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Subsidy for horticulture farmers

Special Correspondent

VELLORE: The Central government is providing 65 per cent subsidy on the project cost of establishing a drip irrigation system, besides an additional benefit of fertilizers worth Rs.15,000 per hectare to horticulture farmers in Vellore district, under the National Agricultural Development Project (NADP).

The project is being implemented with the objective of increasing the yield and preventing irrigation water loss.

According to a release from Eapan Vettath Eapan, Assistant Director of Horticulture, Walajapet, while the subsidy would be available to horticulture farmers who register with the Assistant Directors of Horticulture in any block in the district, the additional benefit of fertilizers would be available only to those who register under the NADP at the office of the Assistant Director of Horticulture at Walajapet.

Interested farmers can contact Mr. Eapan at 9486476942 or the Assistant Agricultural Officer at 9444010638.

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YPARD to attract more young people to agricultural research

Staff Reporter

YPARD inks MoU with VIT University to establish the YPARD Asia office

Courtney Paisley, global coordinator, YPARD, talking to the press persons at the VIT University in Vellore on Monday. G. Viswanathan, VIT Chancellor, is in the picture.

VELLORE: With a current member base of 3,500 young professionals from 117 countries, the Young Professionals' Platform for Agricultural Research for Development (YPARD), Food and Agricultural Organisation of the United Nations, Rome, Italy is taking steps to increase its member base to 10,000 in the next two to three years and attract more young people to agricultural research for development.

It was in this direction that YPARD inked a Memorandum of Understanding with VIT University to establish the YPARD Asia office at the university during a meeting of local and regional representatives and capacity building workshop on Monday.

The meeting, according to Courtney Paisley, Global Coordinator of YPARD, was to strengthen the regions and thereby build up a global network.

“There are representatives from Latin America, Asia and Africa. We will be discussing activities and medium term plans during the meeting. Strategic areas such as facilitating increased access to information among young professionals, promoting youth participation in agricultural research for development, career in agriculture and how to make agriculture attractive for young people will be discussed," she told reporters.

The week-long deliberation will look into the activities and resources needed for the next five years, pointed out Balasubramanian Ramani, YPARD International Office, Leibniz University of Hannover, Germany.

He said they aimed to enhance sharing of information with young people and also to provide capacity building and skill training to them.

"Web tools have been developed to spread our member base and attract more young professionals. We have developed a new website of YPARD – www.ypard.net. The network is going to be a very active one and it will be explained to all representatives, who in turn will train young professionals in their respective regions," he explained.

With the highest number of members being from India, which was about 800 to 900, he said that YPARD was keen on increasing its member base from the present 3,500 to 10,000 in two to three years. "Through the YPARD Asia office at VIT University, we will be able to reach out to more students in universities," he added.

Stressing the need to increase food productivity, Chancellor of the university G. Viswanathan said, "We require technology to be used in agriculture. Agriculturists should use technology to increase productivity." He said the university will take steps to popularise the movement.

Among others, Vice Chancellor of the university V. Raju, Vice President (Administration) Sankar Viswanathan and Director-School of Bioscience Technology Anil Kumar Gopinath were present.

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Farmers allege reduction in crop loans at meeting

Staff Reporter

Tirupur: Tribulations of farmers due to meagre scale of finance in the issuance of crop loans, inadequate supply of urea and tardy disbursal of bank credit, among other issues, dominated the proceedings at the farmers' grievances meeting conducted by the district administration here on Friday.

A section of farmers from Mayilvadi and Narasimhapuram areas complained that the crop loans issued by cooperative credit institutions for raising maize were reduced this financial year when compared to the last fiscal.

“The rate of assistance has been scaled down from Rs. 9,000 per acre during the last financial year to Rs 7,000 per acre this fiscal,” they said.

According to them, the reduction has put the farmers into a difficult situation since the input and cultivation costs had been going up tremendously. Another group of farmers raising coconut too had problems with the low ceiling of finance for their crop. Collector C. Samayamoorthy assured the farmers that the matter would be considered on its merit.

A major demand that came up during the discussions was the need to appoint a geologist in the agricultural engineering department for the district. The farmers pointed out that due to absence of professional geologists, it was becoming increasingly difficult for them to locate potential groundwater table for digging borewells.

Yet again, the major concern aired by the farmers was the severe shortage in availability of agricultural labourers ever since the commencement of Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme.

The farmers pleaded with the Collector to consider including farm works too under the ambit of Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme so as to attain the targeted four per cent agriculture growth.

Agriculturists from Dharapuram complained of short supply in urea issued to them through Primary Agriculture Cooperative Credit Societies.

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Published: October 10, 2010 20:31 IST | Updated: October 10, 2010 20:31 IST Manila, October 10, 2010

Climate change takes its toll on “miracle rice”, institute says

Climate change has reduced by 15 per cent the yield of the “miracle rice” which helped avert famine in Asia in the 1960s, the International Rice Research Institute said on Friday.

A study conducted by the Manila-based institute showed that the yield of the IR8 rice variety, also known as “miracle rice,” had dropped to 7 tons per hectare from yields of 9.5 to 10.5 tons per hectare when it was first introduced.

Before the introduction of the new rice in the 1960s, the average global rice yield per hectare was only around 2 tons.

“Our study eliminated changes in the genetic composition of the IR8 which may have occurred over time, and instead identified changes in the environment as the cause of the decline,” Shaobing Peng, a crop physiologist from the institute, said.

“Hotter nights, which are known to reduce rice yields, and other environmental changes such as modification in soil properties ... and air pollution are all possible contributing factors,” Peng added.

He said their study underscored the need for further breeding to make future generations of rice plants better able to cope with a changing environment.

“Maintenance breeding needs continuous support to help farmers to cope with erratic climate changes around the globe,” Peng said.

Published: October 10, 2010 20:45 IST | Updated: October 10, 2010 20:45 IST New Delhi, October 10, 2010

Prices of essentials rose 18 p.c. in one year: Assocham

The Hindu The study says that the rise in prices of essential commodities and per capita income is utterly disproportionate. File Photo: K. Gopinathan

Prices of commodities like condiments and spices, eggs, fish, meat, tea, wheat, pulses and coffee rose by 18 per cent in the one year between August 2009 and 2010, an industry lobby says.

In the same period, the per capita income of an average Indian rose by 10.4 per cent - Rs. 4,404 - from Rs. 40,141 in August 2009, the study by the Associated Chamber of Commerce and Industry of India (Assocham) adds.

The study says that the rise in prices of essential commodities and per capita income is utterly disproportionate.

The prices of condiments witnessed extremely high volatility - 40 per cent - between August 2009 and August 2010.

The survey found that the per capita consumption of condiments and spices in India is on the rise following a change in food habits. Winter, the season of weddings in north India along with Christmas and New Year celebrations, may also lead to an upsurge in the demand for spices.

"The good demand due to upcoming festivals such as Navratras, Dussehra and Diwali, has resulted in condiments and spices prices rising during the festive season," said Assocham secretary general D.S. Rawat.

Prices of eggs, fish and meat also rose over 27 per cent between August 2009 and August 2010.

During this period, milk prices increased by 26 per cent. Tea prices have increased by 11 per cent, while meat prices have increased by 10 per cent.

Coffee prices increased by over seven per cent during the period. This is because of the anticipated tight supplies that would be just enough to satisfy the growing demand.

THE ECONOMIC TIMES
Tue, Oct 12, 2010 | Updated 07.24AM IST

12 Oct, 2010, 01.02AM IST, Rituraj Tiwari & Madhvi Sally,ET Bureau

Mustard output set to rise on good rains

JAIPUR/CHANDIGARH: On the back of extended monsoon, the acreage of rapeseed/mustard is all set to go up. Even as a good soya and groundnut harvest is putting pressure on the rabi oilseed , low water requirement and favourable weather conditions are prompting farmers to go for the crop.

In the eastern Rajasthan, sowing has already begun after a good kharif harvest. The state is targeting a 25% increase in acreage at 4 million hectare this year. Rajasthan agriculture department chief statistics officer Panna Lal said the production will go up due to early sowing.

"The sowing in the state generally begins after Navratra. But this time, due to cold weather conditions during dawn and dusk and bright sunlight during day, farmers have advanced their sowing. It will result in glut in mustard production," he said. The production is likely to cross 4 million tonne mark — 25% more than the last year's output.

In neighbouring Haryana, area under cultivation will increase by 89,000 hectare touching 0.6 million hectare with production estimate at 1.11 million tonne. "The government has set a target to increase oil seed and pulses in the state. With a mustard seed subsidy of over Rs 1,200 per quintal, we expect more area to come under it," said Haryana additional director agriculture BS Duggal.

Business Standard

Tuesday, Oct 12, 2010

In good times, coffee planters say no to price stabilisation scheme

Debasis Mohapatra / Bangalore October 12, 2010, 0:31 IST

Coffee planters in major growing regions are reluctant to contribute towards the price stabilisation fund scheme of the central government on the back of high prices in the recent time. They want more benefits to be associated with the contribution towards the fund.

This scheme, run by the ministry of commerce, has a provision of contribution from both, government and planters, to assist growers during a bad crop year.

“Coffee planters are less inclined to contribute towards price stabilisation fund as they are receiving the right price for their produce in the recent time. So, the government should make the scheme attractive by adding some insurance products into the scheme,” Ramesh Rajah, president of Coffee Planters Association of India said.

Health insurance product or more crop insurance products will encourage small planters to contribute towards price stabilisation fund, he added.

Price stabilisation fund scheme was started in 2003 by the central government for coffee , tea, rubber and tobacco planters to provide assistance against low prices.

This scheme, which has started with an initial corpus of Rs 500 crore, declares a crop year as a distress year when planters get 20 per cent lower price for their crops from the seven-year average of the international prices.

Similarly, it calculates a crop year as a good crop year when planters get 20 per cent higher price than the seven-year average price.

Coffee board officials are of the opinion that as planters are receiving good price for the produce in the last six-seven years, they are reluctant to contribute even a small amount of Rs 500 as designated in the scheme towards the fund.

Recently, while prices of arabica coffee reached $1.9 a pound for December delivery at ICE futures in New York, up three per cent over previous close; robusta variety reached $1,850 a tonne on NYSE Liffe Exchange in London, up 2.7 per cent.

Moreover, this price range is historically at high level and is more than 30 per cent higher as compared to the 2004-05 level.

“International prices have been on a high in the last six-seven years, which enabled domestic planters to receive good prices for their produce. As there is no distress crop year, planters are not willing to contribute money towards the corpus,” a top Coffee Board official said.

This is not a healthy trend as the corpus is essential to provide cushion to planters during a bad crop year, he added.

“Government should revise the scheme with a change in criteria for announcing a crop year as a distress year. There also should be some kind of incentives like personal insurance so that small growers would be interested in contributing towards the fund,” he said.

Even, some planters say the assistance under the scheme should be higher to give genuine support to planters.

“Assistance provided to planters during the distress crop year is not substantial to protect growers. So, it should be higher in value terms,” A Nanda Belliappa, a planter from Kodagu region said.

“After the debt relief fund announced by the government for coffee planters, nobody is talking about this scheme. However, we need certain preparation for a bad crop year,” Belliappa added.

Central government had announced around Rs 242-crore relief package in September last year to waiver debt of small and medium coffee growers.

Punjab: Potato area to be stagnant

Vijay C Roy / New Delhi/ Chandigarh October 12, 2010, 0:29 IST

The area under potato cultivation in Punjab would remain more or less same this year, as compared to 83,117 hectares last year. Experts mentioned that assured return from wheat as one of the reason. Besides that the prevailing price of Potato which is ruling around Rs 5-8 per kg in wholesale market as another reason, while during the corresponding period last year it was ruling around Rs 10-13 per kg.

In 2008-09, the total acreage under Potato was 81,082 hectares and the yield was 24.68 metric tonnes per hectare. Further, the total production in 2008-09 was 20,00,000 metric tonnes.

While in 2009-10, the total acreage was 83,117 hectares and the production was around 21,00,000 metric tonnes. Also, in last year the yield touched 25.46 metric tonnes per hectares.

Speaking to Business Standard, officials in horticulture department said that the area would remain more or less same this year. Even if it is increased it would be marginal.

The main potato growing areas in Punjab are Hoshiarpur, Jalandhar, Ludhiana, Amritsar, Kapurthla, Bathinda, Patiala, Fatehgarh Sahib, Moga, etc. Almost all the varieties released by Central Potato Research Institute(CPRI) Shimla, viz Kufri, Chandramukhi, Kufri Jyoti, Kufri Badshah, Kufri Sindhuri, Kufri Chipsona-1 and Kufri Chipsona-3 are being sown by the farmers with Kufri Pukhraj and Kufri Jyoti is the prefreed varieties.

Already, the sowing has started in the states from first week of October and will continue till November. Horticulturists are of the view that Potatao crop is prone to diseases which is also one of the reason, for selecting wheat over Potato.

Cardamom output may dip 15% on heavy rain

George Joseph / Kochi October 12, 2010, 0:26 IST

Heavy rainfall in the central and southern districts of Kerala has badly hit the production of cardamom this season. The production of the spice is estimated to have declined 15 per cent due to extreme rainfall that caused widespread fungus infection in plantations.

Normally the north-east monsoon that follows the main south-west monsoon begins by the end of October, but this year the rainfall pattern changed with unusual heavy downpour which spoiled majority of the plantations.

Fungus infection is widely prevalent in areas like Kattappana, Vandanmedu, Udumbanchola and Anavilasam and local small and medium farmers are now facing a serious crisis.

According to farmers, due to excess rain plants, offshoots and seeds have rotten. Labour shortage caused a delay in plucking of ripe seeds. The total production may decline to 11,000 tonnes this season from a normal crop of 13,000-13,500 tonnes. The rain has also affected the plucking and processing of cardamom and plucked seeds have also been destroyed due to bad weather.

P J Kuriakose, a grower, told Business Standard that the unfavourable climate would affect the next round of flowering too. There will be two major rounds plucking within a gap of 90 days in this season. But growers said not much crop could be expected in the next rounds of plucking.

Meanwhile, low prices are also a concern for the farmers as the average price in auction sales decreased to Rs 940 a kg. On October 1, average price was Rs 1,011 a kg. The fall in prices is mainly due to seasonal increase in the supply of the spice. But growers allege this is because of the cartel of buyers in various auction centres.

Experts said the bearish mode in cardamom market is rather unexpected as Guatemala, the major global supplier of cardamom, is not aggressive in the market. So there is good local demand, though exports were rather sluggish.

Fish seed production likely to be down 25%

BS Reporter / Kolkata/ Berhampur October 11, 2010, 4:31 IST

The deficient monsoon in the state has not only affected the agricultural operation, but also taken its toll on the production of the fish seed. The spawn (small fish seed) production in the state is likely to be down by about 25 per cent.

The spawn is the early stage of the fish seed like fry and finger-ling. “The production of the fish seed is likely to be reduced by around 25 per cent this year due to erratic rainfall”, says the secretary-cum-commissioner of fishery and animal resources department Satyabrata Sahu.

Worried over the development, his department has asked the fishery officers to maintain the production of quality fish seeds in the reservoirs to ensure that the fish production in the state is not affected.

Sahu, who was on a tour to south Orissa recently, conducted a review of the fishery sector at Berhampur. “We have suggested the fishery officers to preserve quality fish seeds in the reservoirs, so that the fish production will not be affected”, he said.

There are 138 reservoirs in the state, where the fish seeds are stocked by the fishery department and state-owned Orissa Pisciculture Development Corporation (OPDC). The corporation will get around Rs 3 crore from National Fish Development Board (NFDB) for this purpose this year. The government aims to produce about 85 crore quality fish seeds.

In a bid to boost the fish production in the state, the secretary said emphasis is being given on the setting up of multi-purpose farm tanks through the job card holders under the labour-intensive Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS). The government has targeted to set up around 15,000 tanks, where the beneficiaries would get Rs 1.50 lakh subsidy.

The subsidy would be provided to the small and marginal farmers, who have less than five acres of land and also hold job cards under the MGNREGS.

The beneficiary would have to develop the pond in half acres on his own land to avail the subsidy.

Tobacco Board restricts crop size to 170 million kg in AP

BS Reporter / Chennai/ Hyderabad October 11, 2010, 4:27 IST

The Tobacco Board of India has decided to restrict the crop size in Andhra Pradesh to 170 million kg for the upcoming season.

Speaking at a press conference here on Friday, G Kamalvardhana Rao, who recently took over as chairman of the board, said there was a tobacco glut globally.

Farmers would end up getting lower returns if they were allowed to grow more tobacco, he said explaining the reasons for turning down Indian Tobacco Association’s appeal for an increase of 10 million kg.

The board had earlier refused any increase in the crop size for Karnataka from 100 million kg.

The Centre has decided to double the penalty from Rs 1 to Rs 2 on every kg grown extra and 15 per cent of the value (from 5 per cent) of that output, he said. However, a group of MPs from Andhra Pradesh had sought a reduction in penalties for farmers who grew more tobacco than the supposed limit.

The board has also decided to introduce electronic auction at all the 31 platforms — 20 in Andhra Pradesh and 11 in Karnataka — from the next auction season to ensure better price for farmers.

It would call for expressions of interest and initiate talks with public sector IT firms to put in place the e-auction system.

The European Union in 2008-09 had rejected 3 million kg tobacco citing presence of non-tobacco material. Rao asked the farmers not to use plastic bags to store the commodity.

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Back **Coromandel plans foray into urea business**

Chosen as handling agent for urea imported on Govt account at Karaikal port.

"Right now, the idea is to leverage our retail network to supply urea as well," — Mr A. Vellayan, Chairman, Murugappa Group.

Harish Damodaran

New Delhi, Oct 11

The country's No. 2 phosphatic and complex fertilisers concern, Coromandel International Ltd (CIL), is entering the urea business.

The Rs 6,527-crore flagship company of the Murugappa Group plans to launch sales of urea under its ‘Godavari' brand during the current Rabi season, for which sowing operations will start after the middle of this month.

“We have just been nominated as a handling agent for urea imported on Government account at the Karaikal port in Puducherry. That will enable us to receive and unload vessels carrying official urea cargo at the said port. After paying customs duty, this material can then be bagged and distributed under our own brand,” said Dr G. Ravi Prasad, President (Marketing), CIL.

He added that the first vessel of 50,000 tonnes is scheduled to arrive by mid-October and “we would be in a position to launch our product immediately after that.”

The company expects to handle one vessel every month, which translates into roughly 5 lakh tonnes (lt) on an annual basis.

Import of urea, unlike other fertilisers, is currently not freely allowed and can be undertaken only through the state-owned MMTC, STC and Indian Potash Ltd.

These canalising firms, in turn, have officially-nominated handling agents at designated ports to take delivery and undertake distribution in accordance with the Centre's movement control orders.

During the year ended March 31, 2010, CIL sold 29.09 lt of fertiliser materials.

This included 19.63 lt of complexes, 6.03 lt of di-ammonium phosphate (DAP), 0.92 lt of single super phosphate and 2.51 lt of muriate of potash.

That makes it the second biggest domestic player in complexes/DAP next to the Indian Farmers Fertiliser Cooperative.

The latter did sales of 26.98 lt of DAP and 27.94 lt of complexes in 2009-10, besides 63.35 lt of urea.

Will CIL's foray into urea through imports be a precursor to its getting into manufacture, either through green field investments or takeover of an existing unit (there are a few struggling plants in the South itself)?

Indigenous manufacture

“Indigenous manufacture of urea is not really viable today, given the high gas prices here. So, we don't intend going for it. Right now, the idea is to leverage our retail network to supply urea as well. Being able to import will help us meet our customers' demand, especially in States like Andhra Pradesh, where there are shortages,” the Rs 13,617-crore Murugappa Group's Chairman, Mr A. Vellayan, told Business Line.

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Back **Slack overseas demand pounds rice**

Our Correspondent

Karnal, Oct. 11

Sluggish overseas demand pulled down the prices of aromatic rice varieties by Rs 100-200 a quintal. With new arrivals and slack demand, prices of non-basmati varieties also witnessed a downtrend.

Prices of Pusa-1121 (steam) dropped Rs 100 a quintal and ruled around Rs 5,250 a quintal, Pusa-1121 (sela) at Rs 4,100 against the levels of 4,200 last weekend; Pusa-1121 (raw) at Rs 5,200. Pusa (sela) quoted at Rs 3,200-3,300 a quintal and Pusa (raw) at Rs 4,100.

Prices of basmati varieties dropped Rs 200. Basmati sela ruled around Rs 6,000 against the 6,200 last weekend, while basmati raw was around Rs 7,000.

Prices of non-basmati varieties fell Rs 50-70. The Sugandha-999 sela (new) was quoted at Rs 2,750 and PR14 (old) Rs 2,220 while the PR14 (new) was at Rs 2,025; Sharbati sela at Rs 2,650 and Sharbati steam (new) at Rs 2,800. PR (new) ruled at Rs 1,900.

Mr Amit Kumar, a rice trader, told Business Line that slack foreign demand resulted in prices decline by Rs 100-200 a quintal in the aromatic rice varieties. The fall in dollar is the prime reason behind the slack demand, he said. More than 1.6 lakh bags of different paddy varieties arrived at the Karnal grain market on Monday against the around 2.1 lakh bags arrived on last weekend.

Around 40,000 bags of PR-13 arrived and ruled between Rs 950 and Rs 975 a quintal.

More than 80,000 bags of Grade-A arrived and the stock ruled between Rs 1,000 and Rs 1,030, that is also the minimum support prices of this quality. Around 30,000 bags of PR-14 was quoted at Rs 1,050-1,100 a quintal.

About 3,000 bags of Sharbati ruled between Rs 1,550 and Rs 1,580. Sugandha-999, with a stock of around 3,000 bags, was quoted at Rs 1,550-1,600 while around 1,000 bags of RS-10 variety were quoted at Rs 1,300-1,325 a quintal.

There were 1,000 bags of Pusa (duplicate basmati) and was around Rs 1,850-1,900.

Around 200 bags of Pusa-1121 were quoted at Rs1,800-2,000 a quintal. The entire stock was lifted by the agencies and the millers.

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Back **Only 34% of minor irrigation tanks full in Karnataka**

Anil Urs

Hubli, Oct 11

At the end of three months of monsoon rains in Karnataka, of the total 3, 460 minor irrigation tanks, about 34 per cent had water storage capacity of more than 50 per cent. About 42 per cent of the tanks had storage capacity between of 30 per cent and 50 per cent and remaining 24 per cent of the tanks were dry.

There are a total of 3,460 minor irrigation tanks in Karnataka having total atchkat area of 4.16 lakh hectares.

According to the Karnataka minor irrigation department statistics, at the end of September 25, the status of minor irrigation tanks in north zone (13 districts in north Karnataka), is as follows: There are a total of 1,494 tanks, of these only 430 tanks is reported to have full capacity.

Belgaum (number of tanks 244, total atchkat area 27,734 hectares, number of tanks not received water 77), Bijapur (143 tanks, 22,763 hectares, zero), Bagalkot (59 tanks, 11,614 hectares, zero,) Dharwad (110 tanks, 13685 hectares, 2 tanks), Gadag (29 tanks, 7,643 hectares, 5 tanks), Haveri (263 tanks, 23,358 hectares, 11 tanks), Uttar Kannada (91 tanks, 13,762 hectares, zero), Gulbarga (144 tanks, 26,323 hectares, zero), Yadgir (71 tanks, 6,528 hectares, 2 tanks), Bidar (112 tanks, 20,489 hectares, 2 tanks), Bellary (79 tanks, 13,059 hectares, 21 tanks), Koppal (82 tanks, 13,775 hectares, 4 tanks) and Raichur (67 tanks, 8,430 hectares, 7 tanks).

In the south zone (17 districts in south Karnataka), there are a total of 1,966 minor irrigation tanks, of which 253 tanks has full capacity.

As for the cumulative rainfall (June 1 to September 30) is concerned in north interior Karnataka, it was excess in Bellary, Koppala, Raichur, Bidar, Bagalkote, Gadag and Yadgir districts and normal in Gulbarga, Belgaum, Bijapur, Haveri and Dharwad districts.

Among the 69 taluks, rainfall was excess in 42 taluks, and normal in 27 taluks. Last year for the same period rainfall was excess in 34 taluks, normal in 30 taluks and deficit in 5 taluks.

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Back **Limited arrivals sweeten sugar**

Our Correspondent

Mumbai, Oct 11

On Monday, spot sugar prices at Vashi APMC market rose Rs 10-15 a quintal on limited arrivals and increased retail demand. Supply just about met demand.

Fresh buying from upcountry/neighbouring States continued to support mill tender rates.

Naka and mill tender rates were also increased by Rs 10-15, as profit selling pressure by resellers is mostly over and increased fresh buying from mills, kept market sentiment/moral firm, said market sources.

On Monday, total arrivals were at 42-45 truck loads (of 10 tonnes each) and lifting was about 45-48 truck loads. Higher demand from retailers for festival will reflect in increase volume in coming days.

In the international market, sugar price continued to rise almost eight month high on lowered forecast by the USDA for the EU harvest. At local level, in Maharashtra and Uttar Pradesh, there was a talk about cane farmers may agitate/demand for higher price of their produce and withhold supplies to mills. In Maharashtra, cane crushing by mills is supposed to start from next week, sources added.

On Saturday, 4-5 mills managed to sell about 65,000-70,000 bags to the local trade. Before that two rail rakes (each of about 27,000 bags) were sold to Kolkata buyers.

Mills are not keen to sell at reduce rates on expectation of higher demand. On Monday, mills tenders were at S-grade: Rs 2,570-2,610 and M-grade: Rs 2,625-2,660.

According to the Sugar Merchants Association, spot rate for S-grade: Rs 2,671-2,701 (Rs 2,656-2,700) and M-grade: Rs 2,701-2,791 (Rs 2,693-2,781). Naka delivery rates were: S-grade – Rs 2,640-2,675 (Rs 2,630-2,660) and M-grade – Rs 2,680-2,720 (Rs 2,670-2,700).

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http://www.thehindubusinessline.com/2010/10/12/stories/2010101250631900.htm

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Back **Pepper futures continue to fall on liquidation**

Falling:File picture of pepper corn

G.K. NairKochi, Oct 11

Pepper futures continued its fall on Mondayfollowing liquidation and switching over by investors.

Investors liquidated farm grade pepper, allegedly of low bulk density, at Rs 300 – Rs 350 a quintal below the October delivery price.

An estimated 40 tonnes of it were said to have been traded today, market sources told Business Line.

At the same time, they switched over to November and December positions rather than selling their validity expired stock at Rs 200 a quintal below the October price, they said. Wide difference between October and November and October and December prices has prompted the investors to switch over.

Farm grade

Domestic buyers, mainly inter-state dealers, covered farm grade pepper from the investors. In fact, investors were the only sellers.

In the primary market, there was not much activity as sellers stayed away.

October contract on the NCDEX dropped by Rs 243 to close at Rs 18,165 a quintal. November and December fell by Rs 234 and Rs 203 respectively to close at Rs 18,370 and Rs 18,601 a quintal.

Total turnover increased by 4,079 tonnes to 10,399 tonnes. Total open interest dropped by 198 tonnes to 15,046 tonnes.

October open interest dropped by 701 tonnes to 9,228 tonnes. November and December open interest increased by 334 tonnes and 164 tonnes respectively indicating good switching over.

Spot prices, in tandem with the futures market trend and some selling pressure from investors, dropped by Rs 100 to close at Rs 18,000 (ungarbled) and Rs 18,500 (MG 1) a quintal.

Indian parity in the international market dropped to $4,350 - $4,375 a tonne (c&f). India's competitor, at present, is Indonesia and if it had not reduced its prices for L Asta today, then the Indian parity is likely to remain competitive, market sources claimed.

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Back **Packing mills told to file sugar output, movement details**

Our Bureau

Kolkata, Oct 11

The Jute Commissioner has directed all sugar factories in the country to submit returns, giving accounts relating to sugar produced or manufactured in and removed from the factories and the packing materials used, in order to check the rampant rise in use of synthetic bags for packaging.

jute mills' demand

The move comes in the wake of a representation made by the Indian Jute Mills' Association (IJMA) to the Jute Commissioner, regarding the large-scale violation of the order issued by the Ministry of Textiles under the Jute Packaging Materials Act, 1987. The Act directs all sugar factories to use jute bags for packing sugar to the extent of 100 per cent, according to Mr Manish Poddar, Chairman, IJMA.

“We had made a representation to the Jute Commissioner that sugar factories, particularly those in the private sector, are using synthetic bags for packing sugar on a large-scale in violation of the order issued by the Ministry of Textiles under the Jute Packaging Materials Act, 1987, directing all sugar factories to use jute bags for packing sugar to the extent of 100 per cent and urged him to take necessary action against the sugar factories which are not using jute bags in terms of the above Order,” Mr Poddar told Business Line.

The Jute Commissioner, in exercise of the powers vested in him under the Jute Packaging Materials Act, 1987, has directed all sugar factories to submit returns in the prescribed form within a specified date, giving accounts relating to sugar produced or manufactured in and removed from their factories and of packaging materials used, he said.

Imposing penalties

The Jute Commissioner has also deputed authorised officers to inspect the records of the sugar factories. The question of imposing penalties would be considered in case it was found that sugar factories were using synthetic bags in violation of the above Order. “This is a welcome step which will prevent sugar factories from using synthetic bags in violation of the Jute Packaging Materials Act, 1987,” he said.

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Back **Cardamom prices decline on increased arrivals**

G. K. Nair

Kochi, Oct 11

Cardamom prices declined last week at auctions held in Kerala and Tamil Nadu on increased supply outweighing demand as the harvesting has reached its peak with the second round of picking about to come to a close. Total arrivals during last week from Monday to Sunday stood at 355 tonnes, probably the highest in the current season.

In fact, Diwali demand and export buying has helped the market from falling sharply on increased arrivals, market sources said.

The individual auction average price dropped to below Rs 1,000 a kg from the previous week and vacillated between Rs 940 and Rs 960 a kg.

Upcountry buyers were covering, albeit not aggressively. They were hesitant to buy from the declining market, they said. Exporters bought an estimated 25 tonnes during the week.The peak period of the harvesting in the current season is about to end and the third round of picking will commence by the month-end, they said. Harvesting was delayed this year due to delay in the onset of monsoon the growing areas and absence of summer rains, they said.

Arrivals

Total arrivals at the KCPMC auction on Sunday stood at 73 tonnes and almost the entire quantity was sold out, Mr P.C. Punnoose, General Manager, CPMC, told Business Line. The maximum price was at Rs 1,176.5 a kg while the minimum at Rs 606.5 a kg. The average price dropped to Rs 945 a kg from previous Sunday's average of Rs 1,016 a kg, he said.

Diwali buying is expected to continue till next week end and till then market is likely to rule almost steady, he said. Inquiries from overseas market were also reportedly floating, they said.

Total arrivals during the current season from August 1 to October 10 stood at 2,151 tonnes. Of this, 2,142 tonnes of cardamom were sold.

Arrivals and sales in the same period of the previous season were 2,085 tonnes and 1,956 tonnes respectively.

Weighted average price as on October 1 was Rs 1,167.50 a kg, up from Rs 703.50 same day last year.

Prices for graded varieties (Rs/kg) on Monday were: AGEB 1,290–1,300; AGB 1,145-1,155; AGS 1,035–1,045; AGS1 995–1,005.

Prices in the open market at Bodinayakannur were: AGEB 1,250-1,260; AGB 1,110-1,120; AGS 995-1,005; AGS 1 970- 980.

The weather conditions in the growing areas of Idukki last was unfavourable as there was heavy incessant down pour for over a week, which negatively affected the plants. However, now the climatic conditions have changed, growers said. There crop this season is expected to be same as of the previous season, they said.

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Back **Edible oils rise on global cues**

Our Correspondent

Mumbai, Oct. 11

Edible oil spot prices rose sharply on Monday, taking cue from global spot markets and the sharp rise in palm oil and soya futures. In Mumbai, most of edible oils rose sharply. Palmolein, soya oil along with cotton oil rose by Rs 7, sunflower oil by Rs 5, rapeseed oil by Rs 2 and groundnut oil rose by Rs 5 for 10kg. Sudden rise in global markets and absence of fresh buying from retailers at local level kept volume thin.

In international markets, CBOT December soya oil extended gains and Malaysia's BMD CPO closed higher by 145and 170 ringgits tracking surge in Chinese commodities. Malaysia's September crude palm oil output fell 2.7 per cent supported the rally.

Local wholesaler said, in Mumbai spot market, in line with the foreign market refineries have increased their rates for palmolein, soya oil but due to low demand resellers were quoting lower price. About 200/250 tonnes of palmolein resale was traded in the range of Rs 472-476. There was no demand for indigenous oils. Groundnut oil price increased on firm reports from Saurashtra market, where price increased by Rs 20 for loose 10 kg.

Malaysia's BMD and NBOT futures: Malaysia's BMD CPO futures closed higher at November , MYR 2,929 (2,784), December futures closed at 2,930 (2,760) MYR. Indore NBOT soya oil futures sustained global rally . October futures was at Rs 510.70 and November futures was at Rs 520.40.

Mumbai commodity exchange spot rate (Rs/10kg): Groundnut oil Rs 860 (Rs 855), soya refined oil Rs 492 (Rs 485), sunflower expeller refined Rs 560 (Rs 555), sunflower refined Rs 630 (Rs 620), rapeseed refined oil Rs 572 (Rs 570), rapeseed expeller refined Rs 542 (Rs 540), cotton refined oil Rs 507 (Rs 500) and palmolein was Rs 473 (Rs 466).

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Back **Subdued mill demand grounds chana**

Our Correspondent

Indore, Oct 11

Chana edged lower in the spot by Rs 20-25 at Rs 2,200-2,210 a quintal following sluggish domestic demand, subdued demand at mill level and decline in futures.

Chana futures in October, November and December at the National Commodities and Derivatives Exchange closed 1.06 per cent lower at Rs 2,264, Rs 2,307 and Rs 2,339 respectively.

Among its various varieties, desi chana quoted Rs 2,150-2,160; chana (mausmi) quoted Rs 2,200-2,300; chana (annagiri) was Rs 2,175-2,200; chana (gulabi) quoted Rs 2,500-3,000 while Kabuli gutki quoted Rs 2,500-2,800 a quintal. On Mumbai port, chana (Russian) quoted Rs 3,000-3,200, while chana (American) quoted Rs 4,100-4,200 respectively.

On the other hand, prices of pulse seeds continued to remain either steady or edged slightly lower in the spot because of its subdued demand at mill-level. In the spot, moong (best) quoted Rs 50 lower at Rs 3,850, while moong (medium) quoted Rs 3,300-3,600. Masoor quoted Rs 25 lower at Rs 3,325, tur remained steady at Rs 3,000-3,400 a quintal, while urad traded Rs 100 lower at Rs 4,100-4,200.

According to pulse mill owners, downtrend in pulse seeds is mainly due to weak festival demand. Local mandi on Monday witnessed arrival of about 1,200-1,500 bags of urad and about 1,000 bags of moong.

On the other hand, dollar (kabuli) chana or chickpea gained about Rs 100 higher with its prices in the spot quoted Rs 4,700-4,800 a quintal, though its export demand continues to be weak as compared with the past sometime. About 1,200-1,300 bags of dollar chana arrived in the local mandi on Monday.

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Back **Low buying stumps jeera**

Our Correspondent

Rajkot, Oct. 11

After a smart rise on Saturday, jeera traded lower again as exporters and local buyers kept away from the market.

At the National Commodity and Derivatives Exchange (NCDEX), jeera October futures were lower by Rs 164 to Rs 12,831 a quintal with an open interest of 6,789 lots. Jeera November futures closed at Rs 12,960, down by Rs 136 .

At the Unja mandi, prices came down by Rs 20-25 to Rs 1,500-2,600 for 20 kg.

Mr Ajay Kumar Kedia of Kedia Commodities from Mumbai said, “Despite competitive prices in the international market, export demand is weak. Domestic buyers are also staying away on apprehension of further fall in the prices.” He said, “Lower stocks and weakening arrivals prompted buying on Saturday, but hopes of good sowing in the up-coming season weighed the jeera price again on Monday.”

According to Angel Commodities, fall at the futures is prompting buyers to follow a wait-and-watch stance since the past few days. Demand from the overseas and domestic buyers is expected to improve in the coming weeks.

According to market sources, jeera stocks currently are projected to be lower at around 10-11 lakh bags (of 55 kg each) as compared with 13-14 lakh bags in the same period previous year.

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Back **Poor offtake takes colour off turmeric**

Our Correspondent

Erode, Oct. 11

Spot turmeric decreased by Rs 200 a quintal on Monday, and sales were also down.

In the regulated market, prices declined by Rs 355 a quintal.

At the Erode Cooperative Marketing Society, the finger variety was sold at Rs 13,709-14,189 a quintal, the root variety at Rs 13,419-14,166.

Out of 1,000 bags that arrived, 740 were sold.

The price of the finger variety was down by Rs 299 a quintal, compared with last Friday's price, and the root variety declined by Rs 153.

. In the regulated market, the finger and root varieties were sold at Rs 13,689 and Rs 13,935 a quintal, respectively. Out of 1,150 bags on sale, only 650 were sold.

According to Mr R.V. Ravishankar, President of the Erode Turmeric Merchants Association, there was absolutely no demand from the other States. This has resulted in the decline in price and sales.

“Contract will commence after October 20 in futures, so traders will buy very negligible quantity. Further, prices in futures were fluctuating. In the morning, turmeric price in futures was at Rs 14,670 a quintal. It started going up and suddenly dropped to Rs 14,670. So the traders quoted low prices in the spot market,” he added.

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Back **Amazan Agro launches its first brand of mustard oil**

Our Bureau

Kolkata, Oct 11

Amazan Agro Products Limited, a part of the Rs 500-crore Amazan Agro Group, forayed into the edible oil sector by launching its first brand of mustard oil ‘Pureline' here on Monday. The company hopes to break even within the next two to three years as it targets a revenue of Rs

1,000 crore this year. At present, the edible oil sector is worth around Rs 75,000 crore of which the mustard oil segment amounts for around 17.33 per cent i.e. around Rs 13,000 crore.

The company is planning to start the production of seasame oil within the coming months while it has plans to foray into other edible oil sections like soyabean oil and sunflower oil soon. Mr Joydeb Garai, MD & CEO, Amazan Agro Products Limited, pointed out that the company planned to have a pan-India presence by 2012 and would begin by launching its product in Jharkhand, Bihar and Assam in the months ahead. Jharkhand will be the second state where the product will be launched.

"West Bengal is a key market for us, having an estimated size of Rs 3,500 crore branded edible oil market. We are targeting nearly 5,000 – 10,000 strong retail stores and grocery stores network in Kolkata to begin with before a phased national roll out", added Mr Garai.

Mustard seeds will be outsourced by the company from Jaipur, Alwar and Bharatpur and the edible oil will be produced at a plant in Jaipur.

Products will be priced ranging from Rs 11 for a 100 ml pouch to Rs 165 for a 2 litre packet.

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Back **Lacking seasoning**

— K. K. Mustafah

Tepid export demand: A worker holding white pepper at a small-scale commodity collection centre near Kochi. Fresh arrivals of pepper from new crop in Brazil pressured prices in the futures market. Pepper dropped Rs 69 to Rs 18,558 for 100 kg in Kerala. India's pepper exports in April-August fell 5 per cent to 7,600 tonnes from a year ago.