

Farmers' grievances meet on May 30

The monthly farmers' grievance meeting is scheduled to be held here at the Collectorate on May 30.

The redress meeting will be presided over by Collector T. Munusamy.

According to the press release from the Collector's office, farmers' representatives are requested to participate in the proceedings scheduled for 11 a.m. on the stipulated day. —
Staff Reporter

APCC seeks farm loans for farmers

Andhra Pradesh Congress Committee president N. Raghuvveera Reddy has urged Governor E.S.L. Narasimhan to take immediate steps to convene the State-Level Bankers' Committee meeting to discuss the issue of farm loans to the agriculture sector.

At a press conference here on Monday, Mr. Reddy said that as the farm operation is fast approaching, it was time the Governor took the initiative and held the meeting to extend loans to the farming community.

Issue of repayment

He said after the Telugu Desam Party had promised to waive the farm loans, the repayment had come to a grinding halt.

He said unless the banks get loan repayments, they would not renew or give fresh crop loans.

Stating that farmers may be put to hardships, he wanted the Governor to take steps to provide relief to the farmers at the earliest.

Botcha against separate entrance test

Former PCC chief Botcha Satyanarayana took objections at the move of the private medical colleges to hold their own entrance test for admission into the MBBS course in the two States.

Speaking to reporters here, he said out of 6,000 medical seats in the State, 3,800 are in private colleges and there was scope for fleecing the students.

The students belonging weaker sections would be hit hard by such a move, he said, adding that when Eamcet was followed it was beneficial to the students.

To meet Governor

A delegation of APCC leaders is expected to call on the Governor shortly with a plea not to allow private managements to conduct own entrance test.

Agitated paddy farmers stage protest

Farmers were up in arms against the district administration for non-availability of minimum support price to the paddy produce in Karimnagar district on Monday.

Irked over the non-availability of MSP, the farmers came on to the roads and staged a rasta roko in front of the Agricultural Market Yard in Karimnagar on Monday.

The farmers alleged that the traders were providing only Rs.1,150 per quintal against the MSP of Rs.1,350 per quintal.

They also charged that the traders were delaying the purchase of paddy on various pretexts.

Later, the officials had tried to pacify the farmers, but in vain.

The officials said that the traders were providing fewer rates to the paddy due to high moisture content.

They called upon the farmers to get their produce cleaned and dried for getting the assured MSP.

Grooming farmers for kharif season



In order to encourage farmers and create awareness of new agricultural technologies to increase productivity of farmland, the Agriculture Department had conducted a week-long awareness programme scheduled from May 19 to 24 in Hubli and other villages in the district.

Inaugurating the Awareness Campaign Vehicles here on Monday Zilla Panchayat president Ramesh S. Maragol said the awareness campaign and agricultural trainings would help farmers in preparation for sowing, and help to choose crops according to fertility of the soil that would result a good harvest.

Mr. Maragol said the farmers would get to know of new technologies introduced in the field of agriculture and innovated by progressive farmers. He called upon all farmers in the district to use the opportunity and participate in the training programmes.

Seeds distribution

Joint Director of the Agriculture Department Jilani. Mokashi said that the department has fixed a target of taking up sowing operations in 5.71 lakh hectares during the kharif season this year in Gulbarga district .He said the department had made arrangements to ascertain adequate stocks of 1,86,043 metric tonne of fertilizer and around 75,568 quintal seeds required for the sowing.

He said the fertilizer and seeds would be made available in all Raita Samparka Kendra (RSK) and 184 godowns available at each RSK. The agricultural products would be distributed through 86 distribution centres, including 32 RSKs and 54 godowns, in the villages across the district, he said.

Mr. Mokashi advised farmers to use only certified seeds supplied by national and State seeds corporations. The department would also ensure proper distribution of seeds and fertilizer to the farmers at the price fixed by the government, he said.

Mango export committee on the cards

Minister for Horticulture and APMCs Shamanur Shivshankarappa has said that the State government was planning to set up a committee to export quality mangoes grown in the State to other countries across the globe.

The committee would chalk out strategies to identify the quality mangoes grown in the State and export them.

Speaking after inaugurating a three-day mango mela organised by the Horticulture department in its premises here on Monday, the Minister said that the committee would also be given the additional responsibility of exporting quality grape, pomegranate and sapota to different countries.

Coconut- Neera Board set up

The government has issued an order constituting the Coconut-Neera Board. An official pressnote issued here on Monday said the board chaired by the Agricultural Production Commissioner had been set up to coordinate the activities of the Excise and Agriculture departments, under plans to make coconut farming more remunerative, provide assistance for farmers cooperatives and promote neera as a health drink within the State and across the country. The Excise Commissioner will be the Chief Executive Officer of the board.

Tata Global acquires Australian coffee co



Tata Global Beverages (TGB) has bought, through its overseas subsidiary based in the U.K., the entire stake in the equity capital of Bronski Eleven Pty Ltd., Australia.

TGB said that the Australian company was engaged in the roast-and-ground (R&G) coffee, and coffee in pods (single service portions) segments under the MAP brand in Australia.

The investment is in line with TGB's strategic vision to become a leader in the good-for-you beverage segment in Australia, the company said in a stock exchange filing.

The buy also helped Tata Global Beverages expand its portfolio to include high-growth, contemporary single-serve business, it added.

The company, however, did not disclose the amount involved in the transaction.

A few years ago, Tata Global Beverages, then known as Tata Tea Ltd., embarked on a strategy to gradually defocus its plantation business and position itself as a beverage company.

It spun off its tea estates in Assam, West Bengal and in the South into separate companies, and started concentrating on the good-for-you beverage segment.

Over the last few years, it has made a string of purchases in the beverage segment.

It is now a global company, with 65 per cent of its revenue coming from outside India.

It said that 90 per cent of revenues come from sale of branded products in 40 countries with the remaining coming from the plantation and extractions.

The beverage positioning has been driven mainly by acquisitions, with two of its flagship brands – Tetley and Eight o Clock Coffee coming through that route. Besides tea and coffee, TGB is marking a major presence in fortified water segment too.

TNAU scientific workers' conference

The 80th scientific workers' conference will be held at the Tamil Nadu Agricultural University on May 21, and 22.

A release says that Agriculture Minister S. Damodaran, Secretary and Agriculture Production Commissioner Sandeep Saxena, and other officials will participate in the inauguration on May 21.

TNAU Vice-Chancellor K. Ramasamy will deliver the presidential address, the release said.

Application invited for TNAU convocation

Tamil Nadu Agricultural University has invited application for convocation from eligible candidates.

A release says that the TNAU proposes to hold the convocation in July 2014, for which candidates who received their results before March 31, 2014 were eligible to apply.

Website

Those interested may download the application from the website, www.tnau.ac.in. The fee may be remitted online.

Last date

The filled-in application along with copy of the provisional certificate and copy of the bank receipt (remitted online) should reach the office of the Registrar before June 13, 2014.

Fruit and shade trees for Kozhikode

One-lakh saplings will be planted in the district in connection with the ongoing 'Shudham Sundaram Nammude Kozhikode' scheme, District Collector C.A. Latha has said.

She said here on Monday that saplings of shade and fruit trees would be planted on roadsides and in the compounds of government institutions and quasi-government bodies.

Students, voluntary agencies, Kudumbasree units and government institutions would be roped in to implement the scheme, the Collector said.

Conservation message

The objective of the programme was to create awareness of nature conservation. Large tracts of government land that was remaining unused at many places could be used for the purpose, she said, urging the cooperation of all in this green mission.

On June 5

Minister for Social Justice M.K. Muneer would launch the programme on June 5. Students along with local self-governing bodies and the Forest Department would participate.

The Collector has asked voluntary agencies, residents' associations, nature clubs and Kudumbasree units to contact the Deputy Collector (General), Civil Station, Kozhikode, for implementing the scheme.

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- One-lakh saplings to be planted in district*
 - Support of students, voluntary agencies to be sought*
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Water level

MADURAI

The water level in Periyar dam stood at 114.20 feet (permissible level is 142 feet) on Monday with an inflow of 200 cusecs and a discharge of 200 cusecs. The level in Vaigai dam was 32.97 feet (full level is 71 feet) with an inflow of 94 cusecs and a discharge of 40 cusecs. The combined storage in Periyar credit was 1,448 mcft. There was no rainfall recorded during the last 24 hours ending at 8.30 a.m. on Monday, PWD officials said.

Mettur

The water level in the Mettur dam stood at 35.31 feet on Monday against its full level of 120 feet. The inflow was 630 cusecs and the discharge 500 cusecs.

TIRUNELVELI

The water level in the Papanasam dam on Monday stood at 53.45 feet (maximum level is 143 feet). The dam had an inflow of 37.50 cusecs and 200 cusecs of water is discharged from the dam. The level of Manimuthar dam stood at 67.81 feet (118 feet). The dam had an inflow of 10 cusecs and no water is discharged.

Kanyakumari

The water level stood at 20.10 feet in Pechipparai dam, 45.40 feet in Perunchani, 7.94 feet in Chittar 1, 8.03 feet in Chittar 11, 6 feet in Poigai and 54.12 feet in Mamabazathuraiyaru dam.



Alphonos available in market at 50% discount

With the European Union banning the import of Alphonso mangoes from the country, you can feast on this variety at ₹450-500 per tray of 12, half the price, you will have paid otherwise.

This could thus be a moment for you to enjoy the expensive variety, that a common man usually fails to afford, priced as it is at around

₹100 for a single piece in normal market conditions.

There is a glut of Alphonos in the market as the European Union has imposed a ban on the variety's import, due to

"We have a lot of the stock of this variety of mangoes and we are selling it at 50% of last year's prices. Its shelf life is limited and our priority is to dispose it as quickly as possible and thus the discount. We hope that people come forward and buy from us," said Lucky Sahni, member Sabzi Mandi Arthiya Association, Sector 26. He has also been the association president.

"There is a glut in the market and we have been forced to slash the prices. Rates may also fall further if buyers stay away," said Tarlochan Singh, another member of the market association.

He added that if the sale did not pick up at the reduced prices, rates will be slashed again and that the traders were incurring a loss.

Import ban

The EU had banned import of mangoes from India beginning May 1, after a large number of shipments from India were found to be contaminated with fruit flies. The EU had

issued a statement saying these flies could cause serious threat to crops being grown in European countries.

Chennai

Chennai - INDIA

Today's Weather



Sunny

Tuesday, May 20

Max Min

34° | 28°

Rain: 0

Sunrise: 05:42

Humidity: 75

Sunset: 06:28

Wind: normal

Barometer: 1008

Tomorrow's Forecast



Partly Cloudy

Wednesday, May 21

Max Min

38° | 28°

Extended Forecast for a week

Thursday
May 22



38° | 28°

Partly
Cloudy

Friday
May 23



39° | 29°

Partly
Cloudy

Saturday
May 24



39° | 29°

Partly
Cloudy

Sunday
May 25



38° | 29°

Partly
Cloudy

Monday
May
26



37° | 28°

Sunny

Airport Weather

Chennai

Chennai

Rain: 0

Sunrise: 05:42

Humidity: 75

Sunset: 06:28

Wind: normal

Barometer: 1008



Business Standard

Potato up 0.5% as demand picks up



[Potato](#) prices moved up by 0.51% to Rs 1,355 per quintal in futures trading today as speculators created fresh positions after demand in the spot markets picked up.

Further, restricted arrivals from producing belts supported the upside.

At the [Multi Commodity Exchange](#), potato for delivery in June gained Rs 6.90, or 0.51%, to Rs 1,355 per quintal in a business turnover of 57 lots.

Potato for delivery in May also traded up by Rs 3, or 0.23%, to Rs 1,307 per quintal in 12 lots.

Analysts said fresh positions built-up by speculators, driven by rising demand in the spot markets against limited arrivals from producing regions, mainly led to rise in potato prices at futures trade

Coriander down 0.4% on low demand, increased arrivals



[Coriander](#) prices fell by 0.48% to Rs 9,250 per quintal in futures trade today as speculators reduced positions due to sluggish demand in the spot markets.

Besides, adequate stocks position in the physical market due to higher arrivals from producing belts also put pressure on coriander prices.

At the National Commodity and Derivatives Exchange, coriander prices for delivery in May fell by Rs 45, or 0.48%, to Rs 9,250 per quintal with an open interest of 4,050 lots.

In a similar fashion, June contracts declined by Rs 42, or 0.44%, to Rs 9,594 per quintal with an open interest of 43,260 lots.

Market analysts said adequate stocks in the physical market against sluggish demand led to the fall in coriander prices.

Chana down 0.9% on increased supply



[Chana](#) prices eased by 0.94% to Rs 3,041 per quintal in futures trading today on sluggish demand in the spot market against increased supplies from producing regions.

At the National Commodity and Derivative Exchange, chana for delivery in June fell by Rs 29, or 0.94%, to Rs 3,041 per quintal with an open interest of 1,58,080 lots.

Similarly, the commodity for delivery in May traded lower by Rs 20, or 0.67%, to Rs 2,977 per quintal in 1,040 lots.

Analysts attributed the fall in chana futures to increased supplies from producing regions against weak demand in the spot market.

Jeera up 1.5% on export demand



[Jeera](#) prices climbed 1.59% to Rs 11,165 per quintal in futures trade today as speculators created fresh positions amid pick-up in export demand.

At the [National Commodity and Derivatives Exchange](#), jeera for delivery in May shot up by Rs 175, or 1.59%, to Rs 11,165 per quintal with an open interest of 348 lots.

Similarly, the spice for delivery in June gained Rs 55, or 0.49%, to Rs 11,235 per quintal in 9,336 lots.

Analysts said the rise in jeera futures was due to positions built up by speculators on pick up in export demand in the spot market.

Turmeric down 2.4% on sluggish demand



[Turmeric](#) prices plunged 2.43% to Rs 6,676 per quintal in futures trade today as speculators trimmed positions amid sluggish domestic demand and adequate supplies.

At the [National Commodity and Derivatives Exchange](#), turmeric for delivery in June dropped by Rs 166, or 2.43%, to Rs 6,676 per quintal with an open interest of 11,805 lots.

Similarly, the spice for delivery in May lost Rs 120, or 1.83%, to Rs 6,450 per quintal in 340 lots.

Analysts said offloading of positions by speculators, driven by sluggish demand in the spot market against adequate supplies from producing regions, mainly pulled down turmeric prices at futures trade.

THE HINDU
BusinessLine

Rice seen ruling at current levels

The rice market may continue to rule around current levels without any major fluctuation in the coming days, according to trade experts.

The market witnessed a mixed trend on Monday. Prices of Pusa 1121 (steam) and Sharbati (sela) moved up on buying interest while all the other aromatic and non-basmati varieties continued to rule around their previous quoted levels.

Amit Kumar, proprietor of Ginni Rice, told *Business Line* that an increase in demand mainly pushed Pusa-1121 (steam) and Sharbati (sela) prices upwards. In the absence of any major market moving factors, rice prices may continue to rule around current levels for the next few days, he added.

Pusa-1121 (steam) went further up by ₹200 to ₹9,500, while Pusa-1121 (sela) quoted unchanged at ₹7,600 . Pure Basmati (raw) quoted at ₹12,300. Duplicate basmati (steam) was sold at ₹7,400 a quintal.

Pusa-1121 (second wand) was at ₹7,200, Tibar at ₹6,100 while Dubar at ₹5,250 a quintal.

In the non-basmati section, Sharbati (steam) sold at ₹4,800 while Sharbati (sela) moved up by ₹100 and quoted at ₹4,300.

On the other hand, PR varieties were quoted with nominal fluctuations. Permal (raw) sold at ₹2,350, Permal (sela) at ₹2,400 , PR-11 (sela) sold at ₹2,725 while PR-11 (raw) at ₹2,700 . PR14 (steam) sold at ₹2,900 a quintal.

Selling pressure dissolves sugar

Selling by sugar mills at ₹20-30 a quintal lower kept sugar prices in spot and futures markets under pressure on Monday. Need-based local demand and continuous supply pulled down physical prices by ₹10-20 on the Vashi wholesale market.

However, *naka* rates were unchanged on limited activities. Jagdish Rawal of B. Bhogilal & Co said, “due to continuous recovery in domestic currency against dollar – which reduced the chances of exports – and slack local demand the offtake was limited. Millers are selling continuously resulting in ample supply in the market. Vashi market is already carry over 110-115 truckloads of inventory since the last few days keeping stockists away from taking fresh bets. Global prices have improved after the Centre cut the export subsidy but a sharp recovery in the rupee has made sugar exports uncompetitive. Freight rates were steady.

Arrivals at Vashi market were around 55-56 truckloads (of 100 bags each) and the local dispatches were 52-53 loads. On Saturday evening, about 13-14 mills offered tenders and sold hardly 38,000-40,000 bags at ₹2,950-3,020 (₹2,950-3,050) for S-grade and ₹3,050-3,160 (₹3,050-3,200) for M-grade.

Bombay Sugar Merchants Association's spot rates: S-grade ₹3,122-3,255 (₹3,132-3,262) and M-grade was ₹3,242-3,392 (₹3,242-3,426). *Naka* delivery rates were: S-grade ₹3,060-3,130 (₹3,060-3,130) and M-grade ₹3,160-3,300 (₹3,160-3,300).

Cotton rules flat on limited buying

Cotton prices were unchanged on limited demand from mills and exporters. Traders said that the season is at its end, so demand is subdued.

A broker said that domestic mills demand was there in the market. Exporters' buying was limited. There is no hope for any big demand and price may decrease this week. Gujarat Sankar-6 best quality cotton was traded at ₹42,000-500 for a candy of 356 kg. Average cotton price stood at ₹39,000-40,000 and lower grade cotton was quoted at ₹35,000-38,000.

About 30,000 bales of 170 kg each of cotton arrived in Gujarat and 80,000 bales arrived in India. *Kapas* or raw cotton declined by ₹5 to ₹880-1,050 for a *maund* of 20 kg. Gin delivery *kapas* was ₹1,050-60. Cotton seed was quoted at ₹375-390.

Quality root turmeric finds takers

Spot turmeric prices witnessed a declining trend, but demand for the root variety was high on Monday.

“Contrary to expectations, turmeric prices did not rebound. But traders purchased the root variety by quoting higher price. Because of arrival of fine variety root turmeric, traders quoted ₹500 a quintal more and purchased all the 75 bags. They also quoted ₹100 more for the other root varieties in the Regulated Market and Cooperatives,” said RKV Ravishankar, President, Erode Turmeric Merchants Association.

Totally, about 350 bags of root variety arrived for sale in the four markets and all were sold for higher price. Traders are expecting that they will get good upcountry orders soon. Stockists procured over 500 bags of turmeric on Monday. Of the 4,000 bags that arrived, 50 per cent of the stocks was sold. At the Erode Turmeric Merchants Association sales yard, the finger variety fetched ₹4,755-7,017 a quintal; the root variety ₹4,599-6,669.

Salem Hybrid: The finger variety was sold at ₹6,209-7,309; the root variety ₹5,910-7,200. Of the 834 bags that arrived, 217 were sold.

At the Regulated Market Committee, the finger variety quoted ₹6,394-7,047 and the root variety ₹6,019-6,977. Of the 831 bags on sale, 672 were traded.

At the Erode Cooperative Marketing Society, the finger variety was sold at ₹6,289-7,089 and the root variety ₹5,800-6,980. All the 608 bags were traded.

At the Gobichettipalayam Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Society, the finger variety fetched ₹6,189-7,060 and the root variety ₹5,999-6,919. All the 301 bags found takers.

Kochi tea loses steam on heavy withdrawals

Prices of almost all tea varieties declined at the Kochi auction. In sale no 20, the quantity on offer in CTC dust grades was 11,10,000 kg.

With a fair demand, the market opened at ₹3-5 lower. As the sale progressed, the decline in price was to the tune of ₹5-10 and sometimes more.

Medium and plainer teas witnessed heavy withdrawals due to low or lack of bids.

According to the auctioneers Forbes, Ewart & Figgis, the arrival in orthodox dust category was low compared to last week with only 6,500 kg on offer.

The market for primary grades remained steady while others were irregular and lower.

A small quantity of orthodox dust sold was absorbed by exporters.

In the best CTC dusts, PD grades quoted ₹97/114, RD varieties fetched ₹105/125, SRD ruled at ₹118/151 and SFD stood at ₹120/152. The leaf category also witnessed a declining trend in prices and the quantity on offer in orthodox grades was 1,31,000 kg. The market for select best Nilgiri Broken,

Whole Leaf and Fannings barely remained steady. Clean, black, well-made medium bolder broken, whole leaf, tippy grades were steady to firm. There was a subdued demand from exporters.

The quantity on offer in CTC leaf was 80,500 kg. The market for good and medium barely remained steady and tended to ease.

Plainer varieties were lower and witnessed heavy withdrawals due to low or lack of bid.

In the dust category, Injipara (Prm) SFD quoted the best prices of ₹163 followed by Injipara (Prm) RD at ₹155.

In leaf varieties, Chamraj Green FOP (s) fetched the best prices of ₹310 followed by Pascoes Woodlands Hyson Green Tea at ₹280.

26% tea unsold at Coonoor auctions

Due to inadequate demand, some 26 per cent of 12.62 lakh kg offered at Sale No: 20 of Coonoor Tea Trade Association auction remain unsold.

Vigneshwar Estate topped CTC market at ₹187 a kg. Deepika Supreme got ₹185, Crosshill Estate ₹183 and Hittakkal Estate ₹180. In all, 88 marks got ₹125 and more.

Among orthodox teas, Chamraj topped at ₹240 a kg, followed by Kairbetta ₹218, Havukal ₹200, Kodanad ₹195, Corsley and Highfield Estate ₹186 each.

In all, 32 marks got ₹125 and more.

Quotations held by brokers indicated bids ranging ₹51-54 a kg for plain leaf grades and ₹100-160 for brighter liquoring sorts.

They ranged ₹62-66 for plain dusts and ₹120-180 for brighter liquoring dusts.

Export purchase was less and limited to plainer less-priced teas.

Some teas were bought for Pakistan in wide range ₹53-116 a kg.

Some purchase for CIS and European ports were made in wide spectrum of ₹52-159.

High-priced CTC leaf eased by ₹2-5 a kg, mediums ₹3 and plain ones ₹2-3. Most orthodox dusts lost ₹2-3. CTC dusts lost ₹2-3.

Natural rubber imports shoot up 84% in April

Imports of natural rubber rose 84% to 26,445 tonne in April on account of lower prices in international markets and drop in domestic production.

According to the Rubber Board data, India's natural rubber imports stood at 14,396 tonne in the same month last year. Natural rubber imports in FY 2013-14 increased by 49% to 3.24 lakh tonne from 2.17 lakh tonne in 2012-13.

Imports increased despite the Centre raising import duty on natural rubber to R30 per kg or 20%, whichever is lower, in December last year.

The basic customs duty on natural rubber earlier stood at R20 a kg or 20% whichever was lower. "Imports have gone up as prices of both block rubber and sheet rubber in the international market are lower as compared to domestic prices," a senior rubber board official said.

The gap between international and domestic prices of block rubber is R30-35 per kg, while that of sheet rubber is R17-18 per kg. About 95% of rubber imported is used by tyre manufacturers and India imports a big chunk from Vietnam and Indonesia.

Meanwhile, the production of natural rubber dropped 4% to 51,000 tonne in April 2014 as against 53,000 tonne in the same month last year. The consumption, however, fell marginally to 81,500 tonne in the month from 82,980 tonne in April 2013, the data showed.

Rubber exports declined to 28 tonne in April this year as compared to 1,538 tonne in the same month a year ago.

THE ECONOMIC TIMES

Coriander falls on low demand, increased arrivals



NEW DELHI: Coriander [prices](#) fell by 0.48 per cent to Rs 9,250 per quintal in [future](#) trade today as speculators reduced positions due to sluggish [demand](#) in the [spot](#) markets.

Besides, adequate [stocks](#) position in the physical market due to higher [arrivals](#) from producing belts also put pressure on [coriander](#) prices.

At the National Commodity and Derivatives Exchange, coriander prices for delivery in May fell by Rs 45, or 0.48 per cent, to Rs 9,250 per quintal with an open interest of 4,050 lots.

In a similar fashion, June contracts declined by Rs 42, or 0.44 per cent, to Rs 9,594 per quintal with an open interest of 43,260 lots.

Market analysts said adequate stocks in the physical market against sluggish demand led to the fall in coriander prices.

Sugar softens on sluggish demand



NEW DELHI: [Sugar prices](#) receded by Rs 20 per quintal in the national capital today on slackness in [demand](#) amid mounting of [stocks](#) following increased [supplies](#) from millers.

Marketmen said in addition to mounting of stocks on increased supplies from mills, fall in demand from stockist and bulk consumers, mainly pulled down sweetener prices.

THE TIMES OF INDIA

Special agriculture cell to hear seed quality plaints

Kolhapur: The district agriculture office has started a special cell ahead of the Kharif season to deal with the farmer's complaints about the quality and supply of seeds.

District agriculture officer Mohan Atole said that farmers can take information about the seeds availability or can file complaint on a landline number 0231-2654603 or on a cell phone number 8275917676.

The district office has prepared for the Kharif season sowing over 4.26 lakh hectares and aiming to increase the area of paddy, groundnut and soybean cultivation. Currently, there is 1.12 lakh hectares area under paddy cultivation, 22,700 hectares for nagli, 5,100 hectares for jowar, 3,300 hectares for maize and 58,600 hectares for groundnut.

"We have distributed seeds for paddy through the state-owned Mahabeej company and some private players. However, the soybean seeds will reach to distributors soon. We have received taluka-wise requirements for the paddy and soybean seeds and the

distribution will be done as per the requirement," Atole said.

He appealed to farmers to use the last year's verified seeds wherever available.

"Already 20,551 quintals of seeds are with farmers. We have appealed to them to use these seeds or distribute the same in adjoining villages for the optimum utilization of available seeds," he said.

There were reports of unauthorized agents trying to communicate with the farmers for the distribution of seeds.

Atole has told farmers to directly contact the agriculture office.

"We have started awareness programmes across the district for the proper usage of seeds. Agriculture superintendents are visiting villages and talking to the farmers. The farming community should not trust any agents and should talk to the authorized government persons in case of seed quality, its productivity and complaints," he said.

Revolutionary agri ideas get awarded

NEW DELHI: Two revolutionary ideas showcased at an agricultural conclave here could help improve the shelf life of vegetables and change the way fish is consumed in the country. One, called Veg Sav, will substantially reduce post-harvest loss of vegetables by using edible film (coat) while the other, 'FishPaneer', is a value added item that can be processed into various products like the way milk paneer is processed in the country.

The World Bank-funded National Agriculture Innovation Project (NAIP) of the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) has identified these two indigenous innovations.

Both these innovations caught the attention of participants at the Agri Innovation Conclave, which concluded at the National Agricultural Science Centre (NASC) Complex, Pusa on Monday.

Veg Sav, developed by young farm scientist V Ponvizhi Ramya of Tamil Nadu Agricultural University, Coimbatore, is a Bacteriophages-based based technology.

The presentation, made before experts of ICAR and UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) during the conclave, explained that Bacteriophages-based bio-control measurements had great potential to enhance micro-biological safety. It could be coated on vegetables using edible film which does not have any harmful side effect.

"An edible film is defined as a thin layer which can be consumed, coated on food/vegetables or placed as a barrier between the food and the surrounding environment," Ramya said in her presentation.

The scientist claimed that the vegetable's cooking quality would not be altered by the edible coat and the country could save up to 90% of post-harvest loss by using natural preservative (bio-preservation).

Onno Ruhl, World Bank's country director for India, awarded the Veg Sav innovator the first prize for the best presentation while scientist Joshykumar Khangembam of Central Institute of Fisheries Education, Mumbai, who developed FishPaneer, got the second prize.

FishPaneer is a Surimi-based valued added fish product. Surimi is the Japanese term for de-boned and washed fish meat which is a wet concentrate of proteins.

According to the presentation on FishPaneer, the value-added item has the nutritional quality of fish and textural characteristics of milk paneer which made it a unique product. There is no item like this in the market. It is a ready-to-cook product which can be processed into various products. "The technology is simple and can be easily adopted," the presentation said.

The two-day conclave was organized to identify, support and encourage young agri-students and entrepreneurs with high potential in business start-ups in agriculture.

Speaking on the occasion, FAO representative Peter Kenmore said India was on the march towards attaining food security and NAIP had contributed towards this aim through innumerable innovations and interventions.

Stop Factories From Emptying Sugar Stocks

BELGAUM: Demanding the implementation of the prices declared by the state government and urging the factories to pay their dues, sugarcane farmers will stage a protest in front of the residences of all District Ministers throughout the state on May 29.

The protest is the result of the sugar factory owners not sticking to the State Advisory Prices (SAP).

State Sugarcane Growers Association Kurubar Shantkumar addressed the media on Monday after participating in the association's state executive meeting held to debate the failure of the factory managements in paying the prices fixed by the government.

He said the district administration has issued notices to factories instructing them to pay the dues within seven days. The notices also warned the mills of initiating criminal prosecution if they fail to make payments within seven days.

However, the factory managements have challenged the notice and moved the court seeking a stay which the court has refused.

According to him, the factory managements have now conspired to empty the sugar stocks by transporting it to unidentified locations in Maharashtra and adjoining states to avoid seizure.

He urged the Deputy Commissioners of all districts to immediately seize the sugar stocks to protect the farmers and sell the sugar stocks to settle the dues.

Shantakumar said sugar factories across the state have `3,500 dues per tonne towards the farmers.

Although the state government announced sops to sugar factories including cut in levy on production by 10 per cent, provided interest-free fund to the tunes of `1,064 crore and lessened the burden on factories, the sugar managements are refusing to stick to the direction of the state government to deceive the farmers, he said.

Taking Cue from Movie, Govt Set to Promote Organic Terrace Farming



KOCHI: It looks like Rosshan Andrrews' new flick 'How Old Are You' has made a huge impact on the public and the government. Influenced by the message on organic farming which is being publicised through the movie, Social Justice Minister M K Muneer on Monday announced that the state government will promote organic terrace farming through the Kudumbasree and the Kerala State Womens' Development Corporation (KSWDC).

"We have already held discussions in this regard and we will soon promote this at the state level," he said.

He was speaking during the inaugural ceremony of the 'She taxi' project which was held in Kochi on Monday. The movie which saw the comeback of actress Manju Warriar is the story of an ordinary woman who achieves success despite barriers of age put forward by the society.

"Effective methods such as organic farming should be promoted and we are thankful to the government for the initiative to promote this unique method of farming," Manju Warriar who was present during the inauguration said. "It is a coincidence that the movie was released just two days before the inauguration of the 'She taxi' which promotes women empowerment," Manju said.

Meanwhile, she said that she was overwhelmed by the response of the public who has given her sufficient support during her comeback to the film industry.

"I am ever grateful for the way the people have accepted me back wholeheartedly.

"I had not anticipated such a warm response and I take this opportunity to thank the audience," she said.

