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Paddy procurement in State crosses 15 lakh tonnes

However, target could not be achieved due to failure of kuruvai crops

On an average 4,000 tonnes are arriving at the 400-odd direct purchase centres in the districts. Tiruvarur district topped among the delta districts by recording 4.22 lakh tonnes.

CHENNAI: Paddy procurement in the State has crossed 15 lakh tonnes in the current khariff season, that is, between October 1, 2009 and September 30, 2010.

Agency

Though a target of 16 lakh tonnes had been fixed, the Tamil Nadu Civil Supplies Corporation, the procurement agency for the State, is unlikely to achieve it due to shortage in kuruvai procurement.

As on May 10, the Corporation had purchased 15.03 lakh tonnes from all over the State and the bulk of the purchase was from the delta districts viz., Thanjavur, Tiruvarur and Nagapattinam and some taluks in Tiruchi, Pudukottai, Karur and Cuddalore districts.

Tiruvarur district topped among the delta districts by recording 4.22 lakh tonnes followed by Thanjavur with 3.9 lakh tonnes and Nagapattinam with 2.44 lakh tonnes.

On an average 4,000 tonnes are arriving at the 400-odd direct purchase centres in the districts. There had been substantial arrivals in non-delta districts also, especially in Madurai, Kancheepuram, Erode and Sivaganga districts.

However, the procurement was less when compared to the last season.

During the last khariff season, that is, 2008-09, the State had purchased 17.9 lakh tonnes. The shortfall, according to Tamil Nadu Civil Supplies Corporation officials, was due to failure of kuruvai crops.

In the last season, the Corporation had purchased 3.04 lakh tonnes in kuruvai compared to a mere 36,000 tonnes in the current season.

Reason

Another reason was that farmers this time sold a substantial quantity to private traders who were ready to pay more than the minimum support price offered by the Corporation.

The official said the procurement operations would come to an end by May, the officials added.

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Demonstration on trapping fruit fly in mango held

The Government has granted Rs. 1 lakh through Dr. Perumal Krishi Vigyan Kendra

KRISHNAGIRI: A demonstration was held at Moongilpudur village, near Krishnagiri, on Tuesday on how to trap fruit flies that affects the growth of mango.

Inaugurating the demonstration, District Revenue Officer P. Prabhakaran said such demonstration would be held in all the Panchayat Unions in the district for which the Government has allocated Rs. 1 lakh through Dr. Perumal Krishi Vigyan Kendra.

Agriculture experts from the Kendra explained about the cheap equipment designed by them called 'Phermones Trap' to save the fully-grown mango from fruit fly called 'Bactocera Dorsalis'

Mango varieties such as Bangalooru, Alphonso, Senthura, Banganapalli and Malgoa are cultivated on more than 35,000 hectares in Krishnagiri and Dharmapuri districts.

Fruit fly affect mango production during April and May by nearly 30 per cent to 40 per cent.

The 'Bactocera Dorsalis' used to lay two to 15 eggs inside the skin of the mango. When the larva comes out from the eggs, these mango get rotten.

Explaining the features of Phermone Trap, T. Sundararajan, Project Coordinator, Dr. Perumal KVK said that they had designed the trap to help mango growers to save it from the flies at the harvest stage itself. The trap cost Rs. 65.

To safeguard from this fly, farmers can keep at least six pheromones trap to attract the male flies and control their population.

K. Gunasekar, Technical Expert (Soil) welcomed the gathering. T.I. Ramesh Babu, technical expert (Horticulture), proposed a vote of thanks.

K. Rajan, Joint Director (Agriculture), N. Arulmozhi, Executive Engineer, Agriculture Engineering, H. Arulmozhi Devan, Assistant Director, Animal Husbandry among others participated.

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Siruthuli implements watershed programme

COIMBATORE: Siruthuli, a people's initiative in the district to conserve water resources, has initiated a watershed programme at Madhvarayapuram, more than 30 km west of the city, with assistance from the National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD).

Siruthuli has already de-silted tanks in the city and is into a massive programme for reviving River Noyyal. The river flows through Madhvarayapuram.

The micro-level watershed programme has been sanctioned by NABARD to irrigate 1,300 h.a. of agriculture lands in the Madhvarayapuram Village Panchayat that is located at the foothills of the Western Ghats, near the origin of the river.

District Collector P. Umanath inaugurated the project recently and highlighted its benefits to the farm economy of the region.

Commissioner of Income-Tax-I Ashutosh Chandra, Thondamuthur MLA M.N. Kandasamy, Assistant General Manager of NABARD V. Suresh, president of Tamizhaga Vivasayigal Sangham K.C. Rathinasamy, Chairman of Siruthuli S.V. Balasubramaniam and Managing Trustee Vanitha Mohan were present.

Farmers

Siruthuli said the project was a long-felt need of the farming community in Nallurvayal, Sadivayal, Alandurai, Madhvarayapuram and Kallipalayam areas.

Siruthuli had been interacting with the farmers of these regions and they were also taken on an exposure visit to the Kadavakurichi watershed project implemented by the

Centre for Improved Rural Health and Environmental Protection (CIRHEP) at Nilakottai Taluk in Dindigul district in 2008.

Components

A CIRHEP representative gave a presentation on various components executed in the project area and the distinct roles played by the community, the implementing agency and the funding agency, NABARD.

A village watershed committee had been formed with the beneficiary farmers for ensuring smooth and fruitful execution of works.

Norms

As per the norms of NABARD, shramdan works were carried out by the beneficiary farmers towards which they contributed 720 person days for the following activities: clearing the bushes, removal of blocks along the canal to ensure free flow of water, sectioning of a canal and desilting three check dams.

After the total implementation of the Madhvarayapuram watershed project, Siruthuli would take up a macro-level project for an area of 400 sq. km., west of Coimbatore. It would be implemented in five years.

Livelihood assistance was distributed to tribal women at the function at Madhvarayapuram.

Siruthuli said that the assistance and the watershed project constituted an integrated rural development programme.

A rope-making implement sponsored by Sanskar, a voluntary organisation, was handed over to a group of six tribal women.

Siruthuli said that the Collector had asked it to submit a technical feasibility report and arrive at cost estimates for increasing the water holding area of the Nandagarai checkdam.

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Farmers plead for waiver of loans in Perambalur, Ariyalur, Tiruchi

Declare these districts as drought-hit: Vivasayigal Sangam

PERAMBALUR: The Perambalur, Ariyalur and Tiruchi district wings of the Tamizhaga Vivasayigal Sangam has urged the State Government to declare these districts as drought-prone zone in the wake of failure of crops.

A resolution adopted at its executive meeting held here on Tuesday, said that the ground water in these districts had got depleted seriously, affecting agricultural operation altogether. The State Government should also write off the farm loans sanctioned through the commercial and cooperative banks in these districts.

Another resolution referred to the state-level agitation on May 17 called by the Tamil Nadu Milk Producers' Welfare Association demanding higher price for milk. Expressing solidarity with the Association, the resolution urged the State Government to raise the procurement milk by Rs.5 a litre. The hike in fodder price had hard hit the milk producers, the resolution said.

The meeting, through another resolution, said that the government should not collect shares from the sugarcane cultivators for setting up of co-generation plant and modernisation of the public sector sugar mills at Eraiyur near here. R. Raja Chidambaram, State secretary of the Sangam, presided over the meeting. R.

Ranganathan; D. Viswanathan; P. Manickam all office-bearers of these districts, were among those present.

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Scientific fertilization of soil very much on the cards

Healthy soil and balanced nutrients are the basic necessities for good yield



New beginning: A Kozhikode farmer receiving the soil test card.

Unscientific soil and crop management practices followed by farmers for many years took a heavy toll on the soil's health condition.

“Fertility loss and related nutritional problems pose a major challenge, next only to pests and diseases today.

“A healthy soil, proper environment, and balanced nutrients are the basic necessities for a good yield,” says Dr. V.A. Parthasarathy, Director, Indian Institute of Spices Research (IISR), Kozhikode, Kerala.

Three main elements

Plants mainly need three elements: nitrogen, phosphorus, and potassium in higher quantities, besides thirteen elements such as calcium (Ca), sulfur (S), magnesium (Mg), boron (B), chlorine (Cl), manganese (Mn), iron (Fe), zinc (Zn), copper (Cu), molybdenum (Mo), selenium (Se), sodium (Na) and silicon (Si) in small quantities for optimizing their growth.

Plant toxicity

The availability of an element in less than the minimum quantity in the soil cripples crop growth and makes it more vulnerable to pest and diseases. Presence of these elements in higher doses in soils can also lead to plant toxicity.

“Farmers must ensure the availability of all essential elements in balanced proportions in soil, and keep its pH (measurement of the alkalinity or acidity of soil) most congenial to a crop for sustainable production” says Dr. Parthasarathy. Farmers cannot grow crops successfully in poor soil. They must be aware of the importance of maintaining soil health for reaping good yields. A scientists' team at Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK), IISR, Kozhikode, took the lead in issuing soil health cards to several farmers in the region.

Soil samples

They collected soil samples from several fields for making soil health cards, analyzed them critically in the laboratory, and printed the details of the farmers and the field in a form.

The card aims at scientific fertilization of soil to obtain optimum produce from limited holdings. It also gives a farmer the basic details of the soil from different locations in his farmland.

Suitable crops

It also suggests the most suitable crop that can be grown on their land, depending on the fertility and other chemical and organic features of the soil.

“It contains all vital information on the present soil health status including fertility, acid content, level of micro and macro nutrients, and the recommended fertilizer application schedule for all major crops grown in a farmer's field,” explains Dr. Parthasarathy.

Scientists are planning to charge a nominal fee of Rs. 20 for each farmer in future.

Need for awareness

“We need to create awareness among the farmers on the importance of the soil health cards through continuous mass campaigning and we decided to issue soil health cards to all the farmers in the district of Kozhikode as early as possible,” says Dr. P. A. Mathew, Head, IISR Experimental Farm at Peruvannamuzhi.

A soil fertility map of Kozhikode district is also being prepared by the Institute to help farmers procure the right fertilizers and choose suitable crops to increase productivity.

“Already steps are being initiated for the preparation of soil fertility maps for easy identification of soil fertility of different regions,” says Dr. Mathew.

Different colours

The district level map to be prepared after compiling the data from various villages will be marked in various colours. Often farmers use fertilizers in excess not being aware about the quality of their land and thus end up damaging the soil fertility and wasting fertilizers.

With the help of the soil card, farmers can know their soil conditions better and also about what suitable crops to be grown.

For more details contact readers can contact the programme co-ordinator, Krishi Vigyan Kendra, Peruvannamuzhi, Kozhikode district, Kerala, email: kvkcalicut@spices.res.in or kvkcalicut@sancharnet.in, phone: 0496-2662372.

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Management of anthracnose in mango

Anthracnose (a fungal infection) is the most prominent disease that mango producers must combat.

In the field, anthracnose can cause a direct loss of fruit and, if left untreated in harvested fruit, the blemishes it produces can make mangos hard to market. It is a fungal disease caused by *Colletotrichum gloeosporioides*.

Anthracnose symptoms occur on leaves, twigs, petioles, flower clusters (panicles), and fruits. On leaves, lesions start as small, angular, brown to black spots that can enlarge to form extensive dead areas.

Dark spots

Ripe fruits affected by anthracnose develop sunken, prominent, dark brown to black decay spots before or after picking and may drop from trees prematurely.

Most green fruit infections remain latent and largely invisible until ripening. Thus fruits that appear healthy at harvest can develop significant anthracnose symptoms rapidly upon ripening.

A second symptom type on fruits consists of a “tear stain” symptom, lending an “alligator skin” effect and even causing fruits to develop wide, deep cracks in the epidermis that extend into the pulp.

Lesions on stems and fruits may produce conspicuous, pinkish-orange spore masses under wet conditions.

Wet, humid, warm weather conditions favor anthracnose infections in the field. Spores (conidia) of the pathogen are dispersed passively by splashing rain or irrigation water.

Mangement

Prune trees yearly and remove fallen plant debris from the ground. Wider plant spacing will inhibit severe epidemics. Intercropping with other types of trees that are not hosts of mango anthracnose will inhibit epidemics. Periodic fungicide sprays, at the right time are very critical for adequate disease control. Sprays should begin when panicles first appear and continue at the recommended intervals until fruits are about 1½–2 inches long.

Spraying at every 14–20 days depending on the weather with 1.0 per cent Bordeaux Mixture or 0.1 per cent Carbendazim (50WP) or 0.1 per cent Methyl thiophenate (70 per cent) will control the foliar anthracnose.

MALLIKARJUN KENGANAL, HEMAVATI RANEBENNUR & A.S. BYADGI University of Agricultural Sciences, Dharwad Karnataka

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FARM QUERY

Liquid bio-formulations

Are liquid bio-formulations easy to apply on crops? **D. Jagadish Chandra**, Kolkatta

Liquid bio formulations are easy to use and can be applied using hand sprayers, power sprayers, fertigation tanks and as basal manure mixed along with farm yard manure. For

more details you can contact Mr. R. Kulandaisamy at email:tari_hitech@yahoo.com, , mobile: 98430-59117 and 98434-39909. Mr. Kulandaisamy owns a biofertilizer production unit in Thanjavur called Taari biotech which produces nearly 30,000 litres of liquid biofertilizers a month

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Secret of tomato quality



Scientists have found that the most determining factor is temperature and not their exposure to natural light. This finding is of interest in regions that have frequent cloud cover and long rainy days per year.

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Beware! Coriander you consume may contain dung



CHENNAI: If you consume coriander powder not certified by Agmark, there are chances that it may contain horse dung. A whole lot of other powdered spices, including chilli and turmeric, are also prone to adulteration, according to experts.

Speaking to Express after a demonstration on detection of contaminated food products, organised for government employees by the Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) here on Wednesday, P Mani, chemist with the Regional Agmark Laboratory, listed some of the most commonly adulterated food products.

Vanaspati is mixed with ghee and castor oil is added to coconut oil. What is alarming is that some of the adulterants mixed with powdered spices are carcinogenic and may cause serious illness too.

Senior chemist C Mahesh of BIS said Sudan Red, a carcinogenic additive used to colour petrol 'diazo conjugate' dye, with an orange-red appearance, is mixed with chilli powder.

Again, a carcinogenic, 'metanil yellow' dye is added to turmeric. "This colouring makes the fake one better than the original," he said.

Horse dung that resembles coriander in colour is mixed with the spice. Jaggery or sugar syrup are added to honey. "Consumption of horse dung may cause acute gastroenteritis," said Mahesh.

To a question, he said it may be very difficult for the common man to detect adulteration. "The best option is to go for products that have an Agmark tag, a Union government certification guaranteeing quality standards," he said.

Dr C Naresh Kumar, Head of Dairy Science, Madras Veterinary College, said besides water, other adulterants used in milk are starch, cane sugar, hydrogen peroxide and sodium bicarbonate and urea. "Better awareness is the only solution," he emphasised.

Not one case under Food Act

Speaking at the training programme for government employees on food safety by BIS, advocate K Murugan said although Prevention of Food Adulteration Act, 1954 provided for filing of complaints by consumers, not a single case had been filed under the law since it came into force 56 years ago.

"The act facilitates action by both health inspectors and consumers," he said. While the officials could inspect, check, and take appropriate legal action for misbranding, contamination and adulteration, consumers could file cases for the same offences. "It is sad that not even a single case was filed all these decades," he added. Only awareness of the subject among the people would help prevent such offences in the community.

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Weather

Chennai - INDIA

Today's Weather



Partly Cloudy

Thursday, May 13

Max Min

39.3° | 29.2°

Rain: 00mm in24hrs Sunrise: 05:44

Humidity: 51% Sunset: 18:26

Tomorrow's Forecast



Partly Cloudy

Friday, May 14






Max Min

38° | 29°

Wind: Normal

Barometer: 1008.1mb

Extended Forecast for a week

Saturday	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday
May 15	May 16	May 17	May 18	May 19
				
37° 29°	38° 29°	37° 28°	37° 28°	37° 28°
Partly Cloudy	Sunny	Partly Cloudy	Partly Cloudy	Partly Cloudy