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Sterlite launches agriculture project at Ottapidaram



INITIATIVE: Suresh Bose, General Manager, Human Resources, Sterlite, handing over a cheque to V. Louis Rajarathinam, Joint Director, Department of Agriculture, at Ottapidaram.

Tuticorin: To support the farmers of Ottapidaram block by facilitating and encouraging the adoption of organic farming practices, Sterlite Industries India Limited (SIIL) has launched an agriculture project.

The initiative also includes distribution of free hybrid vegetable seeds and tissue culture banana saplings in a bid to achieve high production with low investment.

At the launch of the project at Ottapidaram here on Friday, Suresh Bose, General Manager, Human Resources, SIIL, handed over a cheque for Rs 3,17,120 as first instalment to V. Louis Rajarathinam, Joint Director, Department of Agriculture, Tuticorin.

Total cost

The total cost of the project is Rs 5 lakh.

The project was initiated by the corporate in association with Department of Horticulture, Ottapidaram, with the objective to create awareness of the need for the use of organic farming coupled with modern technology for horticulture crops among farmers of Ottapidaram block, according to its statement.

Seeds distributed

During the programme, 40 farmers received hybrid chilly seeds weighing 3.2 kilograms, 20 farmers received hybrid tomato seeds weighing 0.8 kilograms (three – fourths) and another 20 farmers received hybrid brinjal seeds weighing 1.6 kilograms. It was decided to distribute free hybrid vegetable seeds as it would facilitate higher production with low investment. Besides, 30, 000 tissue culture banana saplings costing Rs 3.6 lakh would be distributed shortly to 30 farmers (1000 each) since they could not afford Rs 12, 000 to buy hybrid banana seeds for every acre.

Efforts lauded

While addressing, Mr. Rajarathinam lauded the efforts of Sterlite for showing interest in the development of farmers of Ottapidaram region.

Due to this project, 110 farmers from Duraisamipuram, Ottapidaram, Thennampatti, Kollankinarau, Puthiyamputhur, Jambulingapuram and Kakkarampatti of Ottapidaram block would be benefitted.

M.Kanakaraj, Assistant Director, Horticulture Department, Ottapidaram explained how practical demonstrations would help in the farmers' development and also mentioned other projects undertaken by the department.

R.Rajasekarapandy, Head, Corporate Social Responsibility, SIIL, P.Chellasamy, vice-chairman, Ottapidaram Panchayat Union, S.Joseph Karunanidhi, Deputy Director, Horticulture Department, Tuticorin and K.lyalusamy, Secretary, Chidambaranar Precision Farming were present.

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Farmers seek maintenance of LBP canal

The canal is the main source of water for large tracts of lands in Erode and Karur districts

ERODE: Damaged shutters, weak bunds and silted bed of the Lower Bhavani Project irrigation canal continue to worry the farmers depending on it for cultivation.

The canal is the main source of water for large tracts of lands in the district and neighbouring Karur. It runs for 125 miles irrigating over 2.07 lakh hectares in Erode and Karur districts.

The canal has a number of damaged shutters and other irrigation structures due to lack of proper maintenance works. Another major concern of the LBP ayacut farmers is the seepage. According to Lower Bhavani Farmers Federation over 600 cusecs is lost to seepage, which is heavy at a number of places. The seepage and weakening bunds had resulted in canal breach, which happened a few times in the recent past.

The canal's bed also remains heavily silted at a number of parts in the district. Wild growth of plants on the bed affects the flow of water. Farmers had made a number of appeals to the State government to initiate steps to strengthen the canal and

take up maintenance and repair works.

“But no serious efforts were made by the government for strengthening the canal till date. The tail-end areas are not getting adequate water. If the situation continuous, all those who depend on the canal for water will not be able to get adequate water,” farmers said.

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DECCAN
Chronicle *On The Web*

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Disaster to 'disaster'

Jun 19 2010

The woes of senior IAS officer Mr S. Balasubramanyam are far from over. He worked in the prominent disaster management department for quite some time when Mr Dinesh Kumar was commissioner. When Mr Kumar left, Mr Balasubramanyam was given full charge. But that lasted only till Mr Radha took over as commissioner, and Mr Balasubramanyam was made special commissioner. As disaster hardly strikes every day, Mr Balasubramanyam spent much of his time twiddling his toes. So, when he was recently appointed MD of the state warehousing corporation, he rushed to his new office, only to find that it looked very much like a warehouse itself.

Bitching behind the Chief minister's back

Talk about doublespeak. A senior Congress senior leader from the state, now bestowed with some responsibilities in the AICC office in Delhi, is known to meet

party leaders whenever he visits Hyderabad and talk ill of the Chief Minister. But when he meets the CM, he assures him he will continue in office till 2014. Some days ago, Mr Doublespeak met the Congress president, Mrs Sonia Gandhi, and tried to convince her that Mr Rosaiah is not delivering the goods in the state. Not one to tolerate fools gladly, Mrs Gandhi reportedly ticked him off and told him not to meddle in the affairs of the state, and said the Chief Minister will serve his full term. Not a whit embarrassed, the resourceful leader shamelessly contacted Chief Minister Rosaiah to tell him not to worry, the party high command was with him. "I am telling you that you will complete the full term as Chief Minister, I will repeat it, sir, full means 'F-U-L-L'." Mr Rosaiah, who was perfectly aware of the games the leader was playing, merely smiled. This being politics, the very people to whom the AICC leader had been bitching about Mr Rosaiah, had informed the CM about it.

Flying high on the wings of energy

With several officers in the energy department going off on foreign tours, can consumers expect to benefit from the knowledge and expertise they have acquired from their visits? APGenco's managing director, Mr Vijayanand, went to South Korea recently on a training programme. As soon as he came back, principal secretary, energy, Mr Sutirth Bhattacharya, was off to the United Kingdom on a private mission. Even before he returned, Singareni Collieries CMD, Mr S. Narsing Rao, embarked on a grand tour of the United Kingdom, Belgium, Italy, France and Switzerland! And now, the APTransco CMD, Mr Ajay Jain, is about to leave for China. If you want to see the world, just join the energy department.

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Business Standard

Saturday, Jun 19, 2010

Sugar continues to dip on subdued demand, higher supply

Press Trust of India / Mumbai June 18, 2010, 17:09 IST

The downtrend in sugar remained unabated, as prices dropped further at the Vashi wholesale market here today due to sluggish demand from stockists and bulk consumers.

Small sugar quality (S-30) declined by Rs 30 per quintal to Rs 2,550/2,610 from Thursday's closing level of Rs 2,580/2,640.

Medium sugar quality (M-30) also fell by Rs 10/30 per quintal to Rs 2,610/2,680 against Rs 2,620/2,710 yesterday.

Following are today's closing rates per quintal, with previous rates in brackets:

Small sugar (S-30) quality Rs 2,550/2,610 (Rs 2,580/ 2,640) and Medium sugar (M-30) quality Rs 2,610/2,680 (Rs 2,620/2,710)

Sugar remains flat in thin trade

Press Trust of India / New Delhi June 18, 2010, 17:08 IST

The wholesale sugar market remained flat today, as prices moved in a tight range on alternate bouts of trading and settled around previous levels.

Marketmen said adequate stocks position against sporadic demand kept prices around previous levels.

Following are today's rates in Rs per quintal:

Sugar ready M-30 2,750-2,850 and S-30 2,740-2,840

Mill delivery M-30 2,600-2,700 and S-30 2,575-2675

Sugar mill gate prices (excluding duty): Kinonni 2,800, Asmoli 2,785, Mawana 2,700, Titabi 2,700, Thanabhavan 2,675, Budhana 2,670 and Dorala 2,680

Select grains up on increased offtake

Press Trsut of India / New Delhi June 18, 2010, 17:00 IST

Select grains, such as maize and barley rose up to Rs 20 per quintal in the wholesale grains market today on increased industrial offtake amid restricted arrivals. Traders said increased industrial demand against less arrivals pushed up the wholesale maize and barley prices.

Maize gained Rs 5 to Rs 965-975, while barley rose by Rs 20 to Rs 1,040-1,060 per quintal. Following are today's quotations in Rs per quintal:

Wheat MP (deshi) 1,750-1,850, wheat dara (for mills) 1,245-1,250 chakki atta (delivery) 1,250-1,255, atta Rajdhani (10 kg) 175, Shakti bhog (10 kg) 175, Roller flour mill 650-670 (50 kg), Maida 750-780 (50 kilos) and Sooji 800-820 (50 kg)

Basmati rice (Lal Quila) 9,300, Shri Lal Mahal 9,300, Super basmati rice 9,000, Basmati common 5,250-5,350, rice Pusa-(1121) 4,550-5,050, Permal raw 1,725-1,775, Permal wand 1,825-1,975, Sela 2,025-2,075 and Rice IR-8-1,550-1,575, Bajra 935-945

Jowar yellow 1450-1,525, white 2,250-2,300, Maize 965-975, Barley (UP) 1040-1060 and Rajasthan 1,080-1,090

Cotton export curb to go from Oct, promises commerce secy

BS Reporter / June 19, 2010, 0:25 IST

The Union government on Friday said it intended to lift the ban on export of cotton, imposed last month in the wake of a steel rise in prices, from October 1.

Commerce Secretary Rahul Khullar told reporters the curbs were imposed to ensure the textile sector was not affected. He said these were to be only till September and would be lifted once arrivals in the new cotton season start.

“On October 1, we shall revert to status quo ante. We will go back to a policy of unrestricted imports,” Khullar said.

Cotton exporters have to register with the commissioner of textiles, Mumbai. The government didn't impose a blanket ban, but simply stopped registering for exports.

Pepper, jeera rise on stockists buying

Press Trust of India / New Delhi June 18, 2010, 17:15 IST

Black pepper and jeera prices rose by Rs 100 per quintal each in the national capital today on increased buying by stockists as well as exporters amid higher trend in futures trade. Sentiment turned better on rising domestic and overseas demand and tight stocks position.

Black pepper prices rose further by Rs 100 to conclude at Rs 17,200-17,300 per quintal. Jeera common and jeera best quality also gained by Rs 100 each to Rs 12,200-12,500 and Rs 13,500-14,000 per quintal, respectively on buying support.

Traders said increased buying by stockists and rising exports demand mainly pushed up pepper and jeera prices on the wholesale market here. They said fall in supplies from the producing belts and a firming trend in spices at futures market too aided the trading sentiment.

Following are today's quotations (per quintal):

Ajwain 12,500-15,500, black pepper common 17,200-17,300, betelnut (kg) 85-105, cardamom brown-Jhundiwali (kg) 810-825 and cardamom brown-Kanchicut (kg) 875-1,000

Cardamom small (kg): Chitridar 1125-1,250, cardamom (colour robin) 1,310-1,320, cardamom bold 1,325-1,340, cardamom extra (bold) 1,450-1,470 and cloves (kg) 300-370

Chirounji (new) (kg) Rs 310-340 Dry mango(raipur) Rs 6,000-8,500 Dhania Rs 3,200-8,500 Dry ginger Rs 12,000-25,500 Kalaunji Rs 8,800-9,800 Mace-Red (kg) Rs 900-1100 Mace-Yellow (kg)

Rs 1300-1450

Methiseed Rs 3,200-4,400 Makhana (per kg) Rs 190-225 Nutmeg Rs 420-445 Poppyseed (KG Turkey) Rs 220 Poppyseed (KG MP-RAJ) Rs 220-270 Poppyseed (KG Kashmiri) Rs 200 Red chillies Rs 5,000-9,000 Soya bari pariwar (20 kg) Rs 350-400

Saffron (kg) Irani Rs 1,10,000-1,20,000 Saffron (kg) Kashmiri Rs 1,50,000-1,65,000 Soanf-bold Rs 9,000-15,000 Turmeric Rs 17,100-19,800 Tamarind Rs 2,100-2,600 Tamarind without seed Rs 3,800-5,000 Tea (kg) Rs 110-200 Watermelon kernel (Kg) Rs 230 Jeera common Rs 12,200-12,500 Jeera best Rs 13,500-14,000

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Ban on cotton exports to be lifted from October 1

It will be back to the good old days, says Commerce Secretary.



Our Bureau, New Delhi, June 18

Under heavy criticism for allegedly pandering to the textile lobby, the Centre on Friday said that export restrictions on cotton would be lifted from October 1 when the new crop starts arriving in the market.

UNDER OGL

“The current export restrictions are essentially till September 30. From October 1, when the new cotton year begins, we shall revert to status quo ante (the way things were before). It will be back to good old days of cotton exports being on Open General Licence without any restrictions,” the Commerce Secretary, Dr Rahul Khullar, told reporters here.

The Directorate General of Foreign Trade had, on May 21, moved cotton exports from “free” to the “restricted” list, with shipments being permitted only against licence.

Suspension

Even prior to that, on July 22, 2008, the DGFT had stipulated that all export contracts be registered with the Textile Commissioner prior to shipment. On April 19 this year, the Textile Commissioner announced a suspension of registration of all export contracts “till further orders.”

The virtual ban on exports has come under attack for being against the interests of the country's cotton growers.

The criticism mounted with the Union Cabinet last week deciding not to increase the minimum support price (MSP) for kapas (un-ginned cotton) crop for the second successive year.

For the farmers

By blocking exports and at the same time freezing the MSP (thereby making it un-remunerative for farmers to sell in the domestic market as well), the issue has threatened to assume political dimensions. Sowing of the 2010-11 crop is currently gathering pace with the arrival of the South-West monsoon.

Cotton exports have become highly attractive following a spurt in international prices. The benchmark 'Cotlook A' Index for the far-east is currently quoting at around 95 cents a pound as opposed to 63 cents a year ago.

During the 2008-09 season (October-September), 35.14 lakh bales valued at Rs 3,838.85 crore were shipped out of the country.

In the current season till April 2010, 73.76 lakh bales have been exported of an estimated total crop size of 292 lakh bales.

The surge in exports led to heavy lobbying by the textile industry, following which the Centre clamped the restrictions on shipments.

"The restrictions had to be imposed under very special circumstances where we were left with no option," Dr Khullar said.

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Seafood exporters look towards East for growth

C.J. Punnathara

Kochi, June 18

Every year, with the onset of the monsoon season the catch from the seas improve and price of fish falls. However this year, the prices continue to rule firm at most of the West coast harbours and markets.

But the seafood exporters are not worried as the catch of shrimp, cuttlefish and squid from the seas — the major items of export — continue to be good and arrivals at the markets continues unhindered.

Shrimp, cuttlefish and squid together accounted for over 57 per cent of the value of seafood exports last year. "Going by the present trends, seafood exports would continue unhindered despite the overall rise in the price of fish," sources in the trade said.

But they were not bullish about resurgence in global demand this year. While the economic downturn seems to be waning across the global markets, periodic alarm bells ring from several countries in Europe, which is posing a potent threat to Indian seafood exports. EU as a destination remains the single most dominant market for Indian seafood exports and accounted for close to 30 per cent of the total value last year.

Oil spill impact

The oil spill spreading across Gulf of Mexico is expected to gravely hamper the fishing operations in the US and limit the total catch. Its impact is already evident in escalating prices of shrimp which is reported to have increased 40 per cent. But the benefits are not expected to percolate down to the Indian exporters. The recent spike in the rate of anti-dumping duty for Indian shrimp exports to the US continues to be a cause of concern.

The shortfall in fishing from the productive Gulf of Mexico is more likely to benefit exports from other Latin American and South-East Asian countries such as Thailand, Vietnam, China and Taiwan, rather than from India, the sources added. The importance of the US as an export destination has also been coming down over the years.

As a result of the anti-dumping duties, Indian seafood exports to the US declined from 61,703 tonnes valued at \$424.51 million in 2002-03 to 33,382 tonnes valued at \$211.06 million in 2009-10 – a sharp decline of 50 per cent in value and nearly 46 per cent in quantity. From being the biggest export destination, the US today accounts for just 5 per cent of the country's seafood exports and 10 per cent of the

value.

East markets

Revealing its resilience, the Indian seafood industry has successfully shifted to other destinations. With resurgent growth in volume and value of exports to China and other South Asian countries, exports to the East is now way ahead of the West in both volume and value. China was the second largest export destination accounting for 21 per cent of the volume and 18 per cent of the value. South East Asia accounted for close to 22 per cent of the volume and 15 per cent of the value.

The acceleration to India's seafood exports are expected to come from China and other South East Asian countries this year, rather from the US. The growth from the EU will depend on how fast they are able to overcome the economic downturn and resume the accelerated rate of growth.

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Pepper futures move up on buying support, limited stock

G. K. Nair, Kochi, June 18

Pepper futures continued their upward run on Friday on buying support amid limited availability, despite the efforts of the bearish operators to pull down the market.

All the contracts moved up. Long position holders were liquidating June and buying July. Meanwhile, some have sold and got out of the market.

There was a drop of 444 tonnes in June open interest while July and August moved up by 109 tonnes and 53 tonnes.

Total open interest dropped by 249 tonnes to 14,693 tonnes.

Open interest for July increased to 11,521 tonnes which could build up a pressure on the market, market sources told Business Line. Domestic demand started pouring in from Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan and as a result some primary market dealers directly traded some 50 to 60 tonnes today at Rs 159 – Rs 160 kg, they said.

At the terminal market, however, not much activity took place. In fact, some good business had taken place with overseas markets until a couple of days ago, when the Indian parity was competitive.

Spot prices

Spot prices on good buying support and in tandem with the futures market trend moved up by Rs 100 to close at Rs15, 700 (un-garbled) and Rs 16,200 (MG 1) a quintal. June contract on NCDEX went up by Rs 223 to close at Rs16,295 a quintal. July and August moved up by Rs103 and Rs 83 respectively to close at Rs 16,310 and Rs16, 520 a quintal.

Total turnover moved up by 41 tonnes to 8,938 tonnes. The high parity for much of the time this year has led to a drop in demand for MG 1 from the US markets.

As a result, Indian exports to the world's major consumer of pepper, the US, during January – April, 2010, fell sharply by 1,966 tonnes to 1,050 tonnes from 3,016 tonnes in the same period last year, according to official statistics released by the US administration.

High volatility in the futures market coupled with currency fluctuation has been keeping the Indian parity at higher levels.

On the other hand, some of the other origins monitoring closely the Indian futures market used to reduce their prices marginally below the Indian parity so as to corner overseas orders, export sources said.

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Kharif sowing in most crops trails

SLOW-MOVING MONSOON.

Our Bureau, New Delhi, June 18

With the South-West monsoon advancing slowly and water levels in reservoirs not adequate enough, sowing for the current kharif season is lagging behind in most crops.

According to the Agriculture Ministry, farmers have so far planted only 10.97 lakh hectares (lh) of rice compared to the 11.73 lh covered during this time last year.

Progressive area sown is also lower in case of cotton (14.82 lh versus 17.6 lh), oilseeds (1.349 lh versus 2.710 lh) and pulses (1.309 lh versus 1.398 lh).

Within oilseeds, planting has so far been less for groundnut (0.357 lh versus 0.71 lh), soybean (0.02 lh versus 0.44 lh) and sunflower (0.263 lh versus 0.87 lh), while, being marginally ahead in sesamum (0.647 lh versus 0.62 lh) and castor (0.062 lh versus 0.06 lh).

Among the major pulses, planting has been lower in arhar (0.152 lh versus 0.22 lh) and higher in urad (0.238 lh versus 0.151 lh).

The only crops where progressive acreages have gone up this time are sugarcane (45.24 lh versus 40.75 lh) and jute (7.535 lh versus 6.857 lh).

Sowing may pick up

Sowing numbers are expected to pick up in the coming weeks, as the monsoon would hopefully cover most parts of the country, especially Central, East, North and

North-West India that have so far received very little rains.

Moreover, there is very little water in reservoirs that can be used for planting.

According to the Central Water Commission, the water levels in the country's 81 major reservoirs are right now only 12 per cent of their full storage capacity, which is below the ten-year average of 13 per cent at this point in time.

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Quality CTC teas turn dearer at Kolkata sale

Our Bureau,Kolkata, June 18

This week CTC teas showing improvement in quality met with good demand from the internal sections and sold at dearer rates, according to J Thomas & Company Pvt Ltd, the tea auctioneers. Mediums were around last and irregularly lower following quality. G

ood and best Dooars were irregular around last, while the remainder were lower. Tata Tea was selective in the leaf sale but operated actively in the dust catalogues. Hindustan Unilever was quiet. Western India sections were active on the better sorts. Clean, well made and improved orthodox offerings were firm to dearer, while the remainder were steady around last levels. Hindustan Unilever and West Asia exporters were active with fair support from CIS exporters.

Small weight of better liquoring Darjeeling whole leaf grades on offer sold well in line with quality. Plain and medium whole leaf grades appreciated in value. Broken and fannings sold at around last levels. Local buyers were active, primarily on the broken.

Weather

Chennai - INDIA

Today's Weather



Cloudy

Saturday, Jun 19

Max Min

34.0° | 25.6°

Rain: 0.2 mm in 24hrs Sunrise: 05:42

Humidity: 75% Sunset: 18:36

Wind: Normal Barometer: 1005.0

Tomorrow's Forecast



Rainy

Sunday, Jun 20

Max Min

34° | 27°

Extended Forecast for a week

Monday

Jun 21



34° | 28°

Rainy

Tuesday

Jun 22



34° | 28°

Rainy

Wednesday

Jun 23



33° | 28°

Rainy

Thursday

Jun 24



33° | 28°

Rainy

Friday

Jun 25



33° | 28°

Rainy