

23-12-2016

# THE HINDU

## **Credit plan for Thanjavur released**

The Potential Linked Credit Plan (PLP) prepared by the National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) projects a credit potential of Rs.6,738.96 crore for this district during 2017-18.

The plan projects an increase of about 10 per cent in credit flow over the current financial year. The PLP forms the basis for the Annual Credit Plan (ACP) of the district.

Collector A.Annadurai, who released the plan at the District Level Review Committee meeting here on Thursday, said that the PLP has got vital inputs required for planning by banks at branch level. He advised bankers to increase their targets towards medium and long term credit in agriculture as there was good potential to promote farm mechanisation, micro irrigation systems, animal husbandry sector and inland fisheries.

N.Murugan, Senior Regional Manager, Indian Overseas Bank, Thanjavur, said a background paper will be circulated by the Lead Bank, along with the block-wise and activity-wise potential identified.

N.Balu, Assistant General Manager, Reserve Bank of India, said that the district had a good banking network with 332 branches and the overall credit-deposit ratio of all the banks during 2015-16 was 98 per cent, well above the stipulated 60 per cent. The PLP been prepared in consultation with officials at block, district and state level with a theme of doubling farmers income by 2022, said K. Subramanian, District Development Manager, NABARD. He said the PLP projects a credit potential of Rs. 3,695.03 crore by way of crop loans and Rs. 1,627.96 crore of term loans in agriculture and allied areas. The MSME sector is estimated to have a credit flow potential of Rs. 405.91 crore.

J. Srinivasan, Lead District Manager, indicated that critical issues and constraints faced by the banks as well as government departments and the strategies to be adopted to realise the estimated credit potential have been outlined in PLP.

## “Adopt drip irrigation”



Farmers of the district should explore the possibilities of producing high quality black gram and organic vegetables to get attractive returns, observed scientists and bank officials who spoke at a function got up by the National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development and GVN Trust, a non-governmental organisation at Keelakurichi near here recently.

S. Somasundaram, District Development Manager, NABARD, said that failure of monsoon had been a recurring phenomenon these days.

Adoption of drip irrigation for high yielding black gram and vegetables would go a long way to get good returns.

R Manimekalai, Programme Coordinator, Krishi Vigyan Kendra, Vamban, spoke on value-addition in vegetable cultivation. She conducted a demonstration on preparation of a bio manure using eggs and jaggery. Prabhu Kumar, Assistant Professor of Agronomy, spoke on economic measures in black gram cultivation and soil conservation technique in vegetable cultivation. K. Manimaran, Branch Manager, Canara Bank, Muckanamalaipatti, urged the farmers to adopt shifting cultivation technique by raising pulses and vegetables for sustained returns. Subramanian, Managing Trustee, GVN Trust, spoke on organic methodology in raising vegetables and black gram.

## Make use of e-bazaar, farmers told



The Indian Farmers Fertiliser Cooperative (IFFCO) Limited's e-bazaar is ready to market agro products of individual farmers or farmers groups and they should take maximum advantage of it. With the online services having come to stay, the IFFCO had floated the e-bazaar to integrate farmers with the digital platform, said U. S. Awasthi, Managing Director, IFFCO, New Delhi.

Speaking at a farmers and cooperative members conference organised as part of the golden jubilee of the IFFCO, he said that IFFCO had been registering growth and development in a phased manner. "The company which was started with a capital of about Rs. 5. 50 lakh five decades ago with 57 members, has grown with overseas branches," he said.

The e-bazaar, he said, would provide services such as sale of seeds, insurance, health care services and agricultural inputs under one roof. He said IFFCO would offer special concessions to women entrepreneurs.

Expressing concern over depletion in soil health across Tamil Nadu, he said it was high time that soil was restored to its original texture. "Shortage of water for irrigation has led to loss of micro-nutrients," he said. In this context, he referred to the marketing of the 'Sagarika' a liquid sap produced from the seaweed which has proven to be a very potent bio-stimulant capable of enhancing the productivity of agricultural crops by enriching the soil. If farmers and their societies produced 'Sagarika', the IFFCO would market them, he said. It would also appoint franchisees for IFFCO's e-bazar in this region.

Collector K. S. Palanisamy asked farmers to adopt latest technology in farming practices. He described IFFCO as a comprehensive caretaker of farmers' welfare with a holistic strategy.

N. Vilvasekaran, Managing Director of Tamil Nadu Cooperative Marketing Federation Limited (TANFED), Mayank Singh Parihar, Head of IFFCO e-bazaar, Siva. Muthukumarasamy, Managing Director, Tiruchi District Central Cooperative Bank, S. M. Balan, Director, TANFED, M. Murugan, Chairman, TANFED, and K. C. Ravichandran, Joint Registrar of Cooperative Societies, spoke.

Later, Mr. Awasthi honoured 20 'Best Farmers' and 'Best Cooperator' awards. Mannargudi S. Ranganathan, secretary, Cauvery Delta Farmers Welfare Association, was among those who was honoured with 'Best Farmer' award while Mahadanapuram V. Rajaram was honoured with 'Best cooperator' award.

### **At Krishi Mela, MLA calls upon farmers to adopt new techniques**

Gurupatil, MLA from Shahapur, on Thursday appealed to farmers to shift to modern agricultural systems and grow crops that consume less water, in order to both protect the soil and ensure better yield.

He was speaking on day two of the three-day Krishi Mela organised at Agriculture College in Bheemaranagudi, Shahapur taluk. The event is being jointly organised by Agriculture University, Raichur, the Agriculture College at Bheemaranagudi, and the Agriculture and Horticulture departments.

Mr. Patil, who expressed concern about the "considerable depletion of groundwater levels" owing to deficit rainfall, said farmers should protect the environment and adopt scientific agricultural methods. While appreciating the efforts of agricultural scientists to come up with revolutions in the field, the MLA said it is ultimately up to farmers to carry out the suggestions of scientists and increase their own profit margin.

Progressive farmers Shranamma Budihal and Ashok Mallabadi spoke during an interaction programme with farmers and shared suggestions for better yield.

Mallanna Parivan, who is among those leading an agitation against uranium mining at Gogi, expressed displeasure at the absence of Ministers Priyank Kharge and Sharan Prakash Patil at the mela. He said the elected representatives have not shown any interest in events organised for farmers.

Hundred of farmers from across the district are participating in the mela.

### **Soil testing of one acres in TS within two years**

The Government will complete soil testing of one crore acres of agriculture land in the State within two years and Central Government has been requested to sanction more soil health laboratories.

Agriculture Minister Pocharam Srinivas Reddy revealed this in the Legislative Council on Thursday responding to questions from members during a short discussion on Agriculture. Mr. Reddy said that all the 55 lakh holdings will be tested within two years.

The Government had collected five lakh soil samples in 2015-16 and after analysing 21.63 soil health cards were distributed to farmers. During 2016-17, the target is set for 5.34 lakhs and of this 4.14 lakh samples were collected and 1.23 lakh soil health cards were distributed.

On farmers getting cheated by sellers with spurious seeds, he said that the Government had cancelled 135 dealer licenses, 9 centralised seed licenses apart from booking 17 criminal cases. Five company personnel had been jailed under the PD Act which was never witnessed in the State's history. In addition, Rs. 1.57 crore compensation was arranged to 2,556 farmers from the companies.

Hailing the Central Government's Pradhana Mantri Phasal Bhim Yojana, he said that it helped farmers cover losses as insurance was being given with village taken as a unit. However, the Telangana Government had written to the Central Government to consider farmer as a unit in implementing Insurance schemes.

Mr. Reddy said that the Government was keen on farm mechanisation and inputs were being supplied at 100 per cent subsidy for the SC and ST farmers and 50 per cent to others. However, the response failed to satisfy the Congress members who staged a walk out alleging that the Government was doing little on the ground to help the farmers.

Bharatiya Janata Party member N. Ramachander Rao, Congress member P. Sudhakar Reddy and TRS member Rajeshwar Reddy were among others who participated in the discussion.

Earlier, during the Question Hour Mohd. Ali Shabbir, Leader of Opposition alleged that step- motherly treatment was meted out to minorities and pointed out that hardly 30 per cent of the budgeted sum of Rs. 1,200 crore was spent till December. He said that 1,67,000 applications from minority entrepreneurs were pending with the Government.

He said that 50,000 applications under the Shadi Mubarak scheme were pending as of date and the Government had released only Rs. 19.79 crore out of the budgeted Rs. 150 crore. With regard to the RTF scholarships for Muslim youth he said that though Rs. 238 crore was allocated only Rs. 66 crore had been released, while in the case of MTF scholarships for minority students not a single paisa was released although Rs. 50 crore is budgeted.

Deputy Chief Minister Mahmood Ali admitted that applications were pending and the funds would be released.

### **Tree transplantation to the rescue**



G. Ramakrishnan, (retired) deputy director of Department of Agriculture and a guest faculty at Anna University, on the do's and don'ts of tree transplantation.

\* An uprooted tree could be saved through transplantation, if its roots have not lost their moisture and the root ball remains intact. Its survival however depends on its age. Trees aged between 5 and 10 years are likely to flourish after a transplantation, but those that are over 20 years old may not be able to adapt to the new environment. A good growth and yield cannot be expected of such trees, down the years. Other parameters that determine the health of a transplanted tree includes location, type of soil, nature of root structure, species of the tree and girth.

\* Post-transplantation, it should be ensured that the roots always remain moistened with regular watering. Fertilisers, pesticides and even bio-manure should not be applied till the roots get a firm anchorage in the new soil.

\* Trees such as pungam, mantharai, purasu, Indian coral, casuarina, mango, peepal, coconut, nettilingam, jackfruit, golden shower, sapota can be considered for transplantation.

\* Transplantation is certainly a costly exercise. Transplantation of a young tree costs Rs. 2,000 and transplanting an old and huge tree could cost anywhere between Rs. 10,000 and Rs. 70,000 approximately.

***Ramakrishnan offers free consultation and can***

***bereached at 99623 11840, 2452 3874***

### **Step up production, cocoon farmers told**

Sericulture Department has encouraged farmers to step up productivity by giving incentive of Rs. 10 a kg of cocoon produced.

As against the State average of 77 kg/100 disease-free layings, the department is guiding farmers to achieve production in excess of 80 per cent, said K.S. Rajendren, Regional Joint Director of Sericulture, Erode.

At a Farmer Field School conducted under the aegis of Agricultural Technology Management Agency at Nochipalayam village in Erode block on Tuesday, Mr. Rajendren joined other experts in guiding 25 cultivators on Bivoltine Cocoon Production technologies.

S. Jayaprakash Assistant director of Sericulture, Erode, explained the subsidy scheme of sericulture department implemented during 2016-2017.

He emphasised on focus towards technical knowledge for attaining vertical growth, and, ultimately, quality, productivity and better price.

## **‘PLP prepared with theme doubling farmers income by 2022’**



The National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) has assessed the credit potential of the Salem District for the year 2017-18 at Rs. 5,584.47 crore, registering a 18.03 per cent increase over the current year’s projection of Rs.4731.49 crore.

District Collector V. Sampath released the Potential-linked Credit Plan (PLP) for the year 2017-18 prepared by NABARD during the standing committee meeting held on Wednesday.

C. R. Gopikrishnan, Zonal Manager, Indian Bank, received the first copy.

A. Bhama Buvaneswari, District Development Manager, NABARD, said that the credit potential for agriculture has been estimated at Rs. 4163.09 crores which includes short term credit of Rs. 2761.72 crores and that of micro, small and medium enterprises at Rs.732.47 crores.

She said that the PLP has been prepared with a theme of “doubling of farmers income by 2022”.

While doubling of farmers’ income would be the first milestone to ensure income security of the farmers, there is a need to have sustainable growth in the farmers’ income to cope up with inflation in the long run.

Ms. Bhama Buvaneswari further added that focus is also to be given for increasing capital formation in agriculture, which could be achieved by leveraging the Credit Linked Capital Subsidy Schemes (CLCSS) and other government subsidies, wherever available.

The DDM said that NABARD’s efforts in assessing increased credit potential for agriculture aiming at increased productivity so as to ensure food security is supplemented with NABARD’s support under the Rural Infrastructure Development Fund (RIDF) in creating additional infrastructure for storage of food grains in the District.



She also informed that an area based scheme on sheep / goat rearing and breeding in two select blocks viz., Ayothiyapattinam and Panamarathupatti, which have potential has been suggested and banking plan prepared for replication.

The District Collector urged the bankers to improve agriculture term lending as capital formation in agriculture is essential to boost production and productivity in agriculture thereby leading to overall economic growth of the country.

Mr. C. R. Gopikrishnan informed that banks should improve their lending towards marginal and small farmers and for enterprises as per the Revised Priority Sector Guidelines.

S. Raveendran, Assistant General Manager, Reserve Bank of India, said that banks need to focus their lending towards small and marginal farmers and micro and small enterprises and SC/ST and women borrowers under Stand Up India Scheme.

A. Udayakumar, Lead District Manager, said that banks will strive to achieve the priority sector lending targets.

The Joint Liability Groups (JLGs) can be a safe mode for improved agriculture term lending, the LDM added.

### **Training on gardening**

Tamil Nadu Agricultural University Information and Training Centre is conducting a workshop on medicinal plant cultivation and uses on December 28 and 29 and on roof gardening on December 30. According to the press release, the training will be useful to help understand the production and marketing of medicinal plants. Confirm participation at 26263484, 26283484.

Time: 9.30 a.m. to 4.30 p.m.

Venue: No. U 30, 10th Street, behind Jaigopal Garodia School, Anna Nagar.

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## **Licencing introduced for seed sales**

The Agriculture Department has introduced a licencing system for the sale of seeds and planting material in Kerala.

An official press note issued here on Thursday said the move was aimed at ensuring the quality of planting material used by farmers. Seed companies and dealers have been directed to procure licence before March 31, 2017.

Under the Seed Act, 1966, and the Seed Rules 1968, the sale of seeds and planting material is required to be approved by the Principal Agricultural Officers at the district-level.

### **Unauthorised sale**

Unauthorised sale is a criminal offence.

The government has issued a notification authorising block-level Assistant Directors of Agriculture to monitor and implement the Seed Act.

Special squads would be set up to prevent unauthorised sale.

Director of Agriculture Biju Prabhakar said unlicensed seed companies and dealers would be forced to shut shop and their stocks impounded.

## **Potential Linked Credit Plan for Dharmapuri released**

The Potential Linked Credit Plan (PLP) for Dharmapuri district prepared by the National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) has pegged the credit potential at Rs. Rs. 3,734.72 crore for 2017-18.

K. Vivekanandan, District Collector, and chairman of the District Consultative Committee (DCC), released the credit plan at a meeting of the DLSC held here on Wednesday, in the presence of T. K. Parthasarathy, District Development Manager, NABARD, M. Mutharasu, Lead District Manager, and officers of other banks and the State Government.

The Collector indicated that NABARD had projected Rs. 1,753.35 crore towards crop loan, Rs. 968.38 crore towards farm term loans, Rs. 396.35 crore towards non-farm sector, Rs. 94.95 crore, Rs. 80.44 crore and Rs. 4.65 crore towards education, housing and export respectively.

While making comparison of the current ACP and the PLP for 2017-18, the Collector remarked that NABARD had made a realistic estimate for the next year with around 8 per cent increase.

He expressed the hope that banks in the district could easily achieve the PLP potential of Rs. 3,734.72 crore. The Collector exhorted the bankers to achieve various targets under different sectors in a concerted way dovetailing the State Government schemes along with the subsidies available from various departments.

While elaborating, he indicated that in achieving the crop loan target, various schemes with subsidies for hitech agricultural practices were available with the Department of Agriculture / Horticulture in the areas of drip / sprinkler irrigation, precision farming, shade net / poly house techniques, adoption of system of rice intensification (SRI), sustainable sugarcane initiatives (SSI), could be financed by the bankers which will ensure productivity and also enhanced production culminating in sustainable employment and income generation for the rural poor.

T. K. Parthasarathy, District Development Manager, had indicated that the PLP was prepared keeping in view the Government of India estimate of four per cent increase in agriculture sector, doubling of farmers' income by 2022, Reserve bank of India norms of priority sector lending norms and various State Government schemes and subsidies.

# DECCAN Chronicle

## Middlemen hike vegetable prices in Hyderabad



**Hyderabad:** While farmers are tossing their tomato crop in the garbage at markets due to the lack of minimum support price, the retail price of tomatoes is Rs 20 per kilo against the Rs 2 per kilo in the wholesale market.

On Thursday, the price of local tomato was Rs 2 per kilo, non-local was Rs 3 per kilo, and hybrid (Tomato-618 variety) at Rs 4 per kilo in the wholesale market. But retailers sold all varieties at Rs 20 per kg.

On Wednesday, a farmer from Anantapur district threw away his stock at Bowenpally market as he could not get even Rs 3 per kilo. Commission agents demanded Rs 2 per kilo. While farmers are losing, commission agents and retailers are benefiting.

J.Srinivas, a vegetable retailer, said that the price at wholesale markets was reasonable but malpractices by the commission agents forced retailers to increase prices. “I purchased two quintals of tomato from Bowenpally market. But later I found it weighed 20 kg less. Since there is no grading system at markets, we sell the grade-II stock to hotels for Rs 10 per kg, and the grade-I in weekend markets. After adding our profits, wastage and transportation charges, the price of grade-I rises to Rs 20,” he said.

An official responsible for wholesale markets, however, denied any such wrongdoing.

## Business Standard

**Over 2 lakh farmers open mobile banking accounts; 81K turn to e-wallet**



As the government pushes for cashless transactions in the agri-economy, so far, over 213,000 farmers have activated mobile banking accounts and about 81,000 farmers are now using e-wallet across India. The government hopes that the numbers would double in the next one to two months.

"We believe by end of December, more 50,000 farmers may be added to the mobile banking platform," said Subhash Gupta, chief executive of National Federation of Urban Cooperative Banks and Credit Societies Limited (NAFCUB). NAFCUB represents around 1,600 urban cooperative banks and more than 50,000 cooperative credit societies functioning all over India.

Cooperative banks, National Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Federation of India Ltd (Nafed), National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (Nabard), Gujarat Cooperative Milk Marketing Federation (GCMMF) and other agriculture agencies and institutes are actively organising farmers' training camps across India. So far about 50 such camps have been organised.

"These exercises are for awareness building. The agriculture department and other bodies such as cooperative banks, Nafed, Nabard, Amul, IFFCO (Indian Farmers Fertiliser Cooperative Limited) and Kribhco (Krishak Bharati Cooperative Limited) are spreading awareness about the cashless transaction by organising training programmes across India," said senior official of the department of agriculture, the government of India.

At present, Radha Mohan Singh, Union minister of Agriculture and all ministers of state are making field visits where not only training and awareness programs are being

conducted but also [farmers](#) and other rural households are being helped to activate [mobile banking](#) services on their devices.

Urban cooperative banks (UCBs) have been active and of the 213,000 [mobile banking](#) accounts, around 200,000 accounts have activated through UCBs.

As per agriculture department data, so far more than 81,000 [farmers](#) have downloaded [e-wallet](#) on their mobile phones. The department is hoping nearly 400,000 [farmers](#) and agri-business persons will be on [mobile banking](#) platform.

To provide knowledge about the cashless transaction, [Nabard](#) too is conducting such seminars in rural areas. With this, the bank is supporting to set up [digital](#) payment network in rural areas and will give [RuPay](#) cards to over 34 million [farmers](#) across India.

"Our aim is to enable [farmers](#) for cashless transactions. Generally, [farmers](#) buy seeds, fertilisers and other farming related things on cash or on credit as technology has not yet fully reached rural areas. By providing [RuPay](#) cards, they will also be able to go cashless soon," said H R Dave, deputy managing director of Nabard.

## THE HINDU BusinessLine

### Coffee output seen 9% lower at 3.16 lakh tonnes this year



Truant weather, dried up water resources drag production of the bean

India's coffee output in the current 2016-17 season starting October will be lower by 9 per cent at 3.16 lakh tonnes (lt) over last year's 3.48 lt on account of poor monsoon

impacting the production in the key growing regions of Karnataka, the State-run Coffee Board said in a statement on Thursday.

In its latest post monsoon estimates for 2016-17, the Board has pegged the arabica output lower at 96,200 tonnes — down 7 per cent from last year's 103,500 tonnes.

### **Board cuts figure**

Production of robusta is pegged lower at 2,20,500 tonnes, down 9.82 per cent from last year's 2,44,500 tonnes.

The latest projections are one per cent lower than the earlier post blossom estimates.

Production in Karnataka is forecast down 10 per cent over last year, while in Kerala the drop in output is estimated at 8.58 per cent.

Similarly, the production in Tamil Nadu is estimated to be lower by around 4.25 per cent over last year's output.

In Karnataka — which accounts for 72 per cent of the country's coffee output — the maximum decline in production is seen in Chikmagaluru and Kodagu districts, followed by Hassan.

In Chikmagaluru, the production is lower by 13 per cent over last year, while the drop in output in Kodagu and Hassan is expected to be around 10 per cent and 5 per cent each.

### **Weather woes**

“The reason for reduction in production estimates of 2016-17 is attributed to the delayed blossom and backing showers coupled with high temperatures,” the Board said.

Also, the growers were unable to take up irrigations to top up the scanty showers due to drying up of most of water resources on account of two consecutive drought years.

**Pepper exports lose sting on higher prices; imports up 18%**





Pepper exports via Kochi port fell by 43.54 per cent during January-October 2016, while imports increased by 18.25 per cent.

As against 19,116 tonnes in January-October 2015, shipments through Kochi port stood at 10,792 tonnes in the same period this year. Whereas, the imports soared to 14,515 tonnes from 12,275 tonnes last year, according to Cochin Chamber sources.

Much of the Indian imports have been from Vietnam this year.

According to Vietnam General Department of Customs, India has imported 10,399 tonnes — up 33.82 per cent over the previous year and became the third top importer, Kishor Shamji, an exporter, told *BusinessLine*.

At the national level, total exports might have touched around 11,800 tonnes and the imports at 16,500 tonnes, he said.

Around 90 per cent of the Indian pepper exports, of late, is re-export of imported pepper after doing value-addition such as extraction, grinding and sterilisation.

“Main reason for the decline in exports is the high prices which are ruling much above other origins and as a result, many buyers of Malabar pepper have switched over to Indonesian and Vietnam produce. Consequently, we have lost many of our export markets and it has now become a difficult task for the exporters to regain the lost market from our competitors,” he said.

Export sources attributed the high pepper prices in India to strong domestic demand without a corresponding growth in production.

Add to this is the low productivity and higher production cost in the major growing state Kerala where the productivity per hectare is around 300 kg, they added.

### **Spot pepper slips**

Spot pepper prices slipped further as farmers were releasing their produce. Dealers have slowed down buying hoping for a further fall in prices, while industries — which needs the material now — were buying, market sources told *BusinessLine*.

On the terminal market, 11 tonnes were traded at ₹650-670 a kg. Spot prices fell further by ₹300 a quintal to ₹66,900 (ungarbled) and ₹69,900 (garbled). January, February and March contracts on the IPSTA stayed unchanged at ₹65,000, ₹63,000 and ₹58,000 a quintal.

Export prices were at \$10,600 a tonne c&f for Europe and \$10,850 for the US.

### **Nilgiris tea output drops by 22%**



Tea production in the Nilgiris, the largest tea growing district, dropped by 24.13 per cent in last month over November 2015 and by 21.69 per cent in the 11 months compared to 2015. Companies have informed the Tea Board that their production in November dropped to 0.88 million kg (mkg) from 1.16 mkg in November 2015 due to dry weather. This fall of 0.28 mkg marked a decline of 24.13 per cent. The five-year mean production was higher at 1.22 mkg. In the 11 months of current calendar, the Nilgiris produced 10.98 mkg against 14.71 mkg in the same period of 2015. This fall of 3.19 mkg marked a decline of 21.69 per cent. The five-year mean production was higher at 13.67 mkg.

### **Quality lends colour to turmeric**



Turmeric prices increased both at spot and futures owing to quality arrivals. “The arrival of turmeric bags increased to 3,300. Majority of them were of medium quality and no fine variety turmeric arrived for sale. Traders purchased almost all the medium variety turmeric for their local supply,” said RKV Ravishankar, a trader. 65 per cent stocks were sold.

The traders quoted higher price for both the varieties. Regarding the price, the finger turmeric increased from ₹100-200 a quintal and the root variety by ₹100. At the Erode Turmeric Merchants Association, the finger turmeric traded at ₹5,614-8,909 a quintal; the root variety at ₹5,414-8,099. Of the arrival of 1,970 bags, 955 were sold.