers and seeds. Subsidy amount would be directly transferred to the given bank account. Data of subsidy availed by each farmer would be recorded in software under the unique number and its history would be maintained.

He said that a farmer could avail subsidised fertilisers, seeds as per the ratio based on the extent of agriculture land fixed by the government. It applied to purchase of subsidised machineries as well.

Once the unique numbers were issued, it would help preventing misuse/duplication in availing subsidised government benefits, as the software would have the history of benefits availed by each farmer.

Naturally ripened mangoes fly off the shelves



Cashing in on the huge demand for carbide-free mangoes in the town, two mango growers belonging to Kamepalli and Garla mandals have started to sell mangoes that are ripened naturally using ethylene gas, at the Pavilion Grounds here on Thursday.

The response to the stalls was so overwhelming that all the mangoes put up in the two stalls at the Pavilion grounds were sold out within a few hours on the inaugural day.

Khammam municipal commissioner B. Srinivas inaugurated the stalls here. Horticulture Department Assistant Director J. Marianna and others were present.

Apart from selling the naturally ripened mangoes at their stalls, Banothu Lakshman of Govindralla tribal hamlet in Kamepalli mandal and G. Rajarao of Sitampeta in Garla mandal also donned the role of health educators by spreading awareness on the ill-effects of consuming artificially ripened fruits.

They explained to the buyers the health hazards posed by the consumption of fruits that are ripened artificially using chemicals such as calcium carbide. The enterprising initiative taken by the two progressive farmers, who adhered to the natural method for ripening the mangoes at the ripening chambers at Kaikondaigudem, has earned them wide appreciation from the Horticulture Department officials.

Stage set for Fruit Show in Coonoor



Sandwiched between the Rose Show held at the Government Rose Garden here last weekend and the Flower Show scheduled to be held at the Government Botanical Garden here next weekend, the 56th Fruit Show slated for the coming weekend at Coonoor has generated considerable interest among tourists and locals.

Thanks to the current wet spell, Sim's Park, the venue, is wearing a verdant look and arrangements for the show are apace.

While conventionally the Fruit Show is organised during the last weekend of May to bring the curtain down on the season-related activities in the district, this year it has been advanced on account of the counting of votes polled in the Lok Sabha elections which is scheduled to take place on May 16.

Stating that the show will live up to the expectations of the people, the Nilgiris Collector P. Sankar said that apart from the host, the horticulture departments in nine other districts, including Salem, Theni, Dharmapuri, Krishnagiri, Vellore and Madurai, will display a wide variety of fruits from the plains. A major attraction will be a model of the India Gate made of different kinds of fruits by the Horticulture Department in the Nilgiris.

Fruit carvings displayed by some of the districts will be another attraction.

The wild fruits of the Nilgiris will also be displayed.

Stating that for the past few days the weather has more or less been Park and visitor friendly, horticulture officials hoped that rain will not play spoilsport during the weekend.

It was in December 1874, that the Sim's Park came into existence, thanks to the interest and efforts of two gentlemen Secretary to the Government, J.D. Sim and the Acting Superintendent of the Nilgiris forests Major Murray.

The Park has, therefore been christened after J.D. Sim, who was its prime architect. Situated in a deep ravine in Upper Coonoor, at an elevation of 5,800 to 5,900 feet, it extends over about 12.14 hectares of undulating land and possesses a number of natural advantages.

The park is ideal for hosting the annual Fruit Bonanza. At the height of summer when all the flowers are in full bloom, Sim's Park is a glorious sight.

A few acres of the 140-year-old park which remained undeveloped have now been utilised.

Jackfruit cultivation to be promoted in a big way

Horticulture Department is doing a survey on the crop in the State

The Horticulture Department has begun a comprehensive survey of the jackfruit crop to set the stage to promote its cultivation in a big way in the State. Jackfruit cultivation is suitable for Karnataka because of the presence of large tracts of drought-prone land.

Horticulture Director D.L. Maheshwar disclosed this at the inaugural session of a two-day international symposium on 'Jackfruit and breadfruit of the tropics: genetic diversity, management, value addition and marketing strategies', being jointly organised by the University of Agricultural Sciences, Bangalore, and the Union Department of Biotechnology, here on Thursday. The survey would look into issues such as the extent of the area covered under jackfruit cultivation, nature of the land on which the crop was being grown, and economic status of growers and their income from the crop. In addition to this, the survey would also try to find out if farmers are growing jackfruit as the main crop or as an intercrop, he said.

The main intention of the survey was to get crucial details, which would help in evolving an efficient plan of action to promote this multipurpose crop, Mr. Maheshwar said.

The department was committed to working on a campaign mode to popularise this crop, he added.

Presently, the crop was being grown on about 5,000 hectares of land in the State, with an annual production of 2,459 tonnes, he said.

The main intention was to turn this underutilised crop into "the crop of the future" as other major horticultural crops such as arecanut and coconut were losing their sheen due to moisture stress and diseases, he said.

UAS, Bangalore, Vice-Chancellor K. Narayana Gowda suggested that the State government set up a jackfruit development board for popularising this crop and use the crop as an economic tool for development, especially because jackfruits worth Rs. 2,000 crore get wasted in the country every year as they are not harvested.

Development Commissioner G.V. Krishna Rau suggested to scientists to conduct research to know if cultivation of jackfruit as the main crop on a large extent would attract any diseases or pests. Kerala Agricultural University Vice-Chancellor P. Rajendra,

Adviser to the Union Department of Biotechnology Madhan Mohan and NABARD chief general manager G.R. Chintala also spoke.

Horticulture Department is doing a survey on the crop in the State

The Horticulture Department has begun a comprehensive survey of the jackfruit crop to set the stage to promote its cultivation in a big way in the State. Jackfruit cultivation is suitable for Karnataka because of the presence of large tracts of drought-prone land.

Horticulture Director D.L. Maheshwar disclosed this at the inaugural session of a two-day international symposium on 'Jackfruit and breadfruit of the tropics: genetic diversity, management, value addition and marketing strategies', being jointly organised by the University of Agricultural Sciences, Bangalore, and the Union Department of Biotechnology, here on Thursday. The survey would look into issues such as the extent of the area covered under jackfruit cultivation, nature of the land on which the crop was being grown, and economic status of growers and their income from the crop. In addition to this, the survey would also try to find out if farmers are growing jackfruit as the main crop or as an intercrop, he said.

The main intention of the survey was to get crucial details, which would help in evolving an efficient plan of action to promote this multipurpose crop, Mr. Maheshwar said.

The department was committed to working on a campaign mode to popularise this crop, he added.

Presently, the crop was being grown on about 5,000 hectares of land in the State, with an annual production of 2,459 tonnes, he said.

The main intention was to turn this underutilised crop into "the crop of the future" as other major horticultural crops such as arecanut and coconut were losing their sheen due to moisture stress and diseases, he said.

UAS, Bangalore, Vice-Chancellor K. Narayana Gowda suggested that the State government set up a jackfruit development board for popularising this crop and use the crop as an economic tool for development, especially because jackfruits worth Rs. 2,000 crore get wasted in the country every year as they are not harvested.

Development Commissioner G.V. Krishna Rau suggested to scientists to conduct research to know if cultivation of jackfruit as the main crop on a large extent would

attract any diseases or pests. Kerala Agricultural University Vice-Chancellor P. Rajendra, Adviser to the Union Department of Biotechnology Madhan Mohan and NABARD chief general manager G.R. Chintala also spoke.

Horticulture Department is doing a survey on the crop in the State

The Horticulture Department has begun a comprehensive survey of the jackfruit crop to set the stage to promote its cultivation in a big way in the State. Jackfruit cultivation is suitable for Karnataka because of the presence of large tracts of drought-prone land.

Horticulture Director D.L. Maheshwar disclosed this at the inaugural session of a two-day international symposium on ‘Jackfruit and breadfruit of the tropics: genetic diversity, management, value addition and marketing strategies’, being jointly organised by the University of Agricultural Sciences, Bangalore, and the Union Department of Biotechnology, here on Thursday. The survey would look into issues such as the extent of the area covered under jackfruit cultivation, nature of the land on which the crop was being grown, and economic status of growers and their income from the crop. In addition to this, the survey would also try to find out if farmers are growing jackfruit as the main crop or as an intercrop, he said.

The main intention of the survey was to get crucial details, which would help in evolving an efficient plan of action to promote this multipurpose crop, Mr. Maheshwar said.

The department was committed to working on a campaign mode to popularise this crop, he added.

Presently, the crop was being grown on about 5,000 hectares of land in the State, with an annual production of 2,459 tonnes, he said.

The main intention was to turn this underutilised crop into “the crop of the future” as other major horticultural crops such as arecanut and coconut were losing their sheen due to moisture stress and diseases, he said.

UAS, Bangalore, Vice-Chancellor K. Narayana Gowda suggested that the State government set up a jackfruit development board for popularising this crop and use the crop as an economic tool for development, especially because jackfruits worth Rs. 2,000 crore get wasted in the country every year as they are not harvested.

Development Commissioner G.V. Krishna Rau suggested to scientists to conduct research to know if cultivation of jackfruit as the main crop on a large extent would attract any diseases or pests. Kerala Agricultural University Vice-Chancellor P. Rajendra, Adviser to the Union Department of Biotechnology Madhan Mohan and NABARD chief general manager G.R. Chintala also spoke.

Here's to the jack of all snacks



It was the day of the jackfruit at the University of Agricultural Sciences, Bangalore, where a two-day symposium-cum-exhibition on the fruit began on Thursday. Many people thronged the stalls to see and taste the products.

More than a dozen varieties of jackfruits — varying in colour, taste and size — were on display. Value-added products of jackfruit were also a big draw. Bonda, papad, chips, juice, chocolates, peda and halwa — all made from jackfruit — were on display as well as sale by farmers' groups, NGOs and private companies.

The main intention was to send across a message to farmers that it is possible to earn more by making value-addition to this crop, which is mostly underutilised. Endorsing this, Manjula, a farmer from Sakharayapatna in Chikmagalur district who has been trained in preparing value-added jackfruit products by an NGO, Parivarthana, told *The Hindu* that they were earlier getting only about Rs. 40 to Rs. 50 for a fruit. By making value-added products such as papad, bonda and chips, they were now earning Rs. 200 to Rs. 300 per fruit.

Thomas (73) was happy as value-added products such as jackfruit peda and halwa made at his Ernakulam-based factory were selling like hot cakes. A retired employee of the Kerala Milk Federation, Mr. Thomas started making jackfruit products two years ago after he realised that there were not many takers for the fruit and a large number of them were being wasted every year as they were not being harvested at all.

“I tried my grandmother’s recipe of jackfruit halwa in my factory and there was a very good response to it. Farmers too have benefited now as I have procured 20 tonnes of jackfruit — which would otherwise have gone waste — by paying about Rs. 100 a fruit,” he said.

Jackfruit pedas, which were launched at the exhibition, would be released in the market soon, he said.

Another Kerala-based private company launched three varieties of jackfruit chocolates at the exhibition.

UAS wants 2014 to be the year of the jackfruit

The University of Agricultural Sciences, Bangalore, has decided to write to all the States, Union government and various jackfruit growing countries, appealing to them to work at declaring 2014 as the international year of the jackfruit.

Vice-Chancellor of the university K. Narayana Gowda said the declaration would go a long way in promoting the crop which not only had multipurpose utility but also the capacity to withstand extreme weather.

It was ideal for farmers to grow a few jackfruit trees in their farms so that they would be ensured of regular income irrespective of the weather, he said.

He also stressed the need for exploring the possibility of exporting jackfruits or their value-added products to increase farmers’ income.

Growers set five-day deadline for sugar mills to pay dues

‘A total of Rs. 3,500 crore due from 56 sugar mills in State’

Kurubur Shanthkumar, president, Karnataka Rajya Kabbu Belegara Sangha, on Thursday said the sangha would picket sugar mills across the State if the government did not prevail upon the mill owners to pay dues to growers for the sugarcane supplied during the crushing season 2013-14.

Sangha activists picketed Shree Renuka Sugars, a private sugar mill at Munoli near Saundatti town on Thursday. As Mr. Kumar and other sangha leaders picked up arguments with the employees of the mill, the police arrested around 200 of them. They were released later.

Mr. Kumar alleged that mill owners were not releasing the Rs. 2,500 a tonne for sugarcane announced by the government.

A total of Rs. 3,500 crore was due from 56 sugar mills in the State. In Belgaum district, the total outstanding dues from over 15 sugar mills were Rs. 925 crore, including Rs. 62 crore from Shree Renuka Sugars and Rs. 72 crore from Satish Sugars who chief promoter is Excise Minister and Belgaum district in-charge Satish L. Jarkiholi. A total of Rs.569 crore was due in Bagalkot district.

He said the government should ensure that the mills clear their dues in the next four days or seize the stock of sugar.

Mr. Kumar said the Gujarat-based Gandevi Sugar Factory was paying Rs. 3,300 a tonne to growers this year. Similarly, sugar mills in Tamil Nadu were paying Rs. 2,650, Uttar Pradesh Rs. 2,800 and Maharashtra Rs. 2,600 a tonne to the growers. But, the mills in Karnataka were unwilling to pay even the minimum price fixed by the government. Mr. Kumar said the sugar mills were getting benefits from the Centre and State governments in terms of interest-free loans, tax rebates and incentives and were making annual profit between Rs. 200 crore to Rs. 300 crore.

Quoting Deputy Commissioner of Belgaum N. Jayaram, to whom he spoke over telephone, he said the former had assured to prevail upon the sugar mills in the district and try his best to get what was due to the growers in next four or five days.

Water level

MADURAI

The water level in Periyar dam stood at 114.70 feet (permissible level 142 feet) on Thursday with an inflow of 106 cusecs and a discharge of 300 cusecs.

The level in Vaigai dam was 31.46 feet (full level 71 feet) with an inflow of 474 cusecs and a discharge of 40 cusecs. The combined storage in Periyar credit was 1,425 mcft.

Water level

Mettur

The water level in the Mettur dam stood at 35.18 feet on Thursday against its full level of 120 feet. The inflow was 1,172 cusecs and the discharge 500 cusecs.

Water level

TIRUNELVELI

Water level in the Papanasam dam on Thursday stood at 54.40 feet. The dam had an inflow of 155.49 cusecs and no water was discharged from the dam. The level of Manimuthar dam stood at 67.77 feet. The dam had an inflow of 47 cusecs and no water was discharged.

Kanyakumari

The level in Pechipparai dam stood at 19.65 feet, 44.80feet in Perunchani, 7.96 feet in Chittar I, 8.03 feet in Chittar II, 6 feet in Poigai and 54.10 feet in Mamabazhathuraiyaru dam.

Chennai

Chennai - INDIA

Today's Weather



Sunny

Friday, May 16

Max Min

38° | 28°

Rain: 0

Sunrise: 05:43

Humidity: 49

Sunset: 06:27

Wind: normal

Barometer: 1005

Tomorrow's Forecast



Partly Cloudy

Saturday, May 17

Max Min

38° | 28°

Extended Forecast for a week

Sunday
May 18



38° | 28°

Partly
Cloudy

Monday
May 19



34° | 29°

Partly
Cloudy

Tuesday
May 20



34° | 29°

Partly
Cloudy

Wednesday
May 21



34° | 29°

Partly
Cloudy

Thursday
May 22



35° | 29°

Partly
Cloudy

Airport Weather

Chennai

Chennai

Rain: 0

Sunrise: 05:43

Humidity: 49 Sunset: 06:27

Wind: normal Barometer: 1005



Volume rises at Coonoor tea sale

A volume of 12.62 lakh kg is being offered for Sale No. 20 of Coonoor Tea Trade Association auction being held on Thursday and Friday. This is as much as 1.24 lakh kg more than last week.

Of this, a volume of 8.09 lakh kg belongs to the leaf grades and 4.53 lakh kg belongs to the dust grades. As much as 11.76 lakh kg belongs to CTC variety and only 86,000 kg orthodox variety.

In the leaf counter, only 46,000 kg belongs to orthodox, while 7.63 lakh kg CTC. Among the dusts, only 40,000 kg belongs to orthodox while 4.13 lakh kg CTC.

In the leaf auction last week, among corporate buyers, Hindustan Unilever Ltd bought better liquoring varieties while Tata Global Beverages Ltd was active on better medium sorts. In the Dust auction, Indcoserve showed some interest on smaller grades. There was better demand for brighter liquoring teas from upcountry buyers.

Coconut oil prices soar to new high on copra shortage



Erode, May 15:

Coconut oil prices soared to a new high of Rs 2,270 for 15-kg loose pack on Thursday as drought in western districts of Tamil Nadu has resulted in severe shortage of copra.

“Prices rose to Rs. 2,270 from Rs 2240 in the morning and the sudden rise has come as a surprise to crushers. There is absolutely no chance of a drop in prices now. Only limited quantities are being sold due to high price,” said RM Palanisamy, a trader.

Copra shortage

He said the increase in price is due to the shortage of copra and an increase in its price.

Due to drought, many coconut trees in Erode, Pollachi and other places have withered forcing farmers to purchase coconuts from Kerala and Karnataka for conversion to copra.

Now, only inferior quality copra is available for sale.

On Thursday, copra was sold at Rs. 10,300-10,500 a quintal as against last week’s price of Rs. 10,200. Some traders are expecting the price to improve further.

On Thursday, only local coconut oil crushers procured copra with Kerala crushers making no purchases as they have adequate stocks with them.

Some traders said that the current price of coconut oil is artificial.

Palm prices

The price of palm oil has also increased to Rs. 6,200-6,500 a quintal and the price of palm kernel remains at Rs. 9,000 a quintal.

The demand for the palm oil has increased heavily due to hike in coconut oil price.

Sugar holds steady on routine buying

Sugar prices ruled steady across the country with minor changes on Thursday on back of routine demand and sufficient supply.

On the Vashi wholesale market, prices for M-grade declined by Rs. 5-10 a quintal while S-grade ruled unchanged.

Naka prices were untouched at previous level. Mills sold M-grade at Rs. 20 lower in absence of demand.

Need-based demand kept morale calm and slightly weak, said sources.

Vashi-based traders said that need-based local demand and continuous supply from producers kept the morale weak.

In the futures market, prices were up tracking firm overseas markets supported by a slower-than-expected start to Brazil's harvest and forecasts for global deficits in 2014-15 and making room for hope of exports from India.

Vashi market currently carries over 115-120 truckloads of stocks. Sugar prices in other main producing centres are ruling at a par with Maharashtra leaving local mills to offload commodity in local level only, sources added.

Arrivals at Vashi market were around 60-62 truckloads (of 100 bags each) and the local dispatches were 58-60 loads.

On Wednesday evening, about 14-15 mills offered tenders and sold 48,000-50,000 bags at Rs. 2,950-3,060 (Rs. 2,950-3,060) for S-grade and Rs. 3,050-3,200 (Rs. 3,050-3,220) for M-grade.

Bombay Sugar Merchants Association's spot rates: S-grade Rs. 3,126-3,270 (Rs. 3,126-3,271) and M-grade was Rs. 3,192-3,432 (Rs. 3,282-3,442). Naka delivery rates: S-grade Rs. 3,060-3,120 (Rs. 3,060-3,120) and M-grade Rs. 3,160--3,300 (Rs. 3,160-3,300).

Spot rubber stretches gains



May, 15:

Domestic rubber prices ruled firm on Thursday. On the spot market, prices gained strength following a better closing on the National Multi Commodity Exchange.

According to observers, major consuming industries were buyers of RSS 4 grade as arrivals continued to be low in the local trading houses.

Growers still refrain from tapping as prices are running low and an immediate recovery is essential to maintain the availability of the raw material, they said.

Sheet rubber improved to Rs. 142 (Rs. 141) a kg, according to traders and the Rubber Board.

The grade firmed up to Rs. 139 (Rs. 138), as quoted by the dealers.

May futures increased to Rs. 141 (Rs. 140.23), June to Rs. 144 (Rs. 142.34), July to Rs. 145.50 (Rs. 144.02) and August to Rs. 144.32 (Rs. 143.64) while the Rubber mini May futures flared up to Rs. 144 (Rs. 140) on the National Multi Commodity Exchange.

RSS 3 (spot) was quoted firm at Rs. 124.64 (Rs. 123.22) at Bangkok. May futures closed at ¥193.2 (Rs. 112.20) on the Tokyo Commodity Exchange.

Spot rubber rates (Rs. /kg) were: RSS-4: 142 (141); RSS-5: 139 (138.50); Ungraded: 136 (135.50); ISNR 20: 133.50 (132) and Latex 60%: 113 (112).

Karnataka govt, sugar mills at loggerheads over cane arrears



There seems no end to the tussle between the [Karnataka government](#) and sugar mills in the state. Now, mills have refused to pay the higher cane price fixed by the government.

Mills say it will be difficult for them to pay the price fixed by the Karnataka Sugarcane Control Board ([KSCB](#)), owing to low realisations in 2013-14. The mills, which have challenged KSCB's formula, have urged the government to wait until the matter is resolved in the high court in the first week of June.

The mills have challenged the cane price of Rs 2,500 a quintal, 19 per cent more than the Union government's Fair and Remunerative Price (FRP) of Rs 2,100 a quintal (for 9.5 per cent recovery).

Earlier this month, the state government had warned it would take legal action against mills for non-payment of dues to farmers.

T B Jayachandra, law minister, Karnataka, said the [cane arrears](#) of Rs 3,357 crore. The minister had threatened to invoke the Karnataka Sugarcane (Regulation of Purchase and Supply) Act, 2013, to file cases against factory owners. Pawan Kumar, president of the South Indian Sugar Mills Association ([Sisma](#)), said, "We are not against the revenue-sharing formula recommended by the C Rangarajan committee. As a first instalment, we have paid the FRP and, depending on the court's verdict, we will abide by the order...The government has taken into account last year's revenue. It should take into account current market prices for sugar and the revenue at the end of the sugar season. We have contested this matter in court."

All sugar mills had unanimously said they would pay the FRP, and were doing so, he said, adding as of now, no other payment could be made.

Meanwhile, mills in the state are awaiting the release of funds from the Centre, as part of a relief package announced by the government in December 2013. Under the package, the mills will get about Rs 1,000 crore. For 2013-14, sugar mills recorded 16 per cent growth in cane crushing at 37.25 million tonnes (mt), with a recovery of 11.04 per cent. Sugar production rose 23 per cent to 4.11 mt. The combined capacity of the about 60 mills was 273,950 tonnes a day.

Guarseed falls 3% on weak spot demand



[Guarseed](#) prices drifted by Rs 165 to Rs 5,450 per quintal in futures trading today after speculators reduced positions on subdued spot demand against ample stocks amid increased arrivals from producing regions.

At the National Commodity and Derivatives Exchange, guarseed prices for delivery in August dipped by Rs 165, or 2.94 per cent, to Rs 5,450 per quintal, with an open interest of just 6 lots.

The June contracts also traded lower by Rs 110, or 2.05 per cent, at Rs 5,265 per quintal, having an open interest of 22,892 lots while May contracts fell by a similar margin to trade at Rs 5,115 per quintal with an open interest of 367 lots.

Marketmen said apart from subdued spot demand, adequate stocks following higher supplies from growing regions weighed on guarseed prices at futures trade

Jeera sheds 0.36% on subdued demand



[Jeera](#) prices fell by 0.36 per cent to Rs 11,165 per quintal in futures trade today as speculators reduced holdings, triggered by subdued demand in the spot market against adequate supplies from producing regions.

At the National Commodity and Derivatives Exchange, jeera for delivery in June declined by Rs 40, or 0.36 per cent, to Rs 11,165 per quintal with an open interest of 9,411 lots.

The May contract lost Rs 35, or 0.32 per cent, to Rs 11,060 per quintal in 2,601 lots.

Analysts said speculators reduced their holdings due to subdued demand in the spot market against sufficient stocks, following higher supplies from producing centres which mainly kept pressure on jeera prices at futures trade.

Turmeric up 1.45% on higher demand



[Turmeric](#) prices rose by 1.45 per cent to Rs 6,582 per quintal today as speculators created fresh positions amid rising export demand in the spot market.

A decline in supplies from producing regions also supported the uptrend.

At the National Commodity and Derivatives Exchange, turmeric for delivery in May rose by Rs 94, or 1.45 per cent, to Rs 6,582 per quintal with an open interest of 415 lots.

Similarly, the spice for delivery in June gained Rs 78, or 1.16 per cent, to Rs 6,782 per quintal in 12,315 lots.

Analysts said fresh positions built up by speculators, driven by rise in exports demand in the spot market, mainly influenced turmeric prices at futures trade.

Mango exports to US likely to rise by 42% this year



[Mango exports](#) from India to the US are likely to increase by 42 per cent to 400 tonnes this year on strong demand, according to the government body [APEDA](#).

Last year, India, the world's largest grower of the fruit, had shipped about 281 tonnes of mangoes to America.

"Mango exports to US would be around 400 tonnes this year," a senior official of the Agricultural and processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA) told PTI.

Mango exports to the US have commenced this month. In the last ten days, the country has exported 50 tonnes of mangoes, mainly 'Alfonso' and 'Kesar' varieties from western India.

Chana declines 0.27% on increased supply



[Chana](#) prices fell by 0.27 per cent to Rs 2,973 per quintal in futures trade today as speculators trimmed positions, triggered by increased supplies from producing regions against sluggish demand in the spot market.

At the National Commodity and Derivative Exchange, chana for delivery in May traded lower by Rs 8, or 0.27 per cent, to Rs 2,973 per quintal with an open interest of 2,780 lots.

The June contract shed Rs 8, or 0.26 per cent, to Rs 3,042 per quintal in 1,58,770 lots.

Analysts attributed the fall in chana prices at futures to increased supplies from producing belts against subdued demand in the spot market.



Tata Coffee shares tank 5% on disappointing earnings

Shares of Tata Coffee today fell by 5 per cent after the company reported 59 per cent drop in consolidated net profit for the last quarter of FY2014. The stock plunged 5 per cent to settle at Rs 967.15 on the BSE. During the day, the scrip declined by 5.9 per cent to Rs 958.

At the NSE, the stock closed 5.03 per cent lower at Rs 965.

Tata Coffee today reported 59 per cent drop in consolidated net profit at Rs 19.13 crore for the fourth quarter ended on March 31, 2014, as coffee sales were impacted after changes in US market.

The company had a net profit of Rs 46.66 crore in the same period in financial year 2012-13. However, total income during January-March quarter of 2013-14 marginally rose to Rs 397.28 crore from Rs 387.83 crore in same quarter in year 2012-13, the company said in a statement.

The company reported a 34 per cent decline in net profit for the entire 2013-14 fiscal at Rs 103.59 crore as compared to Rs 158.12 crore in 2012-13. Total income during the year 2013-14 declined to Rs 1,677.47 crore from Rs 1,697.35 crore in 2012-13 fiscal year.

The Telegraph

calcutta, india

Dima Hasao eyes high-yielding maize

Organic maize might soon be available at a roadside stall anywhere in central Assam and Barak valley, as Dima Hasao district eyes maize cultivation on its 800-hectare horticulture area.

The targeted area covers both *jhum* and routine crop areas. Farmers would be encouraged to go for organic fertilisers and pesticides.

According to a local agriculture department source, after a series of training, farmers under five development block areas were given high-quality maize seeds and other materials last month.

NC Hills Autonomous Council chief executive member Debojeet Thaosen said all possible steps were taken by the council to enable the hill district produce maize abundantly in the market to fulfil the demand.

“We are looking after the farmers carefully in order to give them maximum support. Seeds are provided and they are trained on quality management,” Thaosen said.

“Our target is mainly the Umrangsu and Langting areas, which are popular as the main maize pockets of Dima Hasao. In these areas, farmers used to go for local varieties and that resulted in low productivity. This time we are using high-yielding varieties and farmers have been trained to procure more return,” said district agriculture officer Banibrata Mukherjee.

Mukherjee said two maize varieties — HQPM-I and HQPM-5 — have been distributed among the farmers for their high lysine and tryptophan content. “We provide 23kg maize seeds against one hectare area. The 200-hectare Umrangsu area is being targeted to be covered under our high-yielding maize cultivation programme. The duration of

these varieties are 90 to 120 days and so we expect that the final product will reach the market by the end of June.”

Normally, 35 to 50 quintals per hectare is the average maize productivity in India and it is 23 to 27 quintals per hectare in Dima Hasao district’s horticulture area. According to records, maize productivity in case of *jhum* areas of the hill district is between 8 and 12 quintals per hectare.

Dima Hasao’s maize is popular among people of Barak valley and central Assam for its taste. Normally, rail as well as road link between Silchar and Lumding is behind the flow of maize from Langting and other parts in the district to various parts of the state.

“There is a problem for the cultivators. The item has a huge demand in neighbouring districts and is sold at comparatively higher rates. But the farmers get less money because of middlemen. If a federation is floated to back the maize farmers, it could rescue the latter from the hands of middlemen,” said Rolendra Thaosen of Mahur.

Dima Hasao district has a 36,758-hectare crop area and as many as 23,700 families are dependent on agriculture. Maize is cultivated in 2,156-hectare horticulture area in the district. Orange, pineapple, rice, banana, maize are the major produce of the hill district.

Share on emailShare on printShare on facebookShare on twitterMore Sharing Services

THE ECONOMIC TIMES

Cardamom futures rise 2.89 per cent on spot demand, low stocks



NEW DELHI: [Cardamom prices](#) rose by 2.89 per cent to Rs 1,129.90 per kg on Thursday in [futures trade](#) on pick-up in demand in spot [markets](#) amid low [stocks](#).

At the Multi Commodity Exchange, cardamom for May delivery surged by Rs 31.80, or 2.89 per cent, to Rs 1,129.90 per kg in a business volume of 12 lots. Spice prices for June contract rose by Rs 4.40, or 0.44 per cent, to Rs 1,001 per kg in a business volume of 638 lots.

Traders said a firming trend at the spot markets on the back of pick-up in demand led to the rise in cardamom prices in futures market.

Chana futures decline 0.27 per cent on increased supply



NEW DELHI: [Chana](#) prices fell by 0.27 per cent to Rs 2,973 per quintal in [futures trade](#) today as speculators trimmed positions, triggered by increased supplies from producing regions against sluggish demand in the spot market.

At the National Commodity and Derivative Exchange, chana for delivery in May traded lower by Rs 8, or 0.27 per cent, to Rs 2,973 per quintal with an open interest of 2,780 lots.

Similarly, the commodity for delivery in June shed Rs 8, or 0.26 per cent, to Rs 3,042 per quintal in 1,58,770 lots. Analysts attributed the fall in chana prices at futures to increased supplies from producing belts against subdued demand in the spot market.

Potato futures up 1.56 per cent on rising demand, tight supply



NEW DELHI: [Potato prices](#) rose by 1.56 per cent to Rs 1,350 per quintal in [futures trade](#) on Thursday due to a firming [spot market](#) trend on rising demand amid tight supplies from producing belts.

At the Multi Commodity Exchange, potato for June contract rose by Rs 20.80, or 1.56 per cent, to Rs 1,350 per quintal, with a trading volume of 162 lots. Potato for May delivery also traded higher by Rs 5.20, or 0.39 per cent, to Rs 1,312.40 per quintal, with a business volume of 42 lots.

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



Paddy Procurement Begins on a Dull Note

Even as the district level Paddy Procurement Committee set a target to procure 2,94,117 tonnes of paddy at a meeting on smooth procurement of rabi crop on May 6, the process began with a wrong note on Wednesday. Out of total 19 procurement centres, paddy was lifted from only nine places.

At the same time, farmers had to wait for a long time for arrival of Primary Agricultural Co-operative Societies (PACS) officials in other procurement centres while only six rice millers out of 24 turned up to lift their produce.

With the district reporting bumper crop this time, 6,944 bags of paddy were procured on the first day followed by 16,071 bags on the second day on Thursday. With the procurement time curtailed to only three hours from 7 am, farmers are worried that slow procurement by the agencies would derail the entire process and trigger distress sale.

Moreover, with storm and rain likely in the evening, the farmers can neither keep their paddy in the open nor take it back home as it would entail additional transportation cost.

As per the guidelines, PACS would procure the paddy and hand it over to rice millers. Apart from PACS, which has been given a target to procure 2,05,842 tonnes, other agencies including Food Corporation of India (FCI), MARKFED and rice millers would procure the rest. Though it was expected that the procurement would begin with gusto, the slow procurement has raised apprehension among the farmers.

While authorities maintain that it was a man-made problem, farmers' leader Ashok Pradhan said it is a pre-planned conspiracy to help the millers. He said the delay would force the farmers to sell directly to the millers at a low price.

While 70 rice millers were participating in neighbouring Bargarh district, why cannot the district administration rope in all 60 millers in Sambalpur district for procurement of paddy through PACS, he questioned.

Pradhan further said in spite of a provision to convene regular meeting of the sub-committees of district level Paddy Procurement Committee to monitor the process, it is not followed.

When contacted, Secretary of Regulated Market Committee (RMC) Sanjay Tripathy said while nine procurement centres were functioning, 10 others would be opened once farmers bring paddy to these centres for procurement.

Procurement process would pick up in next few days, he added.

Fish Farming Fizzles out as Ponds Turn into Swamps in Sambalpur

Belying the claims of both the Central and the State Governments of promoting and encouraging integrated farming including pisciculture and animal husbandry, the fish farming in Sambalpur town has almost met a silent death with all 48 ponds for breeding spawn turning into swamps.

While the closure of the breeding centre has taken a toll on pisciculture in the district, it has led to import of fish even though the district has abundant water resources in which pisciculture could have been promoted in a big way.

The Fisheries department promoted the fish farm at Cheruapada here way back in 1957 to provide quality spawn to fish farmers of the district and neighbouring region. The farm consisted of 48 ponds spreading over 51.36 acre of land with water area of 32.48 acre and a capacity to produce around 800 lakh of fish eggs annually.

The farm remained operational for 45 years and after 2002, apathy and negligence of the authorities concerned took its toll on the infrastructure including the ponds. Moreover, with slums mushrooming on the farm embankments, the ponds are up for grab. Sources said had the spawn been released into Hirakud Dam Reservoir for natural farming, it could have met the fish requirement of the State to a great extent.

The only silver lining is the Government fish farm at Bomaloi which spreads over an area of 97 acre in Rengali block. The farm has earned a revenue of around `30 lakh in the last fiscal. Moreover, another Government farm in Kuchinda, which spreads over six acre, has earned a revenue of `3 lakh speaking volumes about the potential of fish farming in the district.

Locals opined that if the authorities decide to revive and renovate the ponds in the town and panchayats of the district, fish farming can be restored and the demand for fish met locally.

When contacted, District Fisheries Officer Surendra Kumar Patra said a proposal of `3.85 crore has been forwarded to the Department for revival of the Government fish farm at Sambalpur town.

If the proposal is approved, the ponds and the farm will be revived and made operational, he said. Patra admitted to the encroachment on the pond embankments and said the issue had been raised before the Tehsildar several times.

Jackfruit a Health Food for Diabetics?



Experts have suggested marketing jackfruit as a health food that can be consumed by people with diabetes.

At an international symposium on jackfruit and breadfruit held at the University of Agricultural Sciences in the city on Thursday, experts discussed ways to popularise the fruit in the global market. The symposium was inaugurated by G V Krishna Rao, additional chief secretary and development commissioner of the state government.

Rao called for financial help to small farmers so that they can store rainwater and use it to cultivate their lands. Then they can grow tree crops like jackfruit, he said.

P Rajendra, Vice-Chancellor of Kerala Agricultural University, said jackfruit trees once contributed to 5-10 per cent of the greenery in Kerala, but things have changed for the worse now. He said jackfruit is a low-calorie food with high fibre content and could be freeze-dried and consumed by diabetics.

Crop of the Future

D L Maheshwar, director of the state Horticulture Department, described jackfruit as the “crop of the future” and assured that schemes like the National Horticulture Mission would offer complete support to jackfruit growers.

K Narayana Gowda, Vice-Chancellor of the University of Agricultural Sciences, said jackfruit production should be encouraged as it can survive in both high and low rainfall areas.