

Date : 21.08.2013



TNAU forecasts price of brinjal, lady's finger

COIMBATORE: The Domestic and Export Market Intelligence Cell of Tamil Nadu Agricultural University has asked farmers growing lady's finger to go for sowing popular varieties / hybrids of the vegetable depending on the rice forecast. In Tamil Nadu, the crop is sown from June to August (Adi pattam) and in February (Thai pattam).

The price of 'bhendi' in major markets in Tamil Nadu in July was between Rs. 25 and Rs. 30 a kg. Arrivals start in September and are expected to reach a maximum during October.

The price then is expected to be around Rs. 25 a kg in the Coimbatore wholesale market and approximately Rs. 22 a kg in the Ottanchatram wholesale market.

Brinjal

The price of brinjal in Ottanchatram market during July 2013 was around Rs. 28 a kg.

In Adipattam, the sowing has begun and arrivals will reach a maximum during October.

Due to such arrivals in October, farmers can get nearly Rs. 17 a kg in the Ottanchatram market and Rs. 24 a kg in the Coimbatore market.

It is cultivated in December-January (Thai pattam) and April-May (Chithirai pattam).

For details, contact 0422-2431405 / 6611374.

Steps to check bud rot affecting coconut palms

Disease spreading in coconut groves near Western Ghats

A multidisciplinary team constituted to monitor bud rot disease affecting coconut palms in north Kerala has recommended immediate intervention to arrest the infectious outbreak.

A survey carried out by the team found that the disease was spreading at an alarming rate across coconut groves in the foothills and valleys of the Western Ghats bordering Kannur, Kozhikode, and Wayanad districts. Caused by the fungus *Phytophthora palmivora*, the disease has been found to be severe in the highland region (50 per cent), followed by the midlands (30

per cent), and the lowlands (10 per cent). The epicentre of the current outbreak is a valley near Kuttiyadi in Kozhikode district, known for superior quality West Coast Tall (WCT) palms.

The team comprising officials from the Department of Agriculture and Kerala Agricultural University found that though 50 per cent of the farmers had adopted the recommended curative measures, the preventive action recommended by scientists had gone unheeded, mainly owing to the acute shortage and high cost of labour. The fact that the majority of coconut grove owners are absentee farmers has also contributed to neglect of the disease, Jim Thomas, Associate Director of Research, KAU, said. The initial symptom, scientists said, was buckling of the inner fronds, leading to breakage. If the symptoms were ignored, the infection spread to older leaves and the entire crown rotted and the tree wilted in a few months.

The team has proposed the formation of Compact Area Groups (CAG) to promote and sustain group action in a contiguous area for durable adoption of control measures. It recommends the constitution of a monitoring committee, including agricultural officers, farmers, panchayat members, and technicians to conduct awareness campaigns for early detection of the disease and its management. The proposals have been submitted to the government. KAU Vice-Chancellor P. Rajendran said the control strategies recommended by the team included preventive and curative measures such as prophylactic treatment, control of soil acidity, and application of fertilizers and micronutrients. He said immediate intervention was necessary to minimise the loss of coconut palms.

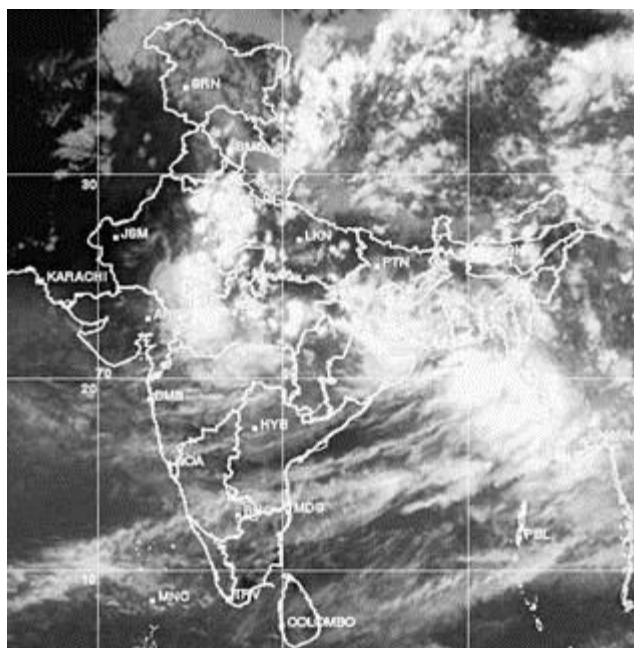
Dr. Thomas said the fungal infection could have been triggered by incessant rain in north Kerala. "The high relative humidity (up to 99 per cent) and temperature (33-36 degree Celsius) provide the ideal environment for the production of fungal spores that spread quickly. Soil acidity is another conducive factor."

He said the failure to adopt preventive measures and the reluctance to cut down affected trees had contributed to the spread of the disease, which usually subsides once the monsoon rain starts tapering off. The discontinuation of lime application, a traditional method of controlling soil acidity, had increased the vulnerability to the disease, he said.

The multidisciplinary team included Koshy Abraham, Head, Department of Plant Pathology, College of Horticulture, Vellanikkara; K. Abdul Kareem, Associate Director of Research, Regional Research Station, Peelicode; and others.

- Formation of groups to sustain control steps mooted
 - Disease found to be severe in highland region
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Weather



	Max	Min	R	TR
New Delhi (Plm)	32	26	8	469
New Delhi (Sfd)	33	24	13	650
Chandigarh	33	26	0	675
Hissar	34	25	0	507
Bhuntar	29	20	4	389
Shimla	23	16	37	716
Jammu	33	25	tr	1028
Srinagar	26	19	0	208
Amritsar	34	26	0	741
Patiala	33	27	2	641
Jaipur	31	24	17	600
Udaipur	31	24	0	617
Allahabad	34	26	9	868
Lucknow	33	24	tr	642
Varanasi	33	25	1	591
Dehradun	33	23	1	2423
Agartala	31	25	1	675
Ahmedabad	31	25	0	739
Bangalore	27	20	0	379
Bhubaneshwar	31	26	2	611
Bhopal	25	22	26	1027
Chennai	35	26	0	423
Guwahati	37	26	0	626
Hyderabad	30	22	1	511

Kolkata	28	25	92	1163
Mumbai	32	26	0	2019
Nagpur	28	24	1	1242
Patna	34	25	16	289
Pune	29	22	0	532
Thiruvananthapuram	30	24	6	870
Imphal	28	22	6	745
Shillong	26	19	0	693

The columns show maximum and minimum temperature in Celsius, rainfall during last 24 hours (tr-trace) and total rainfall in mm since 1st June.

RAINFALL

RAINFALL: Rain/thundershowers have occurred at many places over Uttarakhand, at a few places over Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu and Kashmir, east Rajasthan and east Uttar and at isolated places over rest of the region. The chief amounts of rainfall in cm are: (3 cm and above)

HARYANA: Chhansa and Khorkhada 5 each and Jhahhar, Assandh, Sonipat and Palwal 3 each,

HIMACHAL PRADESH: Baldwara 5 and Shimla 4, PUNJAB: Malakpur 3, EAST RAJASTHAN:

Aklera 16, Bakani, Jhalrapatan, Jhalawar, Hindaun and Nadoti 11 each, Asnawar 10, Khanpur 9, Manoharthana 8, Mandana and Sangod 7 each, Baran, Rajakhera, Dug and Nagarfort 6 each and

Atru, Mangrol, Pirawa, Sapotra, Kota and Gangapur 5 each, Patan, Baseri, Dholpur and Sarmathura 4 each and Anta, Chabra, Nainwa, and Sikrai 3 each, WEST RAJASTHAN: Didwana 3, EAST

UTTAR PRADESH: Meja, Banda, Birdghat and Kunda 3 each, WEST UTTAR PRADESH: Iglas and Lalitpur 5 each and Mahroni and Mathura 3 each and UTTARAKHAND: Munsiyari 3.

FORECAST VALID UNTIL THE MORNING OF 22nd August 2013 : Rain/thundershowers would occur at many places over Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand and east-Rajasthan. Rain/thundershowers would occur at many places over Uttar Pradesh during next 48 hrs and decrease thereafter. Rain/thundershowers would occur at a few places over rest of the region outside west-Rajasthan where it would be at isolated places.

FORECAST FOR DELHI AND NEIGHBOURHOOD VALID UNTIL THE MORNING OF 22nd August 2013: Generally cloudy sky. Rain/thundershowers would occur in some areas.

Water level

The water level in the Periyar dam stood at 131.50 feet on Tuesday with an inflow of 661 cusecs and a discharge of 1,758 cusecs. In the Vaigai dam, the level was 56.63 feet with an inflow and a discharge of 1,370 cusecs and 1,860 cusecs respectively. Rainfall in the Periyar dam was 1 mm, according to Public Works Department officials.

Farmers grievances meeting

The regular farmers' grievances day meeting will be held at the collectorate hall here at 10 a.m. on August 22. Collector Darez Ahamed will preside over. An official press release called upon the farmers and their representatives to participate in the meeting and get their grievances solved.

Mettur level

The water level in the Mettur dam stood at 118.55 feet on Tuesday against its full level of 120 feet. The inflow was 9,967 cusecs and the discharge 9,976 cusecs.

Water level

Water level in the Papanasam dam on Tuesday stood at 122.35 feet (maximum level is 143 feet). The dam had an inflow of 608.91 cusecs and 1,504.75 cusecs of water was discharged from the dam.

The water level in Manimuthar dam stood at 64.92 feet (118 feet). The dam had an inflow of 41 cusecs and 255 cusecs was discharged.

Kanyakumari

The water level in Pechipparai dam stood at 26.40 feet, 64.75 feet in Perunchani, 11.12 feet in Chittar I, 11.21 feet in Chittar II and 30.51 feet in Mambazhathuraiyaru dam.

Focus on reviving millets cultivation

As part of the efforts of the government to promote traditional agro products, a farmers' conference would be organised here on August 22.

Stating this to presspersons here on Tuesday, Joint Director of Horticulture N. Mani said that it would be inaugurated by the State Agriculture Minister S. Damodaran.

Focus would be on reviving the cultivation of millets including ragi, barley, saamai and wheat.

Scientists from research institutes like the Wheat Breeding Research Station and the Horticulture Research Station would participate. There would also be an exhibition.

To a question, Mr. Mani said that the area under millets was less than five acres now.

Stating that of late the area under potato has come down and the area under carrot has gone up, he said that the department is now in the process of preparing a report on the problems confronting farmers in various parts of The Nilgiris. High on the list is the threat posed to crops by stray wild animals.

To another query, he said that the damage caused to crops by the recent rains is being assessed.

When asked about the present farm profile of The Nilgiris, he said that small farmers were cultivating tea over about 56,000 hectares, 7,000 hectares were under vegetables, 2,000 hectares were under coffee and 2,000 hectares under spices.

While fruits were being grown on about 200 hectares, cut flowers were being cultivated on 75 hectares, it was pointed out.

Farmers' conference to be conducted in Udthagamandalam on August 22 will highlight need to grow ragi, barley, saamai and wheat

Government urged to take up crop loss assessment

'Crops destroyed owing to excess rainfall in Davangere'

Members of the local units of Karnataka Rajya Raitha Sangha and Hasiru Sene have said that a majority of crops, including maize, paddy, jowar, cotton and groundnut, have been destroyed owing to excessive rainfall and high moisture content in soil throughout the district. They have urged the State government to instruct the district administration to immediately take up crop loss assessment and rescue farmers.

Office-bearers of the two organisations, who met on the premises of the Agricultural Produce Marketing Committee (APMC) yard here on Tuesday to take stock of the situation, resolved to urge the government to carry out crop loss assessment and release funds to compensate the farmers.

Criticised

They criticised the district administration and the government for not taking up crop loss assessment so far and decided to set a seven-day deadline for the government to get the crop losses assessed from an appropriate government agency, failing which, the farmers would resort to serious agitation.

Huge loss

Honnuru Muniyappa, secretary of the State unit of KRRS, said that over 90 per cent of crops had been destroyed owing to excessive rainfall in the district. In addition, crops had been spoiled owing to different diseases like root grub. Farmers had borrowed loans from money lenders, commission agents and others for buying fertilizer, seeds and pesticides, thinking that they could settle their debts with the kharif yields. While the prices of fertilizer, seeds and pesticides had increased by about three times in the last three years, the prices of agriculture and horticultural produce remained unchanged. As the farmers were likely to sustain huge crop loss, the government should come to their rescue by providing adequate compensation and ensuring that no farmer resorted to commit suicide. The government should direct the district administration to constitute teams, comprising Agriculture and Revenue officials and farmers' leaders, for taking up crop loss assessment, immediately.

Report

He said that a senior official from the Agriculture Department had reportedly stated that the district had already recorded more than 450 mm rainfall this year against the average normal of 375.6 mm for the entire season. The Agriculture and Horticulture officers had realised that crops would be damaged in entire district owing to excessive rainfall and they were not in a position to help farmers on their own, he said.

Kuruva Ganesh, Chinnasamudra Shekarnaik, B. Chennabasappa, Haluru Nagaraj, Bharmappa, Maleshappa and many other leaders spoke.

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- Need to provide compensation to farmers stressed
 - Seven-day deadline set for authorities to fulfil demand
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Gardening fair on August 25



Garden City Farmers (GCF), Bangalore, is celebrating World Kitchen Garden Day with the eighth edition of Oota From Your Thota, an urban organic gardening fair. The event will be held on August 25 from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the Durga Parameshwari Grounds, in JP Nagar. For details, call 9342563028 / 9916594069 /9845627217.

Organic farming

Karnatak Chamber of Commerce and Industry (KCCI) has invited entries from organic farmers for providing stalls at the mega industrial exposition 'Incomex-2013' being held in September in Hubli. Those interested are requested to send details of their organic farming to the KCCI office at J.C. Nagar, Hubli (Ph: 0836-22182324/35) before August 28.

AIR to bring farming to youth

With the objective of making farming attractive to the youth, the State Agriculture Department has begun a daily programme on the All India Radio (AIR) highlighting the success stories of farming.

At an interactive programme with farmers at the zilla panchayat here on Friday, Principal Secretary of the department Bharatlal Meena said the broadcast of the programme titled “Taruna Karnataka” started a week ago. It would be broadcast for 365 days, he said.

Prabhakar Mayya, a farmer from Ujire, suggested the government could start agriculture parks in district and taluk headquarters and other major towns to lure youth to farming. Those five-acre farms should be integrated model farms. It would expose youth in urban areas to farming and could encourage some people to take up farming. To this, Mr. Meena said the department would support if anybody in urban areas came forward to open such parks.

Putting vegetable waste to good use

Refuse from markets is used to feed rescued cattle



Vegetable waste is collected every day from Devaraja Market, Vani Vilas Market, and the Regulated Market Committee and transported to the animal shelter run by the Mysore Pinjarapole Society.— Photo:

M.A. SRIRAM

The vegetable waste generated in markets controlled by the Mysore City Corporation (MCC) is not going ‘waste’, as it is being transported to an animal shelter run by the Mysore Pinjarapole Society.

The consumable vegetables in the waste are segregated and fed to the rescued cattle.

More than bringing additional revenue, the measure has helped the corporation to overcome the piling up of waste in markets, which results in unhygienic surroundings.

The vegetable waste is collected from the century-old Devaraja Market and Vani Vilas Market, which are under the control of the MCC, and the Regulated Market Committee (RMC), a

wholesale vegetable market, and transported every day to the animal shelter on the foothills of the Chamundi.

The society has nearly 4,000 heads of cattle.

“On an average, two tonnes of vegetable waste are collected daily from the markets and the RMC. On some days, the waste generation would be more. Our aim is to keep the market surroundings clean. As the waste is collected daily, the vegetables are not spoilt and can be consumed by the animals,” says Nagaraj, MCC Health Officer (in-charge). Dr. Nagaraj told *The Hindu* that the job of transporting vegetable waste to the animal shelter had been outsourced to a self-help group functioning at the Devaraja Market. The MCC lorries transport the waste, and the initiative was running well since two years, he said.

Devaraja Market, one of the biggest markets here, contributes more vegetable waste than any other market. Nearly one tonne of waste is generated here. Sometimes, the waste from ‘Bale Mandi’ (plantain market) is also transported.

Farmers bring farm fresh vegetables to the RMC. Some portion of the produce (damaged veggies) is discarded as waste, which is transported to the shelter.

The initiative is a win-win situation for the MCC and the society.

Speaking to *The Hindu*, Devaraja, a representative of Mysore Pinjarapole Society, said the initiative had helped the society save a little on cattle feed (paddy straw and other dry feeds). “Vegetable waste is supplied daily to the shelter and we buy the waste at 35 paise a kg. The quantum of waste transported daily varies depending on the availability in the markets,” he said.

According to Dr. Nagaraj, vegetable waste could be converted into compost but the process takes at least 48 days.

Instead, it is disposed on a daily basis, generating revenue for those who transport the same to the animal shelter. “The revenue goes towards the salaries of the SHG members involved in the initiative and for transportation cost,” he explained.

The animal shelter is spread over 24 hectares of land near the Chamundi Hills. It was established in 1938. The society also keeps dogs, horses, donkeys, and rabbits.

Cattle rescued from illegal transportation are brought to the society. Another shelter run by the society at Udbur on H.D. Kote Road gives shelter to over 600 animals.

Water level in Idukki dam static

Water level in the Idukki dam remained static on Tuesday with a considerable drop in rainfall and high production level at the Moolamattom power house. An official at the Dam Monitoring and Research Station, Cheruthoni, said the water level was 2,396.97 ft against the full reservoir level of 2,403 ft.

Rubber farmers lose at least 30,000 tonnes to rain; tyre industry panics



A rubber plantation under water at Vellamakkunnu, near Oonnukal, in Ernakulam district .—

Photo:H.Vibhu

Rubber farmers in Kerala have lost at least 30,000 tonnes of latex, worth more than Rs. 550 crore at the current price, to unprecedented rains in June, July and early August that brought tapping to a near complete halt for more than 60 days.

However, Rubber Board is confident that part of the losses can be made up in the coming months when tapping peaks.

Rubber production commissioner J. Thomas said on Tuesday that Rubber Board's initial assessment of the losses took into consideration the days of lost tapping as well as the incidence of abnormal leaf fall in rubber trees that held out a live threat of reduced latex yield.

The Rubber Board official said though the Board advised farmers to go in for rain guards in May, they held back the operations this year seeing the extremely dry conditions till late into the month of May. Even with rain guards, tapping was impossible in most areas, he added.

Shajimon Jose, secretary of Chirakkadavu Rubber Producers' Society (RPS) in Kanjirappally, in the heart of Kerala's rubber country, said that farmers were caught unawares by the heavy rains that started on June 1 and continued into early August.

Figures from the award-winning Chirakkadavu RPS illustrate the extent of production loss. The society, comprising small and marginal farmers and accounting for around 280 hectares of mature trees, saw latex production go down more than 50 per cent in June and nearly 40 per cent in July this year in comparison to the same months last year.

Dry rubber content (DRC) production in June this year came down to 11,615 kg compared to the 38,624 kg in June 2012. Approximately three litres of normal latex is required to produce a kg of RDC. Production in July came down to 34,353 kg in July 2013 compared to the 54,386 kg in July 2012. Figures for the period till August 15 are still gloomier. DRC production came down to 6,292 kg during this month compared to the 15,280 kg during the same period last year.

Rubber Board figures for the of June and July show contrasting pictures. Latex production came down to 38,000 tonnes in June this year against last June's 62,000 tonnes. Figures for July were 68,000 tonnes and 46,000 tonnes respectively for 2012 and 2013.

The contrast between the two years was a sharp departure from the figures for the previous month of May when latex production was 58,000 and 59,000 tonnes respectively for 2012 and 2013.

Director of Kundamkuzhi RPS in Kasaragod district P.V. Madhusoodanan said the society produced just one tonne of DRC during the months of June, July and August this year against the nine tonnes of DRC during the same months last year.

The sharp drop in rubber production has increased the anxiety of manufacturers. Rajiv Budhraj, director general of Automotive Tyre Manufacturers' Association, said in an e-mail on Tuesday that natural rubber availability continued to be "precarious for rubber consuming interests in the country."

The significant drop in rubber production is unparalleled in recent times and dwindling and uncertain availability of domestic stock had affected procurement and production planning for the tyre and non-tyre sectors, he said.

The view was echoed by Niraj Thakkar, president of All India Rubber Industries' Association, who said that the small-scale sector had been gravely hurt by the natural rubber supply crunch. A tight squeeze in supplies had left operations in rubber-based small and medium enterprises in disarray, he said in an e-mail.

Meanwhile, rubber farms have also been hit by abnormal leaf fall because the near-incessant rains over two months prevented farmers from taking up prophylactic activities to prevent its spread. The problem is caused by fungus infection during extended wet weather and extreme humid conditions.

Kerala received 2,207.8 mm of rain during the current season against the long period average of 1,676 mm, a departure of 32 per cent.

Fisheries meet

Fisheries experts from eight nations converged in Kochi to standardise methods for assessing the genetic stock structure of Indian mackerel at an international workshop organised as part of the Bay of Bengal Large Marine Ecosystem (BOBLME) project.

The National Bureau of Fish Genetic Resources, Lucknow, is hosting the workshop.

Panel formed to oversee proper utilisation of Krishna water

A special committee has been formed with the officials of the allied government departments as its members to oversee proper utilisation of Krishna water being released from the Palair reservoir into the canals under the Nagarjuna Sagar Project (NSP) left canal system in the district.

A decision to this effect was taken at a meeting held under the aegis of Collector I. Srinivas Sri Naresh to review the implementation of AP Water, Land and Trees Act-2002 (WALTA Act) here on Monday.

The committee will comprise the Superintending Engineer, NSP, Tekulapalli Circle, Project Director, District Water Management Agency, Deputy Director, Ground Water Department, and Executive Engineer, Irrigation Department.

According to official sources, the Collector has asked the officials concerned to ensure proper filling of the storage tanks to improve the ground water table with a futuristic perspective.

He emphasised the need for judicious use of Krishna waters to fully meet the irrigation needs of the ayacutdars under the second zone of the NSP left canal system as well as the farmers dependent on borewell irrigation in the district.

Cultivation area expected to increase in Medak

The cultivation area in Medak district is expected to increase considerably following the bountiful rainfall this year.

Paddy, jowar, bajra, maize, green gram, black gram, red gram, sunflower, cotton and other crops are being sown and the farming community has been busy with agricultural activities.

As on August 19, paddy was sown in 71,676 hectares covering about 95 per cent of the normal sowing area and the officials are expecting that it may touch 81,000 hectares, witnessed during 2010 kharif.

Sowing of crops like red gram (110 per cent) maize (129), cotton (149) and soyabean (390) have crossed the officials' expectations. Expecting good yield, the farmers went from usual sowing of 4,600 hectares to 18,270 hectares, which was more than double the area- 7,700 hectares- that was cultivated during the last kharif.

hindustantimes

Weather

Chennai

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Chennai - INDIA

Today's Weather

Wednesday, Aug 21

Max | Min

34° | 26°

Partly Cloudy

Rain: 0 Sunrise: 05:57

Humidity: 74 Sunset: 06:27

Wind: normal Barometer: 1006

Tomorrow's Forecast

Thursday, Aug 22

Max | Min

34° | 27°

Cloudy

Extended Forecast for a week

Friday Aug 23	Saturday Aug 24	Sunday Aug 25	Monday Aug 26	Tuesday Aug 27
34° 27°	33° 27°	33° 27°	33° 28°	33° 28°
Cloudy	Sunny	Cloudy	Overcast	Overcast

Airport Weather

Chennai

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Chennai

Rain: 0 Sunrise: 05:57

Humidity: 74 Sunset: 06:27

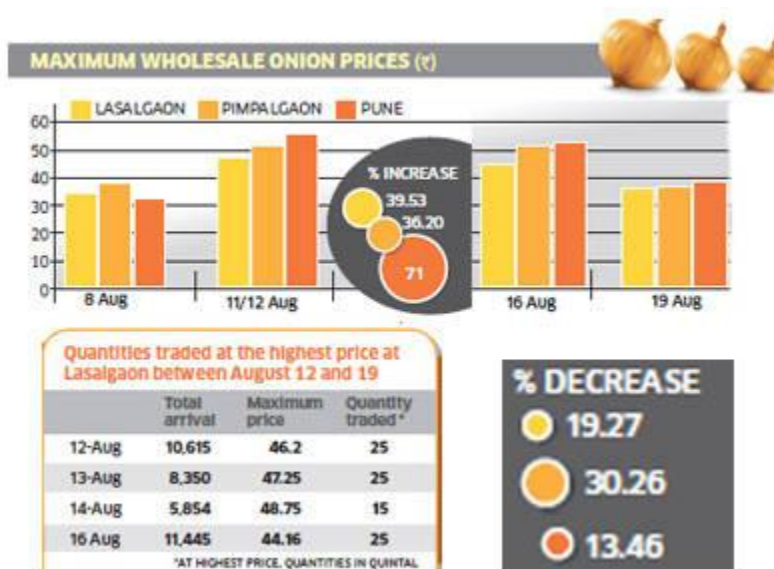
Wind: normal Barometer: 1006

THE ECONOMIC TIMES

Know your 'onions': Who let the price rise

Onion prices have started cooling down again from past two days. But the traders have already made a few crores. Even though drought of last year and heavy rains in some states this year have been blamed for increase in onion prices, trader insiders say, the hike was, as usual, artificial, managed by the traders. The state government claimed that it did not find much stocks with traders during its inspections. However, the sources say that these days, traders keep stocks of one or two days only and increase the prices continuously.

The increase in prices of Rs 10-15/kg was seen in a day, despite good arrivals. Again an increase in onion prices was seen when the wholesale markets opened at Lasalgaon, Pimpalgaon and Pune after being closed between August 9 and August 11. On August 14, the government decides to impose MEP after widespread reports about imports and the prices crashed by 20-30%.



How Lasalgaon/ Pimpalgaon traders 'control' onion prices?

Maharashtra once accounted for about 80% of the onion production in the country.

Its share in the country's onion production has gradually reduced as onion production in other states like Bihar and Madhya Pradesh has increased consistently. Yet, Lasalgaon, the biggest

wholesale market of onion in Asia, controls the onion prices in the country Trade sources say that traders from Lasalgaon keep in touch with traders in other major markets and 'fix' the rates as the market opens. The maximum price is raised, usually only for one tractor, which contains 25 quintal onions, which pulls up the overall onion prices.



THE TIMES OF INDIA

Onion story not that much of a tearjerker

CHANDIGARH: Onion prices have finally started coming down following an increase in supply, available for Rs 50 per kg in Sector 26 market around Rs 20 lower than last Wednesday's rate.

According to market watchers, the rates had begun to decrease a week back as the supply from Maharashtra and Rajasthan gained pace. However, the vegetable was still being sold for Rs 55 per kg to Rs 60 per kg within sectors. A supply squeeze coupled with crop damage had hiked the prices of the tuber earlier this month. But the worst of the times for the consumer were probably over.

G R Pillai, assistant secretary, Chandigarh Market Committee, Sector 26, said, "The supply is slowly returning to normal and prices have started falling down. Presently, onions of two varieties are available." Pillai added that the rates would come down in the coming weeks when arrivals would further increase. "The increase in supply is likely to stabilize the market and bring in some consistency. After several weeks of riding the high tide, onion prices are expected to significantly drop in the coming days pointing to improved arrivals," Pillai said. Vegetable vendors too were optimistic about prices going south.

Ajay, a vendor at Sector 26 vegetable market, said, "Chances of rates continuing to fall in the coming days are high. Sale of big onion had dropped because of the prices during the last few days. Now, there is going to be a flood of onions in the market." The scenario would boost the consumers grappling with soaring vegetable prices. Radhika, a resident of Sector 11, said, "The downfall has added a bit of relief. I am hoping it will remain consistent for a while."

Rain brings some respite

LUDHIANA: A brief spell of rain on Tuesday, though provided some respite, created little difference to the humidity level.

In the morning, the Met department recorded 95% humidity which was 10% higher than normal. But in the afternoon, rains in few parts of the city brought down the humidity level to 60%. Though it was a cloudy day, areas, including Dugri, old city and Jamalpur saw brief spells of rain.

Troubled by humid conditions, residents wished more rain. Paramjeet Gill, a resident from Civil Lines said, "I was sweating heavily in the morning. It was very irritating to work in these humid conditions."

The temperature on Tuesday stood at 35.2A°C.

"Humidity will fall in the coming days as no rain is expected till Friday. There might be some drizzle in parts, but not heavy rains," said KK Gill, assistant agro meteorologist, Punjab Agricultural University.

According to Met forecast, the humidity level will stay between 80% to 85% from August 21 to August 24. But it might decreased on August 25.

TNAU releases new variety of mushroom

COIMBATORE: The Mushroom Research And Training Centre of the Tamil Nadu Agricultural university recently released a new and improved variety of mushroom called Tricholoma Giganteum. The new variety is expected to be a boon for the cultivators in the region.

Professor-in-charge of the centre V Prakasam said the new variety will be received enthusiastically by the customers as well.

"'APK 2', the variety being currently cultivated, released a few years ago had faced some problems. The existing variety is fibrous which take longer hours to cook and taste like radish. This new variety will overcome both these limitations," he said. There are predominantly two varieties of mushrooms, oyster and milky. This is the milky mushroom which is costlier and in

demand.

The new variety can be cooked in around 30 minutes, while the earlier took hours. It is because this is less fibrous than the earlier one. This has a shelf life of 5-6 days. Moreover, the taste of the new variety will be appealing, he said.

The new variety was found in the forest areas near Thondamuthur in 2001 by K Anandh, who was then a research scholar at the training centre.

Anandh, who was on a research project to find an edible mushroom variety for commercial cultivation, stumbled upon this variety after much effort.

"We worked hard during the project," remembers Anandh, who now serves as the district forest officer of Rajouri forest division in Jammu and Kashmir. He used to frequent the forests in Kerala and Tamil Nadu collecting wild species and later testing them in the labs. It took a few months to confirm whether it was edible. Later, after he left the department other researchers took up the project.

Farmers say that mushrooms are grown as a side crop among others as a source of additional income. "Recently the prices of mushroom has gone up," said P Kandasamy, general secretary of a farmers' association.

Prakasam is confident that this variety will be received well. This was checked in farm lands of some farmers who gave a positive feedback. "The initial response has been encouraging. We hope it will be a profitable venture for the farmers," he added.



SOWING FOR MAIZE, SOYABEAN CROPS COMPLETE IN STATE

Sowing for maize and soyabean crops have been completed by the farmers in Chhattisgarh during the ongoing Kharif season, informed an official press release issued here on Tuesday.

Overall , sowing had been completed in an estimated 44 lakh hectares for the Kharif season which is 92 per cent of the proposed cropping area. It had been proposed to carry out sowing in 48.25 lakh hectares in the current Kharif season wherein paddy had been sown in 95 per cent of the area. As regards other crops, pulses had been sown in 69 per cent of the area while oilseeds in 73 per cent.

Paddy had already been sown in an estimated 35 lakh hectares against the targetted 36.58 lakh hectares during the current Kharif season while maize had been sown in 2.26 lakh hectares against the proposed target of 2.25 lakh hectares. This apart, soyabean had been sown in the targetted 1,58 lakh hectares. The pulses crops had been down in 2.59 lakh hectares against a target of 3.75 lakh hectares in which 'Arhar' had been sown in 1.25 lakh hectares and Urad in 1.16 lakh hectares.

The sowing for vegetable and crops with fibre had been carried out in 91 per cent of the area which is 1.28 lakh hectares against the proposed target of 1.40 lakh hectares.

Business Standard

Soya crop loss feared as MP receives excess rainfall

Vikram Singh, a marginal farmer in Amjhara village near Bhopal fears to lose almost entire soya crop this year. Another spell of incessant rain for the last two days has water-logged his soya fields. He says there is a direct damaged to the roots of soya plants.

Like Vikram many farmers are likely to suffer this year due to heavy rains in Jabalpur, Hoshangabad, Harda, Ujjain and Raisen districts. Authorities, though admit crop losses across the state, say actual crop loss picture will come up later.

Weather department has said the rains will continue for another two days there by raising more chances of further damage across the state. "State received a total of 103 cm rains this year against 67 cm in normal condition. Even in good weather condition state receives 99 cm of rains. Districts like Hoshangabad, Bhopal, Betul, Harda, Jabalapur, Balaghat, Mandla, Dindori has received excessrainfall this year," D P Dubey, director Indian Meteorological department Bhopal said.

Soybean Processors Association of India (Sopa) has also estimated 5-7 pre cent losses to the crop but has expected the country to mitigate the losses since acreage has gone up. This year India has sown the crop on an area of 12.2 million hectare of which 6.5 million hectare is in Madhya Pradesh.

Coriander dips by 2.6% on weak demand

Higher supplies from producing regions also influenced prices



Coriander prices fell by 2.63% to Rs 5,698 per quintal in futures trade today as speculators trimmed positions, taking negative cues from spot market on weak demand.

Higher supplies from producing regions also put pressure on coriander.

At the National Commodity and Derivative Exchange, coriander for delivery in October month dipped by Rs 154, or 2.63% to Rs 5,698 per quintal with an open interest of 7,980 lots.

In a similar fashion, the spice for delivery in September moved down by Rs 149, or 2.60% to Rs 5,590 per quintal in 22,590 lots.

Market analysts said besides weak demand in the spot market, higher supplies from producing regions mainly influenced coriander prices at futures trade.

Crude palm oil down 0.2% on subdued demand

Crude palm oil for delivery in September edged lower by 0.17%



Crude palm oil prices slide by 0.26% to Rs 530.50 per 10 kg in futures trading today as speculators trimmed their positions, tracking a weak trend at spot market on subdued demand.

At the MultiCommodity Exchange, crude palm oil for delivery in August declined by Rs 1.40, or 0.26%, to Rs 530.50 per 10 kg in business turnover of 505 lots.

Likewise, the oil for delivery in September edged lower by 90 paise, or 0.17%, to Rs 525.60 per 10 kg in 420 lots.

Market analysts said speculators trimmed their positions, tracking a weak trend at spot market on subdued demand mainly influenced crude palm oil prices at futures trade.

Chana down 0.6% on increased supply

Chana for delivery in September edged lower by 0.43%



Chana prices fell by Rs 18 to Rs 2,895 per quintal in futures trading today as speculators offloaded their positions, driven by a weak demand in the spot market against increased supplies from producing region.

At the National Commodity and Derivatives Exchange, chana for delivery in September month fell by Rs 18, or 0.62% to Rs 2895 per quintal with an open interest of 153480 lots.

Similarly, chana for delivery in September edged lower by Rs 13, or 0.43% to Rs 2981 per quintal in 72720 lots.

Analysts said speculators offloaded their positions on the back of weak demand in the spot market against increased supplies from producing region mainly kept pressure on chana prices at futures trade.

Castor seed fell by 1.5% on selling pressure

Marketmen said a weakening tend in spot market advised speculators to book-profit at existing higher levels



Castor seed prices declined by Rs.53 to Rs.3,396 per quintal in future trade today due to profit-booking driven by weak spot market demand.

Marketmen said a weakening tend in spot market advised speculators to book-profit at existing higher levels.

At the National Commodity and Derivatives Exchange, castorseed prices for September contract lost Rs.53, or 1.54% to Rs.3,396 per quintal, with an open interest of 1,70,670 lots.

Near October contract also slipped by Rs.52, or 1.47% to Rs.3,481 per quintal, having an open interest of 34,570 lots.

Cardamom down by 0.6% on sluggish demand

Adequate stocks in the physical market following increased arrivals from producing regions also put pressure on cardamom



Cardamom prices fell by 0.62% to Rs 791.80 per kg in futures trade today as speculators reduced their holdings, triggered by sluggish demand in the spot market.

Adequate stocks in the physical market following increased arrivals from producing regions also put pressure on cardamom.

At the Multi Commodity Exchange, cardamom for delivery in October month declined by Rs 4.90, or 0.62% to Rs 791.80 per kg in business turnover of 137 lots.

Similarly, the spice for delivery in September traded marginally lower by 50 paise, or 0.07% to Rs 767,30 per kg in 636 lots.

Market analysts said speculators reduced their holdings on the back of sluggish demand in the spot market against adequate stocks position mainly put pressure on cardamom prices at futures trade.

THE HINDU Business Line

States should not set high cane prices



High cane prices will not benefit farmers.

After the partial decontrol of the sugar industry in April 2013, the time has come for State governments to reckon with sugarcane prices.

India's sugar industry, second only to Brazil, is rightly concerned about the methodology of determining input costs in the 2013-14 season (September-October). Will the decision be driven by politics or the market, given that it's an election year?

Generally, moving from control to decontrol should "add" value to growers and the industry. Despite the abolition of levies and the freedom to sell without being bound by the monthly release mechanism, there is more regression than progress in the sugar sector. Unless raw material price is fixed rationally, the freedom to sell in the open market will not be remunerative. In 2012-13, the Uttar Pradesh-based mills suffered the greatest damage due to an irrational State Advisory Price (SAP) fixed by the State government. It was fixed at Rs 280/quintal; in comparison, it was Rs 210-250 in Maharashtra, with the all-India average "cost" being Rs 180 and FRP (fair remunerative price) of Rs 210 calculated by the Commission for Agricultural Costs and Prices.

If such a mismatch is not set right, the entire process of reform and change may be negated. Mills cannot afford the luxury of a "sugar security bill" where the sale price continues to be less than the inherent cost of production.

They have no means of extended deficit-financing, year after year, akin to what is proposed for the Food Security Bill.

pricing principle

The cost of each commodity generally equals input expenses (seeds, labour, fertilisers, energy plus imputed rental value of land, less income from other collaterals (molasses, bagasse, press mud) and reasonable profit. For sugarcane, this principle is followed in the breach. In the liberalised scenario, State governments are expected to determine the SAP of sugarcane rationally, instead of prioritising vote-bank politics.

Agriculture Minister Sharad Pawar has indicated sugar production of about 25 million tonnes (mt) in 2013-14, against the industry's estimates of 23.7 mt. India will have "carry in" (inventory) of about 9 mts in October 2013 .

Against a total availability of 34 mt, local consumption is 22-23 mt, indicating a surplus of about 11-12 mt. An ample monsoon presages well for 2014-15.

The NCDEX futures are flat for the next six months. Worldwide supply exceeds demand by about 10 mt. The market price of sugar in 2013-14 and even in 2014-15 is projected to be bearish, both domestically and internationally.

Exports are feasible if Indian sugarcane prices are rationally determined, so that sugar is not priced out of the export market. Indian exports are unviable even after an 18 per cent depreciation of the rupee in the last three months. (Incidentally, the Brazilian currency is also down by about 20 per cent). This shows a massive divergence in domestic and overseas values and, as a result, farmers' arrears are bound to build up. By an act passed on May 10, 2013, Karnataka became the first State to set up a pricing and supplies board — the Karnataka Sugarcane Pricing and Supplies Board. It consists of about 15 members, comprising five representatives each of farmers, industry and the Government to balance the interests of all stakeholders.

The Minister of Sugar/Agriculture is chairman. Two major responsibilities of this board are to decide the price of sugarcane and ensure payments by mills to farmers within 14 days of delivery. Will this Board be free from political influences?

Revenue sharing

Maharashtra is also deliberating upon a similar model with a provision for revenue-sharing between farmers and the industry. Two types of revenue-sharing models are under consideration: the first with a 70:30 ratio (suggested by the Rangarajan Committee) where only sugar is produced, and the second with a 75:25 ratio where sugar, ethanol, molasses, bagasse, press mud, ethanol, and cogeneration are also involved. The sharing of revenue is consistent with accepted international practice.

Taking Maharashtra's average sugarcane price of Rs 230/quintal in 2012-13 under the proposed configuration, upfront payment — 75 per cent — to farmers will be Rs173/quintal . The balance 25 per cent will be paid after the annual profitability of the mill is determined.

India needs to export at least 3-4 mt to halt depression in the domestic market. Internationally, 100-150 ICUMSA (International Commission for Uniform Methods of Sugar Analysis) is at \$470 which is equivalent to Rs 200/quintal of cane. There is no case for pricing above Rs 210-220/quintal for sugarcane with 9.5-10 per cent recovery rate.

If UP fails to undertake course correction in sync with other States, and keeps itself locked at SAP of Rs 280 or effects upward revision for 2013-14 while domestic values remain range-bound at Rs 30-33/kg, then we may have to write the financial obituary of many mills in that state.

Oilseeds body to assess crop through satellite mapping

To improve crop estimation forecasts, a 'hybrid model', which combines satellite-based data with extensive ground level survey and crop cutting experiment (CCE) will be adopted.

Efforts are also being made to further refine the procedure to increase accuracy of the survey and establish knowledge data bank for the country by the Indian Oilseeds & Produce Export Promotion Council (IOPEPC) under the Union Ministry of Commerce.

The IOPEPC, with the assistance of Apeda, had commissioned satellite-based survey for the groundnut crop.

The findings would be unveiled in the upcoming annual trade meet during October 18-20 in Hyderabad.

In addition, presentations and views by national and international experts on oilseeds and oils scenario and estimations of groundnut and sesame seed crop during kharif 2013 would be presented, said Rajesh Bheda, Chairman, IOPEPC, in a press release.

The groundnut production contributes to about 70 per cent of total production and in order to chalk out the export strategies of groundnut, it becomes important for the exporters to assess the quantity and quality of crop size in India.

southern states

Bheda said that over the last few years the oilseeds and oils industry, particularly the groundnut processing industry, has seen a huge development in southern India.

The event expects good participation from the industry.

The queries of member exporters relating to export of groundnuts and groundnut products to EU and non-EU countries would also be answered by the experts.

A souvenir, which acts as a ready reckoner for all the stakeholders in expanding business opportunities, would be released at the meet.

Has tech fatigue hit rice research?

Has technology fatigue hit rice research in India? Are we failing in producing varieties that can win hearts of farmers and people?

The experience of the last two decades shows that we have failed in delivering the blockbuster rice varieties, said a senior agricultural scientist .

While the country produced some 1,000 varieties in the last few decades, only handful of varieties that were developed before 1995 dominate the scene, Dr Aldas Janaiah, Head (Agri Business Management) of Acharya N G Ranga Agricultural University, said. “About 30 varieties cover two-thirds of paddy area in the country. Five varieties developed by ANGRAU cover 15-20 per cent of the area. The impact of varieties developed after 1995 is very less,” he said, wondering whether it was a sign of technology fatigue.

He was addressing the day-long CII conference on the role of technology in sustainable agriculture here on Tuesday.

The country grew paddy on 44 million hectares, or 22 per cent of the cropped area.

Janaiah said that drip irrigation in paddy would become a reality in years to come. ANGRAU Vice-Chancellor A. Padma Raju said that there was a 95 per cent dependence on chemical fertilisers and increased usage of the same had harmed the soil’s nutrient quotient.

There was a need to increase the usage of bio fertilizers such as zinc soluble bacteria and phosphorous soluble bacteria.

Bayer Crop Science Country Head Satish Patil, who represented ABLE-AG (Association of Biotechnology-Led Enterprises-Agriculture Group), said the world would need to double food production by 2030 to meet the demand.

India would have to double the production by 2020.

Cotton output seen higher by 5% next season

Cotton production for the new season starting October is likely to be higher about five per cent than the current season at 372 lakh bales (of 170 kg), according to the Cotton Association of India.

In a statement releasing the first estimate of the cotton crop, the association said that the higher production would be despite the acreage remaining unchanged. According to the Cotton Advisory Board, on which farmers, Government officials, textiles industry, traders and exporters are representatives, area under cotton this season was 116.14 lakh hectares, down 5 lakh hectares from last season.

“Timely rains will result in higher yields. Gujarat has seen over 10 per cent rise in acreage on good monsoon this year compared to last year, when drought conditions affected plantings,” the association said.

Meanwhile, the association has put the current season’s production at 355.75 lakh bales against a record 373.25 lakh bales in 2011-12.

A balance sheet drawn by the association showed surplus stocks at 140.96 lakh bales.

Despite this projection, cotton prices are near a three-year high of Rs 47,000-47,500 a candy (of 356 kg) for Shankar-6, the variety that is in demand for exports. Prices are surging since inventories are low with spinning mills.

Kerala food safety body orders to destroy 850 tonnes pepper

The Commissioner of Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI), Thiruvananthapuram, has ordered destruction of 93 lots i.e., an estimated 850 tonnes of black pepper, which were found to be adulterated with mineral oil, immediately following statutory proceedings in consultation with the Spices Board.

Of the 104 lots which were analysed at the Spices Board mineral oil was not in 11 lots, said an FSSAI order No. A-3751/12/CFS dated 7-8.2013. These 11 lots, the order said, “shall be clearly identified and separated from the present location and handed over to the custodians for shifting to other warehouses”.

Spot rubber saps further

Spot rubber declined further on Tuesday.

According to sources, the market is expected to reduce the wide gap between the local and the global rates in the coming weeks. Major manufacturers, continued to remain on sidelines as the prices retreated further amidst low volumes. There were no quantity sellers on any grade since it may take a couple of weeks to show an improvement in arrivals following the resumption of tapping.

Sheet rubber weakened to Rs 184 from Rs 185 and Rs 186 a kg respectively, according to traders and the Rubber Board.

September futures dropped to Rs 175.52 (Rs 177.08) while the October futures improved to Rs 170.36 (Rs 169.49), November to Rs 167.51 (Rs 167.07) and December to Rs 168.45 (Rs 168.04) for RSS 4 on the National Multi Commodity Exchange.

RSS 3 (spot) inched up to Rs 162.12 (Rs 162.03) at Bangkok. August futures closed at ₹250.5 (Rs 162.93) from ₹260.5 on the Tokyo Commodity Exchange.

Spot rubber rates (Rs/kg): RSS-4: 184 (185); RSS-5: 182 (183); Ungraded: 173 (174); ISNR 20: 170 (170) and Latex 60 per cent: 161 (162.50).

Mumbai buyers boycott Kerala's Vazhakulam pineapple



While fruit merchants in Mumbai have decided to boycott the GI-tagged Vazhakulam pineapple, the incessant monsoon rains have hit the supply of the speciality fruit from Kerala, pushing up the prices.

Mumbai's Fruits and Vegetable Merchants Association has decided not to accept any Vazhakulam pineapple cargo for one week in protest against the 'artificial' jacking up of the

prices by pineapple dealers in Kerala. They have alleged that the dealers are hoarding the produce with a view to securing higher prices.

However, the Vazhakulam Pineapple Merchants Association denies the allegation. "There is no question of hoarding, but there is a drastic fall in the supply after the Ramzan season," Baby John, President of the association, told *Business Line*. "The demand for the Vazhakulam variety has been going up in and outside Kerala and hence the price has also been on the rise."

He said that pineapple has a shorter shelf life and that farmers and dealers always try to sell off their produce as early as possible. "If the Mumbai merchants know the technology to increase the shelf life and thus hoard the fruits to cash in on the price rise, our association is ready to pay them for the technology," Baby John quipped.

FALL IN SUPPLY

Baby John said that there has been a one-third shortfall in the production this season because of the heavy and incessant rains. "The combined effect of a very hot summer followed by the heavy rains has led to the decaying of plants and fruits – and fungus infection has been widespread," he said. Because of the supply shortfall, prices have shot up.

On Thursday, the Green Grade was quoted at Rs 32 a kg, Special Green Grade Rs 35 and Ripe (which is sold in the Kerala market) Rs 45." Mumbai merchants have complained that prices have been jacked up by more than 100 per cent by Kerala dealers. To force the dealers to bring down the prices, truckloads of pineapple sent to Mumbai from Kerala are not being downloaded.

FARMERS unfazed

"The Mumbai boycott is not going to hit farmers and dealers at all," John claimed. "In fact, we are happy about their boycott as we can sell the produce in the local market at higher prices."

He said that the upcoming Onam season would further increase the demand, and thus the price of pineapple.

The Vazhakulam pineapple used to be grown in a village called Vazhakulam, some 40 km from Kochi. As the fruit gained popularity, farmers spread out to other parts of the State and leased out land to cultivate the fruit.

After Vazhakulam received the GI (geographic indication) tag, pineapple grown in the entire central Kerala region is now sold as Vazhakulam pineapple.

The place is now said to be the largest pineapple market in India.

PEC invites bids for import of 3 lakh tonne onions

State-owned trading entity, PEC Ltd, has invited bids to empanel global suppliers for importing three lakh tonne of onions.

This is even as prices of the commodity have started softening in wholesale markets across the country.

PEC has come out with a tender on Monday in this regard and the last date for submitting the expression of interest is August 26.

The move is part of the Government's initiative to ensure adequate supplies of the bulb to cool down the prices, which had hit a high of Rs 80-100 a kg in retail markets.

On Tuesday, the average or modal price in Delhi stood at Rs 3,400 a quintal, same as on Monday.

However, the arrivals were lower at around 10,000 quintals against Monday's arrivals of 15,450 quintals.

In Bangalore, the average price on Tuesday was up by Rs 100 a quintal to Rs 3,400, while in Pune, onion traded higher by Rs 600 a quintal at Rs 3,500 over Monday's price.

India exported 6.39 lakh tonnes during the April-July period of this financial year, compared with 6.94 lakh tonnes in the the corresponding period last year.

Onion production stood at 16.6 million tonnes in 2012-13, lower than last year.



Rise in futures, weak arrivals and higher demand perked up chana (kanta) prices in Indore mandis on Tuesday by Rs 100.

Chana (desi) ruled at Rs 2,900, chana (mausmi) at Rs 3,000-3,300, chana (vishal) and Kabuli Bitki ruled at Rs 2,700-2,800, while chana (kattu) ruled at Rs 2,800-2,900.

Chana prices have been witnessing an uptrend on renewed buying support for the past few days from the millers.

On account of heavy rains in the State over the past one month, demand for chana and other pulse seeds had declined.

However, with weather becoming clear, demand in chana and other pulse seeds had increased leading to a sharp rise in chana, said Sanjay Agrawal, a local chana trader.

With further rise in demand and sharp rise in dollar against the rupee, chana prices in the coming days may gain Rs 300-400.

Rise in spot chana has also lifted its dal in the past one week by Rs 50 with chana dal (average) being quoted at Rs 3,600-3,625, chana dal (medium) at Rs 3,700-3,725, while chana dal (bold) ruled at Rs 4,000-4,025.

Weak arrival and rise in demand have also lifted dollar chana (chickpea) by Rs 200 to Rs 3,400-4,800 on subdued demand and buying support.

Arrival of dollar chana in Madhya Pradesh was recorded at Rs 13,000-14,000 bags.

Similarly improved export demand also perked up dollar chana in container by about Rs 400 in the past one week.

On Tuesday, dollar chana (42/44 count) in container ruled at Rs 5,600-5,625, 44/46 count at Rs 5,400-25, 46/48 count at Rs 5,200-25, while dollar chana (58/60 count) ruled at Rs 3,750-75 and 60/62 count ruled at Rs 3,625-50 a quintal respectively.

Arrival of dollar chana in Indore mandis was recorded at 4,000 bags.

Upcountry buying still eludes sugar market



Sugar prices on the spot market ruled steady with minor fluctuations based on quality on Tuesday.

The Bombay Sugar Merchants Association was closed. The Vashi wholesale market observed holiday for Rakha Bandhan after 1 p.m., hence, activities were subdued.

A wholesaler said that there was limited loading and unloading activities until noon but prices remained unchanged at all levels. "Upcountry buying is still missing at mill level as prices in other producing centres ruled at par with Maharashtra," he said.

In the domestic futures market, prices were volatile due to ample supply from producers.

Meanwhile, due to festival, arrivals in the Vashi market were 35-40 truckloads (each 100 bags), while local dispatches were merely 15-20 trucks. On Monday evening, 15-16 mills offered tenders and sold about 78,000-80,000 bags at Rs 2,910-3,000 (Rs 2,910-3,000) for S-grade and Rs 3,010-3,110 (Rs 3,010-3,110) for M-grade.

On the National Commodities and Derivatives Exchange, sugar September futures were down by Rs 5 to Rs 3,021 (Rs 3,027), October was up by Re 1 to Rs 3,031 (Rs 3,030) and November was higher by Rs 25 to Rs 3,047 (Rs 3,022).

Nominal spot rates were: S-grade Rs 3,040-3,150 (Rs 3,044-3,146) and M-grade Rs 3,185-3,355 (Rs 3,180-3,352).

Naka delivery rates were: S-grade Rs 3,005-3,060 (Rs 3,005-3,060) and M-grade Rs 3,120-3,210 (Rs 3,120-3,210).

No turmeric sale in Erode till Thursday



The Erode Turmeric Merchants Association declared a three-day holiday for the turmeric markets at Erode from Tuesday to Thursday in connection with the Raksha Bandan, Aavani Avittam and the conduct of the annual general body meeting of the association.

But the Regulated Market Committee (RMC) conducted the turmeric auction on Tuesday.

Mani, Superintendent of the RMC, said, "We are not aware of the holiday declared by the Association till Monday evening.

Despite low arrival, the response at the sale was good, he said.

Some seven traders attended the sale.

Because of the arrival of medium variety turmeric for sale, the price of the finger and root varieties of yellow spice decreased.

But 80 per cent of the arrived stocks were sold.

Still traders said that no upcountry order had been received by them and during the three day holiday period if they receive any urgent order, they will dispatch from their stocks.

At the RMC, the finger variety fetched Rs 4,889-5,699, the root variety Rs 4,619-5,299.

Of the 205 bags that arrived, 174 were sold.

Wheat futures could rule sideways next few days



The wheat futures market is likely to rule sideways, while dera and flour prices in physical market may rule flat over the next few days, said trade experts.

Wheat futures witnessed a mixed trend on Tuesday.

On the National Commodity and Derivatives Exchange, wheat for September contracts dropped by Re 1 and traded at Rs 1,583 a quintal with an open interest of 4,850 lots.

The grain had touched a high at Rs 1,586 earlier in the day. September contracts have some support at Rs 1,580 while resistance at Rs 1,590.

October contracts improved by Rs 2 and traded at Rs 1,590.

In the spot market, wheat prices dropped by Rs 2.5 and traded at Rs 1,485.

Fiat to destroy 850 t in warehouses boosts pepper



The upsurge continued in pepper futures prices on tight supply amid strong domestic demand. Reports that the entire quantity of pepper locked up by the Food Safety authorities in the Kerala warehouses would be destroyed have created a panic in the upcountry markets.

These factors coupled with strong domestic demand amid tight availability have pushed the prices further up.

On the spot, seven tonnes pepper arrived from the plains and that were traded at Rs 403 a kg. September and October contracts on the NMCE soared by Rs 160 and Rs 1,082 a quintal respectively to Rs 44,200 and Rs 44,600.

Total turnover dropped by two tonnes to 22 tonnes.

Total open interest slipped by two tonnes to 37 tonnes. There was said to be no trading on the IPSTA platform, they said. Spot prices remained unchanged at Rs 40,300 (ungarbled) and Rs 42,300 (garbled) on limited activities. Indian parity in the international market slipped to \$6,925 a tonne (c&f) Europe at \$7,175 a tonne (c&f) US, despite increase in futures due to weakening of the rupee.

Overseas trend

In the international market, Brazil and Indonesia have become active.

According to the Vietnam Pepper Association (VPA), Vietnam pepper output for this year is estimated at 1,00,000-1,10,000 tonnes.

The country has exported 25,000 tonnes in the first quarter.

It is expected that Lampung (Indonesia) would have around 25,000-30,000 tonnes black pepper, if the projected 30-40 per cent shortfall in this year's crop is turned out to be true.

Pepper markets remain steady/firm. Vietnam has increased offers but levels are unchanged.

According to the market experts, a sideways movement is likely to be witnessed in the wheat futures market in the coming days.

In the physical market, lukewarm trading pulled dara wheat prices marginally down by Rs 5 and sold at Rs 1,470-1,475.

Around 1,000 bags arrived and were directly offloaded at the mills. Mill delivery was at Rs 1,470 while delivery at the chakki was at Rs 1,475.

On the other hand, desi wheat variety remained unchanged and went for Rs 2,600-2,650.

Ample stocks coupled with reduced off-take pulled dara wheat marginally down, said Satish Kumar, a wheat trader.

Domestic demand is unlikely to improve, but wheat prices may not go further down from here and may continue to rule around current levels for the next few days, he added.

Flour Prices

Despite a fall in wheat, flour continued to rule flat at Rs 1,700. Similarly, Chokar ruled flat at Rs 1,150.

Lady's finger prices may drop further, says TN farm varsity

The Domestic and Export Market Intelligence Cell (Demic), which until recently advised farmers on sowing of cash crops, has started to share its findings on vegetable crops such as bhendi (okra) and brinjal (eggplant) as well.

Demic experts foresee the price of okra to rule between Rs 20 and Rs 25 a kg around October (at harvest).

Advising farmers to take up their sowing decisions and grow popular varieties or hybrids of bhendi, the farm varsity experts said that the severe drought in Tamil Nadu, Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh during 2013 pushed the price of this vegetable to Rs 32.

"The present rate is, however, marginally lower at Rs 25-30. Owing to the arrivals from the second week of September till end-October (of the crop sown in June – Adi Pattam), prices are

expected to further fall to Rs 20-25/kg,” the expert said, after analysing the price movement in the Ottanchatram and Coimbatore markets.

There has been a 25 per cent increase in the area under bhendi from 3.96 lakh hectare in 2006-07 to 4.98 lakh hectare in 2010-11. While the production increased by 42.1 per cent during this period to 57.84 lakh tonnes (40.70 lakh tonnes), the productivity increase was only 12.67 per cent, up from 10.3 tonne/hectare to 11.6 tonne/hectare.

Andhra Pradesh has topped in production, contributing to 20.5 per cent of the total, followed by West Bengal at 14.9 per cent (8.62 lakh tonne). Bhendi has been grown on 6,229 hectares in Tamil Nadu in 2010-11.

Brinjal

This is another common commercially grown vegetable in India. It was raised on over 6 lakh hectares in 2011-12 and the production is said to be around 11.5 million tonnes.

India exports both fresh and chilled brinjal to over 30 countries. The major overseas markets for the Indian brinjals are Canada, Netherlands, Bahrain, the US, UK, France, Germany and Saudi Arabia among others.

The ‘Matti Gulla’ variety, grown in coastal Karnataka has the highest demand, both in the domestic and overseas markets. Its production is limited as its cultivation is confined to only a few villages of Udupi district.

In Dindigul district of Tamil Nadu, a local variety – ‘Kottapatti Kathirikai’ is popular, because of its special taste comparable with mutton. Kerala buyers and some in TN prefer this local variety.

Severe drought in the three southern States is said to have pushed the price of brinjal to a high of Rs 38/kg in 2012-13.

The crop sown during June-July is expected to arrive in the markets here in October. Farm varsity experts foresee a sharp fall in the price of brinjal to around Rs 15-17/kg in Ottanchatram market and around Rs 21- 24 /kg in Coimbatore market, during peak arrival period.
