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Use sustainable farming methods: Nammazhvar

Staff Reporter

KULITHALAI: The National Bank for Agricultural and Rural Development (NABARD) organised a special meet for the benefit of farmers and school children in Karur district to create awareness on protecting environment and to foster organic farming practices. The programme was conducted at the Saraswathi Krishi Vigyan Kendra, Puzhutheri, near here on Monday.

Speaking on the occasion, organic farming expert G.Nammalvar pointed out that gases emitted by industries and vehicles, rampant use of chemical fertilisers and pesticides caused global warming.

He warned that melting of Himalayan glaciers could lead to flooding and submersion of low-lying islands. Referring to the low level of tree cover in Karur district, Dr. Nammazhvar appealed to the people to rapidly take up planting of at least 10 plant varieties such as Neem, Amla, Papaya, Curry leaf plant and Drumstick tree by every family. This would take care of environment and provide economic solutions to problems of malnutrition plaguing the society, he added.

Stating that malnutrition among children was a result of the change in the food habit , Dr.Nammazhvar warned that food products now contain poisonous substances because of excessive use of chemical fertilizers.

Dr.Nammazhvar suggested that farmers should go in for environmentally sustainable practices such as organic farming to improve productivity .

The Assistant General Manager, NABARD, A..Parthiban said Karur district has only two per cent forest cover and it needed to be increased immediately to ensure sufficient rainfall and green cover. The district administration, voluntary agencies and the individuals should cooperate in the endeavour , he pointed out.

Lead District Manager K.Chandrasekaran observed that banks in the district were extending credit to farmers to take up organic farming practices so that productivity can be improved without affecting the environment . Eminent personalities such as Dr.Nammazhvar were shouldering the responsibility of creating awareness among farmers on sustainable and organic farming methods and farmers' should take a leaf out of their book, he opined.

Joint Director, Agriculture, S.Jagadeesan, threw light on various schemes being implemented by the State government with respect to vermicomposting, organic farming and watershed development . At the end of the meet, free saplings were distributed to farmers and school children. Awards were presented to winners of the painting and essay competition on "environment protection" for school children on the occasion.

Date:24/11/2010 URL: <http://www.thehindu.com/2010/11/24/stories/2010112452760500.htm>

NABARD sanctions Rs.27 crore loan to repair Vaigai sluices, Nilaiyur Canal

Staff Reporter

Projects to be executed by PWD's Water Resource Organisation will benefit 22,755 ha.

MADURAI: The National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) has sanctioned a total of Rs.27 crore for repairing the sluices of Vaigai River at Viraganur Regulator and for rehabilitating Nilaiyur Canal.

A total of 22,755 hectares in Madurai district would benefit upon completion of these two projects. The Viraganur Regulator covered 18,541 ha., while Nilaiyur Canal reached out to 4,214 ha. The project involved reconstructing the collapsed distribution sluices, aprons and repairing the worn-out steel shutters across Vaigai at a cost of Rs.5 crore.

R. Shankar Narayan, NABARD Assistant General Manager, told The Hindu here on Tuesday that NABARD had sanctioned a loan of Rs.4.75 crore for this project under its Rural Infrastructure Development Fund (RIDF) – 16 to complete some of the critical incomplete projects in the district. The rest of the project cost would be borne by the State Government.

Another loan of Rs.22.33 crore would be given to the State Government to rehabilitate the Nilaiyur Canal and increase its capacity to feed extension channels. The State Government would contribute Rs.1.17 crore for this project whose total cost is Rs.23.5 crore. Both the projects would be executed by the Water Resource Organisation of the Public Works Department.

Further, he said, NABARD had sanctioned another Rs.1.32 crore to fund the construction of three bridges of vital importance. While the first bridge would cross Othakadai - P. Mettupatti Road, the second would cross Kottanathampatti – Kodukanpatti Road and the third, Kalappanpatti – Chennampatti Road.

In addition, NABARD was also going to take up two major district roads that would connect Melur in Madurai district to Tirupattur. These two roads would connect ten villages that house four marketing centres and two schools besides two hospitals. This road project alone is expected to generate non-recurring employment of 5.32 lakh man-days, he said.

Mr. Shankar Narayan said that the projects were sanctioned two weeks back by a Project Sanctioning Committee at NABARD's Head Office in Mumbai.

The projects carry a three year phasing period within, during which they should be completed without time and cost overruns.

NABARD officials would take up periodic monitoring.

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192 hectares of paddy crop under water

L. Srikrishna

Seeds sown and crop ready for transplanting washed away at many places in Madurai district

— Photo: K. Ganesan



WADING THROUGH WATER: Rainwater surrounding a burial ground opposite Mattuthavani Integrated Bus Stand in the city on Tuesday.

MADURAI: Preliminary assessment of the quantum of damage due to rains in Madurai district suggests that at least 192 hectares of paddy crop in different stages of growth are under water.

Widespread rains in the district in the last couple of days has so far claimed nine lives, including that of four women and as many children. The damage to houses — fully and partially — is also being assessed by the revenue authorities.

Collector C. Kamaraj handed over relief cheques to family members of wall collapse victims near Sholavandan on Monday.

At a time when agricultural activities are under full swing, the heavy rains have dampened the mood of farmers. Many of them who have raised crops in low-lying areas are keeping their fingers crossed.

In several places, seeds sown and crop ready for transplanting have been washed away. Many villagers have also complained to the local authorities about missing cattle.

In a bid to ensure that human lives are safe, the district administration has appealed to the people residing on the banks of the Vaigai River to vacate as they expect a rise in water flow on Tuesday night or the following day since inflow into the Vaigai dam is huge. When reports last

came in, Varushanadu area from the hills of which the Vaigai originates, received heavy rains, officials said.

Control room

Mr. Kamaraj said that a control room had been established at the Collectorate. Public can contact 0452 2533272 (office of the PA-General) and seek information or furnish inputs related to rain. He appealed to the public not to venture into the river as the water level was rising.

Meanwhile, low-lying areas in the city were inundated and a burial ground off Madurai North RTO office had been closed. Cremation was not possible during the day as the area was surrounded by rainwater, workers at the burial ground said and hoped that the authorities would drain it out.

Date:24/11/2010 URL: <http://www.thehindu.com/2010/11/24/stories/2010112458850300.htm>

Rain throws 'puncha' cultivation into crisis in Kuttanad

Staff Reporter

Cumulated agricultural loss put at Rs. 10.13 crore

— Photo: Special Arrangement



Loss of hope: A farmer in Ramankary, Kuttanad, points at his paddy field that has been submerged by a bund breach caused by the rain. He had sowed for the 'puncha' round of cultivation.

ALAPPUZHA: A spate of bund breaches across the Alappuzha belt of the Kuttanad region has thrown the 'puncha' round of cultivation into a deeper crisis with several farmers now thinking of even abandoning the 'puncha' round after suffering heavy losses. Official estimates have pegged the cumulated agricultural loss so far at Rs.10.13 crore.

Bund breaches, according to District Collector P. Venugopal, have been reported from 68 padasekharams till Tuesday, with the loss estimated to be Rs.130.5 lakh. Paddy from the second round of cultivation, which was ripe for harvesting, has been damaged in over 3,000 hectares, causing a loss of about Rs.763 lakh. The damage in 1,753 hectares, where the seed for the puncha crop was sown, is Rs.87.66 lakh.

With the district administration making efforts to motivate the farmers and to discourage them from abandoning the crucial 'puncha' round, plans are afoot to ensure about 140 tonnes of additional seed for 'restarting' the process. At the same time, the loss borne by farmers who had undertaken bund strengthening works prior to sowing, is unaccounted, which could take the total financial wreckage by the rain much above the calculated figures.

The Alappuzha belt of Kuttanad was expecting the 'puncha' acreage to go over 26,000 hectares this time around. Though the preparations and sowing were thrown off-track due to the rain in October, the determined farmers had not given up.

Farmers spent around Rs.6,000 per acre for preparations and about Rs.10,000 per acre for sowing, after taking agricultural loans of about Rs.15,000 per acre. But a majority of them have already suffered a loss of about Rs.10,000 per acre. It is from this group that many are planning to abandon the crop for this season, according to Thomas Peelianickal, executive director, Kuttanad Vikasana Samithi.

"It will take at least two weeks for them to bring matters back on track, forget the additional expenses. This means that the harvest will be possible only around April-May next year, which is when we have summer rain here, apart from the non-availability of combine harvester machines," he said, calling for an urgent rehabilitation package to prevent the State from facing a severe rice shortage next year.

Update land records before applying for loans, farmers told

Staff Correspondent

Most haven't transferred land in their names

'Apply for crop insurance well before the

due date'

Chitradurga: Tahsildar Kumaraswamy has said that many farmers were not able to get loans and apply for crop insurance because they had not got the 'khata' (land records) transferred in their names from their ancestors.

Speaking after inaugurating the fourth seminar on farm loan and crop insurance organised by the Institute of Agricultural Technologies (IAT) here on Tuesday, he said the farmers see the need to transfer property in their own names only when they have to apply for a loan or sell the land.

He urged farmers to get the records updated. These records were also needed during the division of ancestral property, he informed.

Agreeing with the tahsildar, Canara Bank Manager R.C. Patil said many farmers come to the bank seeking loan or to apply for crop insurance without the land in their names. They come to the bank a few days before the deadline and without the right documents. In such a situation, it is difficult for the banks to complete legal formalities in time, he said.

"Banks have to open an account for the farmer before offering a loan or accepting an application for crop insurance. Thus, the farmers should ensure that their documents are proper and they are applying for the insurance well before the due date," he said.

In order to educate farmers on these matters, the banks were appointing candidates, Mr. Patil said.

In his address, IAT treasurer Hanumataraya Reddy alleged that farmers were not getting justifiable compensation for crop loss due to false information being furnished by the officials of the Agriculture Department. He alleged that the officials prepare reports on loss without even visiting the fields.

Date:24/11/2010 URL: <http://www.thehindu.com/2010/11/24/stories/2010112451740300.htm>

Minister to open farm project

Staff Reporter

Kasaragod: The Agriculture Department has come out with an ambitious programme to lease out 61 hectares of land either side of the national highway passing through the district for vegetable cultivation.

The objective is to cultivate vegetables and banana as part of the Harithayoram project implemented in the district, Principal Agriculture Officer S Shivaprasad said at a review meeting of agriculture officers here on Tuesday.

Assistance

The department would provide Rs.12,000 as assistance a hectare to voluntary organisations, educational institutions, women's groups, library houses and Kudumbasree units, he said.

The project would be implemented from Pilicode in the southern end to Thalappady in the northern end.

Areas

The project was being implemented in areas under the agriculture offices at Cheruvathur, Pilicode, Thrikaripur, Padanna, Nileshwaram, Kanhangad, Ajanur, Udma, Pallikkare, Pullur-

Periye, Mogral-Puthur, Chemnad, Chengala, Manjeshwaram, Mangalpady and Kumbala, the official said in a release.

Agriculture Minister Mullakkara Ratnakaran would inaugurate the project at Kanhangad on December 3. The Minister would visit farms in the district.

Date:24/11/2010 URL: <http://www.thehindu.com/2010/11/24/stories/2010112452450300.htm>

Farmers encouraged to grow sandalwood

Special Correspondent

Government has been attempting to remove perception of a 'State monopoly' on the tree

More than 2,500 farmers from Mysore, Mandya and Chamarajanagar attend workshop

'Farmers are not growing sandalwood even after liberalisation of the law'



in Plenty:Sandalwood saplings for distribution on the Forest Department premises in Mysore.

MYSORE: The Forest Department is reaching out to farmers and private cultivators to take up sandalwood cultivation in a bid to dispel the notion that the aromatic tree is a State monopoly.

Though the law on sandalwood cultivation was liberalised a few years ago, the public perception about the "State monopoly over the royal tree" continues to discourage individuals from growing it.

B.P. Ravi, Conservator of Forests, Mysore, told The Hindu that the law pertaining to sandalwood had been amended more than two years ago, but the notion of a “State prerogative” with regard to its cultivation remains strongly rooted.

Hence, the department conducted a workshop in Mysore on Sunday, which was attended by more than 2,500 farmers from Mysore, Mandya, Chamarajanagar and surrounding regions. More such workshops and seminars are in the offing.

Historically, the Mysore region has been renowned for sandalwood. Its aromatic oil was exported to the perfume industry throughout the world resulting in a steep increase in its price.

Mr. Ravi pointed out that sandalwood fetched anywhere between Rs. 4,400 and Rs. 6,000 a kg depending on its quality. As the State was the sole owner of sandalwood trees till two years ago and there was a bar on its cultivation by individuals, the supply of sandalwood had depleted. However, Mr. Ravi pointed out that not many farmers seem to have taken up sandalwood farming even after liberalisation of the law. He said that the Forest Department was now in the process of conducting a survey to ascertain the number of sandalwood farms at the taluk level and prepare a database.

But a cross-section of farmers who attended the recent workshop in the city were hesitant as they feared that the onus of providing security to the sandalwood trees, which is highly susceptible to theft in view of the lucrative price it commands in the market, lay with the individuals.

Mr. Ravi, however, pointed out that the law has been amended with regard to theft of sandalwood and the owner would not be liable for prosecution. However, a case would be registered as in any other scenario, he added.

Vivek Cariappa, an organic farmer, argued that sandalwood had a long gestation period and not many farmers could afford to cultivate it exclusively. Speaking to The Hindu, Mr. Cariappa said that sandalwood had a gestation period ranging between eight and 10 years and the ideal time for harvesting it for commercial use was reckoned to be after 14 years of growth. Very few farmers had the kind of money to invest and the time to wait, he said.

Notwithstanding the prevailing rate for sandalwood in the market, there was also a strong perception that the Government rates did not reflect the actual market rates. Hence, there has been a tendency to sell the sandalwood in the black market, where it fetches almost double the rate. Also, government agencies tend to purchase only dry wood, whereas in the black market even wet wood, which adds to the weight, was in demand.

Sources in the Forest Department pointed out that though farmers were being encouraged to cultivate sandalwood, there was a scarcity of saplings. Some officials said that the scarcity could be overcome through plant tissue culture.

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World food import bill may cross \$1 trillion this year: FAO



AP Global cereal stocks are forecast to decline sharply and the FAO made a strong call for production to be stepped up to replenish inventories. File photo

The food import bill of the global community could surpass the \$1 trillion mark in 2010, with prices of most commodities going up sharply compared to the previous year, the Food and Agriculture Organisation has said.

In the latest edition of its 'Food Outlook' report, the U.N. agency asked the world community to be prepared for harder times ahead unless production of major food crops increases significantly in 2011.

The food import bills of the world's poorest countries are predicted to rise by 11 per cent in 2010, the U.N. body said, adding that low-income, food-deficit countries would witness a 20 per cent jump in their food import bills.

By crossing the \$1 trillion mark, the world food import bill this year will be higher than the peak achieved in 2008.

In its report, the FAO said that contrary to earlier predictions, world cereal production is now forecast to contract by 2 per cent in June, in contrast to its earlier prediction of 1.2 per cent expansion during the month. Unexpected supply shortfalls due to unfavourable weather events are responsible for the revision, the statement added.

Global cereal stocks are forecast to decline sharply and the FAO made a strong call for production to be stepped up to replenish inventories. World cereals stocks are anticipated to shrink by 7 per cent according to FAO, with barley reserves plunging by 35 per cent, maize by 12 per cent and wheat by 10 per cent. Only rice reserves are forecast to increase by 6 per cent, according to the report.

Sugar was an important factor contributing to the rise in the price of the global food basket in recent months.

According to the FAO, sugar prices, which recently surged to new 30-year highs, remain elevated and extremely volatile.

The price increases seen by most agricultural commodities over the past six months are the result of a combination of factors, especially unexpected supply shortfalls due to unfavourable weather events, policy responses by some exporting countries and fluctuation in currency markets, the report said. International prices could rise even more if production does not increase significantly next year, especially of maize, soybean and wheat, it added.

24 Nov, 2010, 01.44AM IST,ET Bureau

Excess rainfall in Maharashtra damages crops

PUNE: Untimely and excess rainfall is going to affect Maharashtra's contribution to the country's kharif kitty. The affected crops include cash crops like onion, soyabean, grapes while sugar cane crushing is also not picking up pace due to the wet fields.

Maharashtra's new agriculture minister Radhakrishna Vikhe Patil said in his first press conference that approximately 10 lakh hectares of kharif crop have been damaged. But the final figures of damage will come out only after the revenue department finishes its panchnama's in a few more days.

Maharashtra is the largest producer of onions, grapes, vegetables like tomatoes and kharif pulses . It is the second-largest producer of cotton, soyabean and sugarcane. In Konkan region, more than one lakh hectare of rice crop has been damaged. All the kharif crops have been affected by the untimely rainfall.

"The state has received 120% rainfall this season. Some crop of late kharif onion has been damaged. Also, the seedling plots of rabi onion have also been affected. Cotton has not suffered much damage as two picking had already been finished," said Mr Patil.

He added: "We will give some help to the farmers who have suffered crop damage as per the existing rules. But it will not be a full compensation for their entire losses."

Rainfall is still continuing across the state even after Diwali, which is happening for the first time in the state's recent history. This has affected the cane crushing as well since sugar cane

cannot be harvested due to wet fields. The allied industries dependent on sugarcane are also being hit by the untimely rainfall.

24 Nov, 2010, 01.38AM IST, PK Krishnakumar,ET Bureau

China in race to beat India in paprika oleoresin production

KOCHI: Rising paprika cultivation in China, aided by government sops, is posing serious challenges to India, which may result in the latter losing top producer slot of paprika oleoresin. The paprika oleoresin has the highest demand among the spice oleoresins, which are essentially spice extracts, in the global market.

Nearly 35% of India's total spice oleoresin exports of Rs 708 crore came from the paprika oleoresins last year. Higher productivity and the government incentives have led to an increase in paprika - a chilli with bright colour and low pungency - production in China. As a result, China is able to sell paprika oleoresin at 20% lower rates, according to Geemon Korah, CEO of Kancor Ingredients.

Global paprika oleoresin production is about 7,000-8,000 tonne. Of this, China's contribution is in the range of 3,000-3,500 tonne while India's share is around 2,500 tonne. The rest is produced by Mexico, Peru and other countries.

Five years ago, India had a monopoly in the market. India uses bydagi chilli for the production. Unlike Chinese paprika, bydagi chilli has some pungency which is removed for paprika oleoresin production. The bydagi chilli, harvested in January, is expected to be lower this year.

George Paul, director of Synthite Industries, said that there are reports of around 30% drop in paprika production in China. As China has higher paprika productivity, the Indian oleoresin exporters have started importing paprika oleoresin from China for refining and re-exporting. Since a shortfall is expected in Indian crop as well, India may not be able to sell at lower prices.

23 Nov, 2010, 02.20PM IST,REUTERS

Oilseeds, soyoil erase gains on palm

MUMBAI: Indian oilseeds and soyoil futures erased early gains on Tuesday afternoon taking cues from the weakness in palm oil and due to hopes area under rapeseed will rise in 2010/11 as rains have been abundant, analysts said.

An improvement in spot demand due to rising meal exports limited the downside, they said.

"Weather is favourable for rapeseed sowing. It is moving smoothly and market is expecting higher area this year," said Prasoon Mathur, analyst with Religare Commodities .

Rapeseed is the main weather-sown oilseed crop in India. At 1:57 p.m., U.S. soy futures were down 0.04 percent at \$12.21 a bushel, while Malaysian palm oil futures were down 2.1 percent at 3,117 ringgits per tonne.

The country's oilmeal exports in October rose 61 percent from a year earlier, its fourth straight monthly gain, due to higher demand from traditional buyers in Japan and China, data from a trade body showed.

December soybean futures contract on India's National Commodity and Derivatives Exchange (NCDEX) was 0.77 percent lower at 2,255.5 rupees per 100 kg.

In the Indore spot market, soybean rose by 7 rupees to 2,218 rupees per 100 kg, while soyoil eased by 1.3 rupees to 561 rupees.

December soyoil fell 0.88 percent to 564.85 rupees per 10 kg, while rapeseed for December delivery eased 0.49 percent at 568.2 rupees per 20 kg.

In the Jaipur spot market in Rajasthan, the country's top rapeseed producing state, the price nudged down by 0.65 rupee to 573.45 rupees per 20 kg.

Business Standard

Wednesday, Nov 24, 2010

Marginal rise in wheat production in Punjab

Vijay C Roy / New Delhi/ Chandigarh November 24, 2010, 0:09 IST

The wheat acreage in Punjab would remain roughly the same this year at 3.50 million hectares, as compared to last year's 3.52 million hectares. However, the total targeted production is likely to be higher.

The state agriculture department is expecting a total production of 15.4 million metric tonnes compared to 15.1 million metric tonnes in 2009.

According to state agriculture department officials, the marginal drop is due the government's thrust on crop diversification. However, the exact area would come in the picture by December, after sowing is completed.

Last year, the state agriculture department had projected the total area under wheat cultivation would touch 3.48 million hectares, but the sown area stood at 3.52 million hectares. However, the department is hopeful that this year, the production of wheat in the state would touch 15.4 million metric tonnes — slightly upwards of last year's 15.1 million metric tonnes. Last year, the average yield was 4,307 kg per hectare while this year they are expecting the yield to touch 4,400 kg per hectare.

To increase the yield, the centre has given Rs 41.33 crore to the state government under National Food Security Mission (NFSM). The centre has selected 10 districts of the state

namely, Mohali, Ropar, Hoshiarpur, Gurdaspur, Amritsar, Ferozpur, Bathinda, Barnala, Tarn Tarn & Sangrur under NFSM. Farmers would be provided with a subsidy of Rs 500 per quintal for wheat seeds in these 10 districts. Besides, the state government, under NFSM would also distribute over 30,000 seed minikits each with 10 kg of high yielding varieties of wheat to the farmers of these 10 districts.

Earlier, there was political uproar over the meagre revision of minimum support price (MSP) of wheat — a hike of Rs 20 per quintal to Rs 1,120 from Rs 1,100 per quintal last year. But that did not act as a deterrent to the farmers of Punjab, as the area under wheat would not be much affected, experts felt.

This meagre hike drew the attention of various political parties who described it as 'woefully inadequate and unjustified'.

It is worth noting that 90 per cent (during the Rabi season) of the total area in the state is under wheat cultivation and rest is under oil seeds, pulses, barley etc.

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[Back](#) **Wheat looks up on low arrivals, strong demand**



Our Correspondent

Karnal, Nov. 23

With arrivals from Uttar Pradesh being low, prices of dara wheat increased by Rs 10-15 a quintal. On Tuesday, the dara variety ruled at Rs 1,230-1,235 a quintal, against Rs 1,210-1,220 quoted last weekend. The fine quality was quoted at Rs 1,250.

Mr Subhash Chander, a wheat trader, told Business Line that low arrivals and good demand lifted the wheat prices, while in the market of Delhi, wheat prices has come to the levels of Rs 1,280. About 250 quintals of dara variety were offloaded at flour mills in Karnal on Tuesday.

On the other hand, sluggish demand pulled the prices of Aaj Tak variety down by Rs 50 a quintal, and the variety ruled at Rs 2,350, against Rs 2,400 quoted last weekend.

Prices of other desi wheat varieties continued to rule firm on low arrivals. Prices of Tohfa variety ruled at Rs 2,450 a quintal, Lok-1, Rs 1,970, and Nokia at Rs 2,350-2,400.

Flour prices ruled at Rs 1,250 a 90-kg bag, Rs 10 up from Rs 1,240 quoted last weekend. Because of the uptrend in wheat, flour prices gained too. Chokar prices ruled flat and were quoted at Rs 615 for a 49-kg bag.

Paddy Trading

Around 5,000 bags of PR-13 arrived, and ruled between Rs 970 and Rs 990. Grade-A variety arrived in 30,000 bags and ruled between Rs 1,030 and Rs 1,040.

About 5,000 bags of Sharbati also arrived and ruled between Rs 1,400 and Rs 1,550. Sugandha-999 arrived in about 3,000 bags, and quoted at Rs 1,450-1,650.

Around 5,000 bags of Pusa (duplicate basmati) arrived and quoted at Rs 2,050-2,280. Around 10,000 bags of Pusa-1121 quoted at Rs 2,300-2,470. About 10,000 bags of the paddy of pure basmati rice arrived here and quoted at Rs 2,400-2,850.

The entire stock was lifted by agencies and rice millers.

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Back Poultry industry crowds on rising demand

10-12% growth seen in layers on higher consumption.

K.V. Kurmanath

Hyderabad, Nov. 23

Despite sharp increase in production costs, the poultry industry is poised for a 10-12 per cent growth in layers and 15 per cent growth in broilers on prospects of higher consumption. Revenue-wise too, the Rs 55,000-crore industry might register a growth of 15 per cent this financial year.

Estimates have put layer population in the country at 18-20 crore and 20 crore monthly replacements of broilers.

“We expect growth rates of 10-12 per cent in layers and 15 per cent in broilers against 6 per cent last year. We see a steady growth in consumption with income levels and awareness going up. The consumption might go up by 10-15 per cent this financial year,” Mr K Mohan Reddy, President of the Hyderabad Layer Farmers' Association, told Business Line.

Cost of production

Increase in production costs, however, could reduce margins. “Cost of maize went up to

Rs 1,000-1,050 a quintal against Rs 700 last year. Prices of soya went up to Rs 19 a kg against Rs 14 last year and Rs 10 the year before. As a result, cost of production could be in the range of Rs 2.15-2.30 an egg," he said.

Mr P. Chakradhar Rao, Treasurer of Indian Poultry Equipment Manufacturers' Association (IEPMA), said India's cost of production was very low thus giving the industry an edge over others.

Mr Subbaraju, Zonal Chairman of NECC, said that prices of pulses would rule above Rs 1,000 a quintal and that the industry would have to live with it. "With prices of eggs and chicken going up, the industry could expect good growth rate. Egg is emerging as a cheaper option for families as prices of vegetables continue to go up," he said.

Equipment meet

Meanwhile, IEPMA has said it would organise a three-day meet beginning November 24 in Hyderabad. The association said the expo would showcase latest technologies targeting different stakeholders in the poultry industry.

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Back Textile industry seeks export curbs on cotton

Our Bureau

New Delhi, Nov. 23

Amid rising cotton prices, the textile industry has reiterated its demand for the need to restrict cotton exports during the year to the 5.5 million bales announced by Government.

Out of this amount, for which export contracts have already been registered, any quantity that remains unshipped within the stipulated last date of December 15 should not be allowed for shipment or fresh registration at least for the next two months, the Confederation of Indian Textile Industry (CITI) has sought.

According to it, there has been an “unprecedented increase” in cotton prices in India during the last few months. “From Rs 23,000 a candy in October 2009, cotton prices increased to Rs 47,000 earlier this month and have remained around Rs 45,000 thereafter. Allowing exports from November 1 is taking away for exports a substantial portion of the crop that is arriving in the market, creating an artificial shortage,” a statement from CITI said.

'No controls'

CITI has also asked the Government to ensure that any further registration of cotton export contracts is allowed only against Letters of Credit. Also, “no controls” should be introduced on exports or prices of cotton yarn “in the long-term interest of the entire textile value chain,” it has said.

Registration of cotton export contracts was opened on October 1, and the entire quantity of 5.5 million bales earmarked for registration got applied for in ten days.

Most of the registration was on Cash Against Documents (CAD) basis, for which no documents other than a contract was necessary.

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Back Spices export volumes up 6% in Apr-Oct



C J Punnathara

Kochi Nov. 23

Spices exports have grown in volume, value and foreign exchange earnings between April-October . Spices such as garlic, ginger and turmeric have shown the fastest growth in value realisation. However, the bulk of the value realisation comes from export of chillies, mint products, spice oils and oleoresins.

The volume of spices exports grew by six per cent to 3,17,800 tonnes (2,99,250 tonnes) while the value realisation grew by 13 per cent to Rs 3,685 crore (Rs 3,260 crore). The sharpest growth was in foreign exchange realisation which grew by 19 per cent to \$805 million (\$675 million).

The country was able to achieve 68 per cent of the volume target set for the year and 72 per cent of the value realisation during the first seven months of the current fiscal. The Spices Board has set an export target of 4,65,000 tonnes of spices valued at Rs 5,100 crore. The foreign exchange realisation target was \$1.125 billion.

The export of chilli, ginger, fennel and garlic has shown an increase in both volume and value during the period. The export of value added products such as curry powder, spice oils and oleoresin have also shown an increasing trend. However, spices such as small and large cardamom, turmeric, fenugreek and mint products, the increase has been restricted in term of value only. A whole gamut of spices such as pepper, cumin, celery and other seeds like mustard, aniseed, ajwanseed, tamarind nutmeg and mace have shown decline in both volume and value.

Chilli constituted the biggest item of export realising Rs 865 crore followed by mint products at 827 crore and spice oils and oleoresins at Rs 495 crore. During April-October, a total quantity of 10,500 tonnes of pepper valued at Rs 187 crore was exported, which was lower both in quantity and value with the corresponding period of last year. This was despite in a sharp spurt in unit value to Rs 178/kg, up from Rs 156/kg of last year.

Although the volume of small cardamom exports has fallen during the first seven months

of the fiscal, the value realisation has improved.

There has been an increased global demand for ginger and its export volume and value have spurted. While the value of ginger export has almost doubled, the volumes have grown significantly higher. A good portion of the export volume was as fresh ginger.

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Back Oil spurts on rain in coconut growing areas



C. J. Punnathara

Kochi Nov. 23

With heavy rains reported in the coconut growing regions of Tamil Nadu, coconut oil prices surged to Rs 80 a kg on Monday. Coconut oil in Kerala markets, which closed at Rs 79.50 a kg on Monday, went up to Rs 80 a kg on Tuesday.

The heavy rains have resulted in low arrivals into the Tamil Nadu markets and prices had inched a notch higher than in Kerala. Copra prices have spurted to Rs 54 a kg in the Tamil Nadu markets and Rs 54.50 a kg in the Kerala markets. There are hardly any arrivals in both the markets, Mr Prakash B. Rao, Director of the Cochin Oil Merchants Association, said.

Pilgrimage demand

The demand for coconuts during the Sabarimala season is also adding to the shortage.

The increased demand for coconuts from Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka during the pilgrimage season is spurring the shortage. This is reflected in the low copra arrivals in the South.

However, increased arrival of copra is expected in the coming weeks as coconuts coming into Sabarimala get converted into copra. Reports indicate that a contract of Rs 2.63 crore has been entered into for procuring the coconuts during the current pilgrimage season. Traders did not want to take a call on the direction that the prices are expected to take in the coming weeks, given the contrary signals. While the onset of the lean season and low arrivals in the major producing States would result in a price spurt, the situation could reverse with the advent of the pilgrimage season and greater arrivals in the coming weeks.

Effect on palm

The contrarian pull is expected to come from the sharp fall expected in palm oil and palm kernel oil prices. Palm oil prices have slipped from Rs 56 to Rs 54 a kg. Further slippages are expected as China has reduced imports and has begun to use its inventories. Palm kernel oil is holding steady at Rs 76 a kg. If the palm oil futures are anything to go by, further price falls can be expected. If the price differentials between coconut oil and palm oil widens, there is strong likelihood of adulteration of coconut oil in the coming days, traders warned.

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Back Mixed trend in pulses



Our Correspondent

Indore, Nov. 23

Pulses witnessed mixed trend in Indore mandi. Due to weak arrival and higher demand, tur dal gained Rs 100.

In the spot, tur dal (local) quoted at Rs 5,900, tur dal (Maharashtra line) quoted at Rs 5,570, while tur dal (markewali) at Rs 6,400 a quintal.

Rise in tur dal was mainly attributed to increased demand and decline in arrival which was mainly affected by chilly weather and unseasonal rains which lashed various parts of the State on Tuesday.

In the wake of sluggish demand, chana dal declined by Rs 25. Chanda dal (bold) quoted at Rs 3,125-Rs 3,150, chanda dal (medium) quoted at Rs 3,000-Rs 3,025, while chanda dal (average) quoted at Rs 2,875-Rs 2,900 a quintal. Downtrend also continued in masoor dal with sluggish demand.

In the spot, masoor dal (bold) quoted Rs 25 down at Rs 3,725-Rs 3,750, masoor dal (medium) quoted at Rs 3,600-Rs 3,625, while masoor dal (average) quoted at Rs 3,500-Rs 3,525 a quintal, respectively. Moong dal (chilkewali) quoted at Rs 4,700-Rs 4,750 a quintal, while moong mongar quoted at Rs 5,500-Rs 5,600. Similarly, urad dal (chilkewali) quoted at Rs 4,700-Rs 4,800 a quintal, urad dal (bold) quoted at Rs 5,700 a quintal, while urad mongar quoted at Rs 6,800-Rs 7,200 a quintal.

Among the pulse seeds, sluggish demand led to a downfall of Rs 50 in masoor and it was quoted at Rs 3,050 a quintal.

Chana which had perked up to Rs 2,415 a quintal on Monday on fear of depleting old stock and bookies' involvement, crashed on Tuesday to Rs 2,375. On the other hand, tur perked by Rs 50 on short arrival and increased demand. In the spot, it was quoted at Rs 3,650 a quintal. Urad quoted at Rs 3,800-Rs 4,000 a quintal, while moong quoted at Rs 4,000-Rs 4,100 a quintal.

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Back Pepper futures fall on bearish sentiments

G.K. Nair

Kochi, Nov. 23

Pepper futures declined on Tuesday cued by the collapse in the share markets following reports of outbreak of hostilities between North and South Korea, as brokers in both the bourses are same.

There was switching over and liquidation which also aided the market down, trading sources said.

Add to this there was some selling pressure earlier in the day in north Malabar and Coorg region of Karnataka where farm grade pepper was being sold at Rs 7 below the terminal market prices here.

This phenomenon coupled with low domestic demand due to buyers wait for the new crop to arrive and low demand from overseas created a bearish sentiment which impacted negatively the market, market sources told Business Line.

But the situation changed in the afternoon and the market witnessed high volatility following the reports of the hostilities. "This kind of fluctuations would only diminish the confidence of people in the futures market. In fact, it is the disadvantage of the futures trading," they said.

December contract on the NCDEX closed at Rs 21,950 down by Rs 351 a quintal. January and February fell by Rs 352 and Rs 602 respectively to close at Rs 22,163 and Rs 22,343 a quintal.

Total turnover fell by 2,213 tonnes to 11,407 tonnes. Total open interest also dropped by 531 tonnes to 13,473 tonnes.

December open interest fell by 727 tonnes to 10,827 tonnes while January and February moved up by 206 tonnes and 7 tonnes respectively to 1,975 tonnes and 290 tonnes showing switching over and liquidation of December, they said.

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Back Blister blight may reduce Nilgiris' tea production in November

P.S. Sundar

Coonoor, Nov. 23

Severe blister blight infestation is feared to reduce tea production in November in the Nilgiris.

“Monsoon has been active in the Nilgiris since October. While the rains are generally good for tea, our fields are suffering from a severe attack of blister blight disease due to inadequate sunshine. We have not seen the sun for almost a fortnight now. Mist surrounds the tea fields most of the time when it does not rain. This weather is conducive for blister blight spread,” Mr Ramesh Bhojarajan, Vice-President, The Nilgiri Bought-Leaf Tea Manufacturers' Association, told Business Line.

“This will reduce the crop of the current month. We have already lost about 10 per cent of the crop compared to November last year. We fear that overall, there will be a reduction of 12 per cent over November 2009 production of quality teas due to reduced availability of quality leaf,” he said.

“In October in Kundah agro-climatic zone, our experimental plot recorded 43 per cent infestation of blister blight. This was 39 per cent in Udhagamandalam, 31 in Kotagiri, 17 in Coonoor and 16 in Kullakamby,” Dr B. Radhakrishnan, Assistant Director, Tea Research Foundation of the United Planters' Association of Southern India, said.

The foundation has advised its members of the spraying schedule they should follow to fight blister blight.

“Because of continuous rains, we are unable to stick to the spraying schedule,” Mr Ramesh Bhojarajan said.

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Back Tobacco in Karnataka on downward spiral



Anil Urs

Hubli, Nov. 23

Tobacco prices at the Karnataka auctions are down by Rs 10-20 a kg and have entered a sliding phase, according to officials.

According to a senior Tobacco Board official, “At present, tobacco prices in Karnataka are in a sliding phase.” “Variations in the global demand for tobacco have affected domestic auctions,” he added. Of the total quantity marketed, Bright grades comprised 17.94 per cent and traded at an average price of Rs 118.40 a kg. Medium grades comprised 54.57 per cent traded at an average price of Rs 102.13 a kg and low grades comprised the rest and traded at an average price of Rs 66.24 a kg.

At the end of the 47th day of auction (November 22), about 2.27 million kg (2.18 lakh bales) of FCV tobacco variety have been marketed in Karnataka, with an average price realisation of Rs 95.21 a kg.

Auction prices

Following are platform-wise auction details, as on November 22: H.D Kote total quantity

marketed 21.71 lakh kg (average price Rs 96.76 a kg), Hunsur-1 13.57 lakh kg (Rs 96.57 a kg), Hunsur-2 18.53 lakh kg (Rs 95.19 a kg), Periyapatna-1 28.40 lakh kg (Rs 96.54 a kg), Periyapatna-2 24.32 lakh kg (Rs 97.68 a kg), Periyapatna-3 19.06 lakh kg (Rs 94.55 a kg), Ramanathapura-1 27.80 lakh kg (Rs 93.93 a kg) and Kamplapura-1 20.35 lakh kg (Rs 94.01 a kg).

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Back Spot rubber prices decline

Aravindan

Kottayam, Nov. 23

Physical rubber prices declined on Tuesday. According to observers, the prices fell following the sharp losses in domestic futures on NMCE. Though there has been only marginal selling pressure from dealers, the market surrendered mainly on buyer resistance with slight improvement in volumes.

Sheet rubber moved down to Rs 199 (201) a kg according to dealers. The grade finished flat at Rs 200.50 a kg both at Kottayam and Kochi as reported by the Rubber Board.

Futures down

In futures, the December series nosedived to Rs 199 (203.86), January to Rs 202.30 (206.88), February to Rs 204.80 (208.83) and March to Rs 208.49 (211.76) a kg for RSS 4 on National Multi Commodity Exchange (NMCE).

The volumes stood at 7530 lots and the turnover at Rs 153.18 crores. The total open interest in all series was 5868 lots.

RSS 3 (spot) closed at Rs 201.30 (201.22) a kg at Bangkok. The Tokyo Commodity Exchange (TOCOM) remained closed on account of Labour Thanksgiving Day.

Spot rates were (Rs/kg): RSS-4: 199 (201); RSS-5: 187.50 (189); ungraded: 183.50 (185);

ISNR 20: 193 (194) and latex 60 per cent: 130 (130).

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Back Farmers told to sell sunflower immediately on harvest

Anil Urs

Hubli, Nov. 23

Sunflower farmers in Karnataka have been advised to sell their crop immediately on harvest.

According to the Domestic and Export Market Intelligence Cell (Demic), set up at the Agri-business Management department, University of Agricultural Sciences, Dharwad, "farmers in the State, due to good monsoon, are going in for a bumper harvest. With good crop, there is a remote chance of prices moving up in the next three to four months.

Crop arrivals in key sunflower markets of Bagalkot, Bellary, Gulbarga, Raichur and Ranebennur are reported to be heavy due to yields touching 5-6 quintal a hectare. Keeping all this in mind, the Demic has advised farmers to sell their crop on harvest, as sunflower is currently trading at around Rs 2,200-2,400 a quintal. The current prices are on par with the minimum support price (MSP) of Rs 2,350. For determining the prices, monthly modal prices of sunflower were collected from markets of Bagalkot, Bellary, Gulbarga, Raichur and Ranebennur and at what prices the sunflower would trade during November, December and January 2011 were established. "For reliable price forecast, data for the past 20 years were analysed by using time series analytical models," said a Demic official. "The output prices were also verified and fine tuned with the opinions of traders, agricultural scientists and progressive farmers. The prices from other major markets and the Government guided policies with regard to the marketing of the crop were also considered to come up with accurate price forecast," he added.