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THE HINDU BusinessLine

Cardamom gains flavour on good domestic demand

Small cardamom continued to gain flavour on good domestic demand amid thin arrivals at auctions held in Kerala and Tamil Nadu.

"With in a week the prices have gone up by 100 a kg to stay at over 1,000 a kg following good domestic demand and squeezed supply. The quality of the material arriving was, however, not at expected levels", Ranganathan, a Bodinayakannur dealer told *Business Line*.

At the auction conducted today in Bodi by the Idukki Dist. Traditional Cardamom Producer Company Limited, the average price At the auction being conducted today in Bodi by the Idukki Dist. Traditional Cardamom Producer Company Limited, 28.9 tonnes of cardamom and arrived and almost the entire quantity traded. The average price increased to 1017.70 a kg from 991.35 a kg last Monday. The maximum price stood at 1,255 a kg.

He said exporters were not very active as the prices were unattractive while exportable variety material was also not available.

However, the situation, he said, would change after August 10 when the arrivals and the quality of the capsules are expected to improve.

"Till then the current trend is likely to persist", he said. Arrivals last week rose to 384 tonnes from 11 auctions last week from 252 tonnes from 9 auctions the previous week.

The weekly auction average soared to 1,011.30 a kg from 935.65 a kg the week before last.

Individual auction average was vacillating between 991 and 1,069 a kg.

Total arrivals during the current season up to July 22, 2017 were at 19,919 tonnes and the sales were at 18,972 tonnes.

Individual auction average for the season as on July 22 was at 1,093.56 a kg.

Prices today at Bodinayakannur, the main trading hub for the aromatic spice, were (in /kg) : 8mm green bold 1,450; 7-8mm 1,200; 6-7mm 950 ; below 6 mm 850-875. Good bulk being traded at 1,020-1,050 a kg.

IFFCO enters organic space in JV with Sikkim

Moving beyond its core chemical fertiliser area, cooperative fertiliser major IFFCO on Monday announced setting up of a joint venture with the Sikkim Government to enter the organic farming sector.

The fertiliser cooperative will hold 51 per cent equity in the new joint venture — Sikkim IFFCO Organics Limited — where it will make an initial investment of 200 crore, a company statement said. The investment will be increased to 500 crore subsequently.

IFFCO also announced acquisition of a 50 per cent share in New Delhi-based Aquagri Processing Private limited for a sum of 11 crore through its wholly-owned subsidiary IFFCO eBazar Limited.

(This article was published on July 24, 2017)

Heavy rain hits Gujarat kharif crop

Gujarat kharif sowing			
as on July 17, 2017		(Area in hectares)	
Crop	3-year normal	Kharif 2017	% over normal
Cotton	27,25,800	24,46,800	89.76
Groundnut	13,87,700	14,98,500	107.98
Cereals	13,33,500	7,20,100	54.00
Castor	6,94,600	54,300	7.82
Pulses	5,21,000	3,82,100	73.34
Guarseed	2,92,400	83,100	28.42
Soybean	1,01,400	1,06,300	104.83

Source: Agriculture Director, Gujarat

Early estimates peg crop damage to be spread over 50,000 hectares

Heavy and incessant rainfall over the past few days, which triggered flooding and water logging in parts of Gujarat, has hit early-sown kharif crops such as cotton and groundnut.

Initial estimates by agriculture experts and government officials indicate that kharif crop losses have occurred on about 50,000 hectares, mainly in Saurashtra, Kutch and North Gujarat, including the cotton-growing areas of Rajkot, Surendranagar, Morbi, Jamnagar, Devbhumi Dwarka, Kutch, Patan, Banaskantha and Sabarkantha.

Kharif sowing had taken place on about 60.62 lakh hectares till July 17, accounting for about 71 per cent of the three-year average sowing of 85.76 lakh hectares. The affected districts had cotton acreages of over 20 lakh hectares, followed by groundnut area of about 14 lakh hectares.

Damage assessment

State agriculture Minister Chimanbhai Sapariya told *Businessline* that a survey is being conducted to assess the damage to the fields and the crop.

“The State received heavy rainfall in multiple spells during the past few weeks. The assessment of the damage caused during the early-month rains was underway and we started receiving another round of heavy rainfall on a much larger area. Currently, the fields are water-logged and the roads are damaged too. We will resume the assessment once the water recedes,” said Sapariya.

He added that all required assistance, including financial support, would be provided to the farmers after the due assessment.

Till July 24, the State has received 61 per cent of the season's rainfall with 491.54 mm against the average of 810 mm. According to the State's water supply department, out of the 203 reservoirs in the state, 30 have been put under high alert with 100 per cent filling, while 11 dams show over 90 per cent filling. The administration has issued an alert for 12 dams.

The small and marginal farmers will be provided financial assistance under the Calamity Relief Fund, while bigger farmers will be given assistance based on the assessment of the damage. Massive damage is reported in cotton and sesamum, which cannot withstand water-logged fields for more than 3-4 days.

Farmer sources revealed that the cotton crop was at its early stage of plant growth. “Damage to a plant at this stage would ruin the prospects of further growth. Water-logging is spoiling the plants. There are also instances of land erosion in several parts. This is going to put excessive burden on farmers,” said Ramesh Bhoraniya, a farmer from Rajkot. Agriculture officers confirmed that fields have been submerged in the floodwaters in several parts of the districts of Rajkot, Surendranagar, Morbi, Jamnagar, besides North Gujarat. “District Development Officers are leading the assessment of damage. We expect the entire process to get over in a week's time after the water level recedes,” said an official with the Agriculture Department.

The fallout

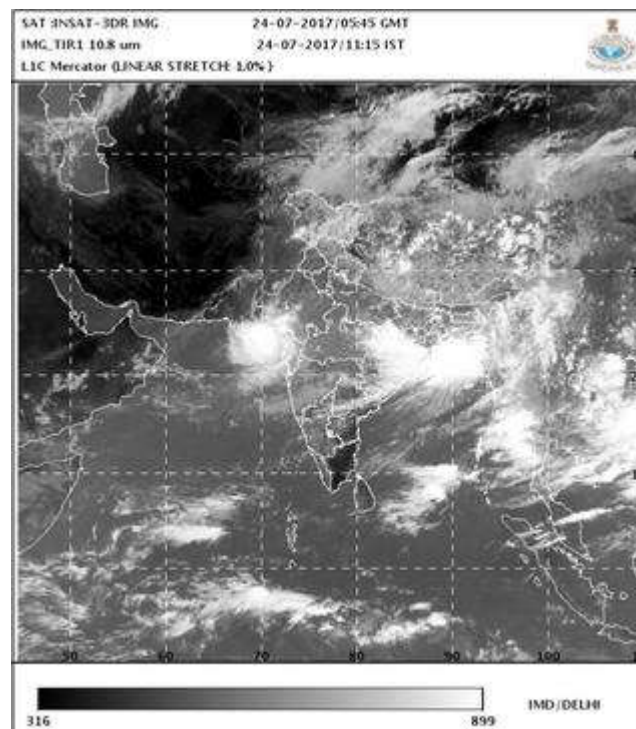
The damage to the cotton crop will have a larger impact on the overall cotton sowing, which will switch to short-duration crops such as tur or other pulses.

“Farmers are already staring at a loss due to lower realisation last year. This year due to heavy rains, the cost incurred on seeds and sowing is wasted. Farmers will not again take a further risk with cotton sowing,” said Bhoraniya.

The IMD has predicted heavy to very heavy rains in the region till July 27.

(This article was published on July 24, 2017)

Monsoon fury unabated in Gujarat, Rajasthan and Bengal



As expected, yet another low-pressure area has evolved over East India, but indications are that this could be the last in the current series of the monsoon weather-driving systems.

Indications are that even this 'low' would not be able to make much headway since, contrary to expectations, a predecessor is still active over South Rajasthan and could stay so for two more days.

This would not leave much space for the latest 'low' to travel into Central India, leading it to merge into its more prominent predecessor and settle in an east-to-west trough formation.

The area covered by this trough extending from Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, northern parts of Madhya Pradesh, Bihar, Jharkhand and the rest of East India will witness a wet spell until July 29.

Meanwhile, India Met Department (IMD) has forecast heavy to very heavy rain for Gujarat and Gangetic West Bengal today as an active 'low' hung over these areas.

An almost similar outlook is valid for South-West Rajasthan and Jharkhand; South-East Rajasthan and Odisha; East Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, hills of Bengal, Sikkim, Chhattisgarh and the North-Eastern states.

Forecasts indicate formation of another monsoon circulation in the Bay around the time the ongoing rain spells weaken out (by the weekend that coincides with the month-end), but this may not last long.

The US Climate Prediction Centre sees largely dry conditions over most parts of the country during the first week of August, except over Kerala and adjoining coastal Karnataka.

(This article was published on July 24, 2017)

Business Standard

Over half of India faces sugar crunch despite stock carryover, bumper crop

Poor rain threatens recovery in production this season, sugar prices at three-month high



Over half of India currently faces sugar deficit despite existence of huge carryover stocks from the previous year and bumper output in some states including Uttar Pradesh and Maharashtra. Deficient monsoon rain so far has threatened recovery in sugar production this season, the second year in a row, pushing sugar prices to a three-month high in the past few weeks.

Industry sources said 14 states and Union Territories with a huge sugar consumption base are currently facing supply shortage due to low output last year. These include major consumers such as West Bengal, Rajasthan, and Bihar to name a few. Despite growing consumption, a number of these states do not produce sugar at all.

States with sugar deficit in 2016-17		
States	Production	Consumption
Punjab	0.6	1.3
Haryana	0.6	1.0
Bihar	0.5	1.0
Gujarat	0.9	1.7
Rajasthan	0.0	2.1
Kerala	0.0	0.8
MP & Chhattisgarh	0.4	2.1
AP and Telangana	0.5	1.1
Odisha	0.04	0.5
West Bengal	0.0	1.3
Jharkhand	0.0	0.4
North East	0.0	0.4
UT & Others	0.0	1.3
<i>Source: Industry; Production, consumption in mn tonnes</i>		

The government has asked Indian Sugar Mills Association (ISMA) to ensure that Mills do not increase prices as market prices were quoted at three-month highs. In response to the letter from ministry of consumer affairs to check prices, Saritha Reddy, president ISMA said that, "We have asked all member sugar mills, writing individually to them, to keep prices under check. We also want prices to remain under check and do not go up unreasonably."

The government had also allowed duty free import of 0.5 million tonnes of raw sugar to bridge the regional deficit, experts believe the quantity insufficient to meet the region's demand.

"During the fortnight ahead of GST (goods and services tax) levy, traders and stockists abstained from re-stocking. Consequently, trading of sugar came to a grinding halt. In the first week of July (post implementation of GST on July 1), traders faced huge difficulties in generating e-bill which also interrupted supply. Now, all these demands suddenly came since

the second week of July resulting into price rise,” said Sanjeev Babar, Managing Director, Maharashtra State Co-operative Sugar Factories Federation Ltd.

Meanwhile, India’s central, eastern and north-eastern states would need 5.4 million tonnes of sugar to flow in from surplus region or through imports as these regions are in huge deficit.

States such as Uttar Pradesh, which produced 8.7 million tonnes of sugar in 2016-17 against a consumption of 3.7 million tonnes, and Maharashtra with a production of 4.2 million tonnes and consumption of 3.3 million tonnes need to supply to the deficit state to control prices there.

Interestingly, major cane growing regions in Maharashtra have witnessed below normal rainfall for the week ended July 12 resulting in 5 per cent of cumulative rainfall so far this season. In northern Karnataka too, the rainfall remained below normal for the week ended July 12, lowering prospects of cane yield in the region. But, the Indian Meteorological Department’s forecast of a return of rainfall in the week ahead, provides a good prospect for cane crops.

Meanwhile, rating agency Icria had recently forecast sugar prices in India to move up following the government’s decision to raise import duty to 50 per cent from the existing 40 per cent to control cheap import.

Concerned with rising prices, the Ministry of Consumer Affairs has directed all sugar associations to order their respective mill members to improve supply to curtail prices.



Fadnavis launches online loan waiver forms on Aaple Sarkar

“My government wants the Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Shetkari Sanman Yojana to reach the poor, small and marginal and eligible farmers,” Fadnavis told the farmers.



Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis (Source: PTI)

Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis Monday launched an online form on the Aaple Sarkar Portal for farmers seeking a loan waiver. Fadnavis launched the online form submission facility at Vidhan Bhavan and also held a video-conference with a group of farmers in Gategaon village, Latur district.

“My government wants the Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Shetkari Sanman Yojana to reach the poor, small and marginal and eligible farmers,” Fadnavis told the farmers. “Therefore, we have adopted technology that would weed out non-eligible candidates.”

In less than 24 hours after announcing the opening of 25,000 centres for farmers loan waiver, the chief minister activated the online process, which would operate across state in full swing to ensure the process of loan waiver applications and its verification and allocation of funds to farmers is expedited and completed in a month.

THE TIMES OF INDIA

Summer school on food technologies for sustainable agriculture concludes at PAU

LUDHIANA: The ten day summer school on "Farmers empowerment and entrepreneurial development in food technologies for sustainable agriculture", organized by the Department of Food Science and Technology, Punjab Agricultural University, concluded here on 17 July. Amarjeet Kaur, Director of the programme informed that 21 scientists from various fields representing most parts of India participated in the course. Neelam Grewal, Dean, PGS, PAU, who was the chief guest on the valedictory function, motivated the participants to be good learners and urged them to remain passionate about their profession. The Head of the Department, Poonam Sachdev presented formal welcome to all the dignitaries and participants.

Kamaljit Kaur, Course Co-Director briefed about the training programme that included lectures on technologies of cereals, pulses, fruits and vegetables, milk, meat products, food safety and quality and other sections of food processing along with marketing, patenting, project report preparation, practical knowledge, industrial visits , as well as visits to labs and farms of PAU and GADVASU. The sessions were taken by experts of various fields including food technology, food processing and food engineering, food and nutrition, live-stock product technology, microbiology, business studies, agronomy etc about various aspects of entrepreneurial development for sustainable agriculture.