



Agriculture Department/farmers

'Farmers should make use of incentives'

The Department of Agriculture has urged farmers to make use of concessions and incentives offered by the State Government.

In a statement here, S. Lakshmiraj, Joint Director of Agriculture, said that applying of fertilizers and weeding were proceeding without major impediments. There have been no reports of pest infection or diseases so far.

Farmers shall approach the Extension and Field level functionaries at the respective Block Agricultural Extension Centres.

Farmers grievances day meet

The regular farmers grievances day meeting will be held at the collectorate hall at 10 a.m. on July 19. The District Collector C. Manoharan will preside. An official press release called upon the farmers and their representatives to participate and get their grievances solved.

Farmers fear rise in production costs

Farmers who have been facing steep rise in input costs in the recent times, are worried as steep escalation in fertilizers and transportation stare at them. With Union Government making it clear on Thursday (ie July 11) that it would stick to the 'Rangarajan formula' for the pricing of domestically produced natural gas, the

agrarian community feels that it could give rise to the fertilizer prices especially the urea. from the coming year.

“The urea is presently distributed at a uniform selling price to farmers, with subsidy borne by the government. But the end prices at which it is sold can go up once the subsidy component scales up, ” said K.C.M. Balasubramaniam, a former agriculture economist.

Already, prices costs of many fertilizers like Di-Ammonium Phosphate (DAP) and Muriate of Potash (MoP) have gone up.

Farmers say that a bag of 50 kg of Di-Ammonium Phosphate that was costing a little over Rs. 500 three years back now costs available only at a rate of over Rs. 1,200.

Another major concern for farmers is the pressure from oil companies on the Government during the last few days to allow them to raise the prices of diesel further.

Diesel price

“Any raise on diesel price can make the direct transportation of agriculture produces from the farms to the markets costlier. This will eat into the already thin-profit margins of the farmers as prices of end produces cannot be raised correspondingly at the same level,” farmers say. The diesel price increase will affect farmers who depend on diesel-run generators as alternative power source during power cut periods for pumping water to irrigate crops.

“To help farmers, the government machinery should come out with good support prices for the produce that commensurate with the cost of production,” Mr. Balasubramaiaam said.

Booster dose for farmers



Agricultural experts were happy with two proposals announced in the State Budget on Friday. Chief Minister Siddaramaiah increased the ceiling on interest-free loans to farmers from the present Rs. 1 lakh to Rs. 2 lakh. He also announced that loans between Rs. 2 and Rs. 3 lakh would be charged a nominal interest rate of 1 per cent. Experts felt this would provide proper access to agricultural credit, an aspect that was a major challenge for the sector.

Though he did not present a separate agricultural budget like his predecessors in the Bharatiya Janata Party government, the eighth State Budget tabled by him had a series of new programmes for farmers with a total allocation of Rs. 6,281 crore for agriculture and allied sectors.

Agri prices commission

Concerned over the fall in prices of produce, he announced formation of an agricultural prices commission to determine the price for crops in a scientific manner. This commission will comprise farmers, agricultural experts and agricultural economists, he said.

He also announced the setting up of a website that provides prices in different markets and commodity exchange centres to help farmers compare prices.

He also increased the size of the revolving fund — that caters to a market intervention scheme during the crash in prices of crops — to Rs. 1,000 crore to ensure that the system of providing minimum support price does not sufferer from lack of funds.

He announced the launch of a scheme to bear the educational fee of wards of farmers and farm labourers in flood or drought-hit areas. He increased the size of the State Calamity Relief fund so that farmers can get better compensation for their losses. A separate calamity mitigation fund would also be set up in the Revenue Department to look into calamity relief operations, he said.

While the Rashtriya Krishi Vima Yojane would be implemented on a pilot basis in four districts to provide relief to farmers hit by natural calamities, rain gauges would be set up at all village panchayats to strengthen the weather-based crop insurance system.

The Chief Minister also announced a multi-disciplinary agricultural extension initiative under public-private partnership in agriculture and allied sectors to provide a one-stop solution for the problems of farmers.

Government to bear education expenses of wards of farmers and labourers in calamity-hit areas

Rain gauges to be set up at all village panchayats

Website to be launched to give details on prices in different markets

Multi-disciplinary agri extension system to come up under PPP model

Industry questions sops for farmers

Industry associations gave a cautious but mixed response to the Congress government's first budget.

Terming the proposals "insufficiently industry-friendly", Bangalore Chamber of Industry and Commerce said while some of them were welcome, some others disappointed them.

It also lambasted the plan for interest-free loans to farmers. "With interest-free loans to the farming sector, valuable financial resources of the State are being eroded in the guise of rationalisation," BCIC said in a press release.

BCIC President H.V. Harish said, "We welcome some of the new initiatives taken by the government to encourage growth and the focus on infrastructure but are concerned with the giveaways which would be a burden on the State's exchequer."

On the unchanged value added tax rate, it said it was widely expected that the two VAT rates would be reduced by 0.5 per cent, to 14 per cent and 5 per cent, from August 1 as promised by the then Finance Minister on the floor of the Assembly.

"This has been belied and will definitely affect future investments," its Taxes Committee Co-Chairman S. Venkataramani said.

According to P.V. Srinivas, chairman of the tax panel, the "fine print" on tax rules had to be seen, though administrative and procedural bottlenecks to tax statutes had been addressed.

The move to amend automatic cancellation of advance rulings / clarifications as modified by a later order or the commissioner, it said, is draconian.

The one per cent VAT on the sugar industry was unfair amidst a recessionary trend in the sector; outlays to the farm sector and public works department looked inadequate, it said.

According to the chamber's senior vice-president A.N. Chandramouli, "adequate thrust has not been given to the manufacturing sector, industrial estates and establishment of IT/BT parks. Overall, the budget is not very industry-friendly and does nothing to spur industry out of its present phase of sluggish growth."

R. Shivakumar, president of the Federation of Karnataka Chambers of Commerce & Industry, termed **Mr. Siddaramaiah's proposals positive and stimulative. However, the government must clarify how it will raise the resources needed to meet its populist schemes.**

The improved infrastructure in industrial estates, establishment of dairy and granite parks in Chamarajanagar, focussing on attracting direct investments from Japan, the U.S. and Germany, and the 'kara-samadhana' schemes, he said, were steps in the right direction.

B.P. Shashidhar, president of the Karnataka Small-Scale Industries Association, said small industry segment has escaped the Chief Minister's attention with meagre allocation at a time when it needed more financial support. This is in spite of the fact that the small-scale sector was next only to agriculture in generating jobs and economic contribution. However, the plan to set up investment promotion desks in Japan, Taiwan, the US and Germany, he said, would help to upgrade SSIs.

Rajeev Chandrasekhar, Rajya Sabha member, welcomed the move to construct elevated roads in Bangalore.

Budget disappointing, say farmers, industrialists

The State Budget presented by Chief Minister Siddaramaiah has disappointed both farmers and industrialists of the district, according to many people.

While farmers are complaining that the allocation for irrigation projects in the district is meagre, industrialists say that no projects have been announced for the district.

“With regard to Bijapur district, the budget is like a ‘janata darshan’, when it comes to irrigation projects, mainly those related to Krishna river basin,” Panchappa Kalburgi, president of the Bhima Nadi Neeru Horata Samiti, said.

While irrigation projects in the Krishna basin alone needed at least Rs. 10,000 crore, the government had set aside less than that amount for the entire irrigation sector in the State. “It is surprising that earlier, the Congress leaders, who had taken out rallies and staged agitations, urging the then BJP government to lay emphasis on projects of Krishna basin, have failed to get adequate funds allocated to such projects when their party has come to power in the State,” Mr. Kalburgi said.

The government could at least allocate Rs. 10,000 crore in the supplementary budget for irrigation projects of Krishna basin, he added.

D.S. Guddodagi, president of the district Chamber of Commerce, Industries and Agriculture, expressed disappointment over the government not announcing the setting up of agro-based industries.

Despite being the producer of highest quantity of grapes and other horticultural crops, Mr. Siddaramaiah had not announced a single special project to boost this sector.

As Bijapur and Bagalkot districts were among the leading producers of horticultural crops in the country, the Chief Minister should have proposed to set up a few more processing and cold storage units, he said.

Mr. Guddodagi said that even the district's tourism sector had been neglected as no project had been announced for Bijapur, which was one of the most important historical places.

Young farmer with a new project

This time to address the issues of pepper farm.



indigenous solution: Digol Thomas, a farmer in Wayanad district, has developed a honeycomb structure with bricks to plant pepper vines.

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After scripting a success story in precision farming, Digol Thomas, a progressive farmer in Wayanad, has launched an innovative project with the financial assistance of the National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) and the technical support of the M.S. Swaminathan Research Foundation and the Agriculture Department.

The State government had selected Digol Thomas as the best 'young farmer' in 2012. This time Mr. Digol Thomas, an engineering graduate at Arattuthara near

Mananthavady in the district, is trying to address the issues of pepper farmers. Dearth of supporting trees after the destruction of the *Erithrina Indica*, in local parlance Murikku, due to a wasp attack, low productivity, various diseases affecting pepper vines, and paucity of workers are some of the factors affecting the farmers.

Addressing these issues, Mr. Digol has indigenously developed an innovative method of pepper cultivation after consulting agriculture scientists and visiting the farms of progressive pepper farmers for the past two years. As a part of it, he developed a honeycomb structure with bricks measuring two square feet width and seven feet height, to plant pepper vines.

As many as 72 such standards have been constructed on his one-acre rubber plantation for the purpose and each structure cost nearly Rs.4,000. The distance between plant-to-plant and row-to-row is two metres. According to Mr. Digol, fertigation is applied through venturi with the technology of open type precision farming and it will ensure that the fertilizers will get only to the pepper plant evenly.

It is expected that the productivity of pepper can be at least doubled in this method, Mr. Digol says. The traditional farmers usually plant two to three pepper saplings to a supporting tree. But in this method, they can plant up to eight saplings at a time. It will also help to minimise the labour cost during harvest and recurring expenditure to maintain the supporting pole, he says.

Mr. Digol uses top shoots of pepper vines instead of the traditional lateral vines as planting material for an early harvest.

As the pathogens of major diseases affect the pepper vines, he has mulched the treated soil with a plastic film and planted the saplings on it. He planted 12

varieties of pepper vines, including 10 varieties of high yielding and two local varieties. “We are optimistic of the project and we are anticipating that it will help to set a new methodology for the pepper farming community in the State,” N.S. Sajikumar, District Development Manager, NABARD, said.

Minister praises cooperative societies for helping farmers

Koothanur PACS has disbursed 220 tonnes of fertilizer this year

The Primary Agricultural Cooperative Society at Koothanoor in Nannilam taluk has marketed 220 tonnes of fertilisers to farmers in the recent past, said R.Kamaraj, Food Minister.

Speaking at a function to distribute loans sanctioned by the Primary Agricultural Cooperative Society, Koothanoor near here on Thursday, the Minister said the society was one of the oldest in the district and accounted for 6,000 members. The society had been playing a key role in the promotion of agricultural activities in Koothanoor and many other surrounding villages. The Minister handed over Rs. 3.08 lakh as loans to 14 members of the Dr. MGR women SHG.

S. Natarajan, Collector, presided over the function. K. C. Ravichandran, joint registrar of cooperative societies, spoke.

At another function, he gave away Rs. 7.39 lakh as loans sanctioned by the primary agricultural cooperative society, Pandaravadai – Peralam to 25 beneficiaries for taking up economic activities.

The Minister said the cooperative bodies had been catering to the credit needs of local residents in the service area. Elected representatives played a crucial role in ascertaining the credit needs of the local people and their repaying capabilities. On the achievements of this society, he appreciated the efforts taken

by it in promoting drip irrigation for which about Rs. 6.31 lakhs had been sanctioned so far. It has advanced short-term farm loans of Rs. 1.04 crore.

The agri clinic of the society had conducted sample test for 3,250 soil samples and 1,364 water samples this year so far. Counselling for fertiliser management had resulted in judicious use of urea and other complex in the region, he added.

Water released from Perunchani dam

Water was released from Perunchani dam for irrigation on Friday. The rains which lashed the catchment areas of the district have raised the water level in all the four dams in the district — Pechipparai, Perunchani, Chittar I and Chittar II. Perunchani dam had an inflow of 349 cusecs on Friday, and the Public Work Department officials released 130 cusecs for irrigation.

According to PWD sources, the water level in all the tanks and ponds is also rapidly increasing due to the heavy rains in various parts of the district.

The water was released from Pechipparai dam for irrigation on June 20 in order to facilitate the farmers to carry out agriculture operation for 'kannipoove' season. The inflow of water into Pechipparai dam was 689 cusecs and the discharge was 720 cusecs.

The rainfall recorded in various areas is (in mm): Pechipparai — 1.2, Chittar I — 3.2, Chittar II — 2, Surulode — 4, Anaikidanku — 2 and Thirparappu — 3.

Sales at farm-fresh outlets in Chennai cross Rs. 1-crore mark



The State government has released a revolving fund of Rs.10 lakh to 23 outlets for procuring vegetables. Photo: M. Srinath

Within a span of three weeks, the retail sales at the 29 farm-fresh vegetable outlets in the city crossed the Rs.1 crore-mark on Wednesday.

The outlets were inaugurated by the Chief Minister on June 20 to supply vegetables to the public at prices less than market rates. This was followed by the Tamil Nadu Co-operative Marketing Federation signing a pact with the National Spot Exchange Ltd., to procure onion, ginger and potato through online method.

Twenty-three outlets are run by Triplicane Urban Co-operative Society and six by Tamil Nadu Civil Supplies Corporation. The daily sales in these outlets have increased from Rs.2 lakh to Rs.7.5 lakh, while the quantity of vegetable sold have doubled from 10,250 kg to 27,000 kg per day.

According to the sources, it was on July 3 the sales volume crossed the Rs.50-lakh mark with quantity touching 180 tonne.

On Wednesday, the sales volume was Rs.1.03 crore and the quantity was 386 tonne. The average daily sales at Kamadenu and Park Town outlets is about Rs.1 lakh each, while in other outlets it is over Rs.40,000.

Meanwhile, the State government has released a revolving fund of Rs.10 lakh to 23 outlets for procuring vegetables from 10 agricultural co-operative societies in Krishnagiri, Dindigul and the Nilgiris. The societies in turn will pay the farmers directly.

Following complaints from the public about cramped space, the Food and Civil Supplies Department has started installing rain-sheds in Kamadenu Supermarket, Park Town, Madipakkam and East Tambaram and shifted the outlets in Adyar and Triplicane to a bigger space.

During an inspection on Thursday, the Food and Civil Supplies Minister, R. Kamaraj, was told that the consumers were able to save up to 40 per cent of their bill at farm-fresh vegetable outlets. Since April 17, co-operative stores and Amudham retail outlets had sold 25,700 quintals of rice at a subsidised rate of Rs.20 per kg.

Veterinary varsity introduces new desi chicken varieties

The Tamil Nadu University for Veterinary and Animal Sciences (TNUVAS) has introduced a number of native chicken varieties for the benefit poor poultry farmers.

These new breeds ensure increase in the number of eggs besides stepping up weight in the meat.

Classified into two major groups of improved varieties and hybrid varieties, these chickens fetch more income to farmers.

The University's Regional Research Centre here has been popularising two types of native varieties of chicks — hybrid and improved varieties – to cater to different sections of farmers.

The hybrid varieties are 'Namakkal 1', 'Namakkal 2', and other hybrid varieties are 'Giriraja', 'vanaraja', and 'Swarnadhara'. The improved varieties include 'Nandhanam 1', 'Nandhanam 2', which are meant for meat," says P.N. Richad Jagatheesan, Professor and Head of the Centre.

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Fluctuation in vegetable prices

OSCILLATING PRICES		
Vegetables	Prices (in Rs. Per kg)	
	Last week	This week
Potato	30	50
Cabbage	6	20
Cauliflower	20	50
Beans	70	20
Capsicum	50	20
Peas	180	200
Turnip	30	8

Prices at Mettupalayam Regulated Market

The heavy rains that lashed the district over the past few days combined with the one-day general strike in Kerala has had mixed impact on the price of vegetables. The price of some vegetables rose sharply as their supply plummeted with farmers reluctant to harvest in the heavy rains. Also, transporting the produce to the market had become difficult.

Simultaneously, Wednesday's strike in Kerala had caused a glut in the four main markets of The Nilgiris district — Udthagamandalam, Coonoor, Gudalur and Kotagiri. The neighbouring State is a major market and the strike completely halted the movement of goods, said a trader in the Mettupalayam Regulated Market.

The trader said Kerala was a major market for carrot, beetroot, radish, beans, potato and cabbage. With the strike, there were no buyers and prices of many of these produces crashed due to few takers.

While some traders in the district purchased these vegetables, they quoted low prices.

N. Raja Mohamed, president of Udthagai Market Anaithu Vyaparikal Ilaigar Nala Sangam, who runs a shop at Nilgiri Vegetable Commission Market, said arrivals from other States had driven down the prices of some produce like beans.

“Conversely, farmers are reluctant to harvest potatoes in the rain and its prices shot up. The ‘Ooty potato’ has a unique market all of its own and regular buyers would rather pay higher than buy the same product coming from other areas,” he said.

Regarding the crash in prices, he said the effect of the strike in Kerala was bound to be temporary. S. Anandan, a resident of Vittoppakovil Street in the district,

said they had either sharply reduced the quantity or wholly stopped buying certain vegetables due to the steep hike in prices.

Grape growers seek bail-out package



Grape growers from Karnataka, the second largest producer of grapes, have appealed to the Union government to bail them out from financial distress following crop loss due to severe drought in the last few years.

Nearly 8,000 growers of North Karnataka, who have lost their crop, have demanded that Union Agriculture Minister Sharad Pawar announce a Vidarbha-type package, under which bank loans are waived.

The growers also sought assistance for adopting good management practices, support for rainwater harvesting and post-harvest management.

Speaking to *The Hindu*, Abhaykumar S. Nandrekar, president, Karnataka Grape Growers Association, said that growers have been facing severe shortage of water in eight districts — Bagalkot, Bijapur, Koppal, Belgaum, Bidar, Gulbarga, Gadag and Bellary. The situation deteriorated in the last two years as the entire State reeled under drought. All taluks in these districts were declared drought-affected in 2012.

The crop has been raised in 15,000 hectares in the eight districts and plants in nearly 9,000 hectares have been damaged in the last two years on account of drought. “There was no rainfall after the plants were pruned,” he said.

The association members recently met Mr. Pawar and sought an urgent package to save farmers from financial distress. The proposal also sought a package for growers in Kolar and Chickballapur.

A majority of vineyards are in the drought-hit areas. The State accounts for an estimated 20 per cent of India’s grape production at 3.30 lakh tonnes. Maharashtra contributes 80 per cent of the national output. India’s grape orchards cover 1.16 lakh hectares. About 70 per cent of production in the State is converted into raisins (dry grapes).

During March-June, a few grape growers saved their orchards by watering them with the help of tankers. But after that it became difficult as it did not rain adequately, Mr. Nandrekar said.

“There is a limit on how much a farmer can water the orchards through tankers. Unlike in Maharashtra, we do not get funds from the government for watering orchards with water tankers. The Maharashtra government grants Rs. 60,000 per hectare for watering the plants through tankers,” he said. Nearly 90 per cent of growers have borrowed loans from nationalised and cooperative banks and they

have been brought under the non-performing assets head. As much as 70 per cent of the loans have turned into doubtful assets. The total amount (both principal and interest) runs into nearly Rs. 600 crore, he said. Growers would struggle to survive, and retain their crops, if the Union and State governments do not waive their loans, he said.

Release Vaigai dam water: farmers

Having lost two consecutive crops owing to monsoon failure, farmers of the double crop areas laid siege to the Public Works Department (PWD) office here on Thursday, demanding immediate release of water from Vaigai dam for irrigation.

The protestors were irked by the non-release of water despite the combined Periyar credit in Periyar and Vaigai reservoirs touching the mandatory 4,000-mcft mark on June 27.

The double crop area of nearly 45,000 acres between Peranai in Dindigul district and Kallandhiri in Madurai district should receive water when the Periyar credit in the dams reaches 4,000 mcft. Normally it is done on June 1. "We expected water to be released on July 4. Despite a court order passed in March this year directing water release once the storage level reached 4,000 mcft, water was not released. Irrigation has not begun even though there is a storage of about 5,100 mcft," Arulprakasam, member of Periyar-Vaigai Irrigation Planning Committee, said.

He blamed PWD officials for the delay, claiming that they had not given the right information about the storage level and not sent a proper proposal to the government resulting in the confusion surrounding the release of water in the last two years, which resulted in heavy losses to farmers.

When PWD Chief Engineer (Southern Region) E.Tamilarasan assured the farmers that water would be released on July 25, the farmers said the delay in water release would lead to harvest during monsoon that would damage crops.

Then the farmers blocked traffic on the Gokhale Road in front of the PWD office for nearly 15 minutes.

However, the farmers dispersed after Revenue Divisional Officer Arumugam pacified them with the promise that efforts would be made to release water on July 15.

Will budget protect the interests of the poor and the farmers?



Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, who is expected to present a people-friendly budget in the Assembly on Friday, faces one of the toughest challenges with the financial document having to be in favour of the people. Simultaneously, he has to tighten the tax administration to raise the requisite resources for schemes which have been announced apart from the ones likely to be proposed.

The plan expenditure, as approved by the Planning Commission, is Rs. 47,000 crore, and the government has to necessarily make arrangements for funding the plan.

Of the very many subsidies and programmes announced by the new government in under two months, the most important is the rice subsidy with the government launching sale of 30 kilograms of rice for every BPL card holder at Re. 1 a kilogram, and the milk incentive scheme where an additional Rs. 2 for a litre of milk is being given to milk producers in addition to the Rs. 2 per litre provided by the Bharatiya Janata Party government. This is expected to cost Rs. 5,000 crore to the State Exchequer.

The Chief Minister has announced waiver of cumulative loans, including the interest component, running into Rs. 1,225 crore of 10 lakh beneficiaries belonging to the Scheduled Castes (SCs), Scheduled Tribes (STs), Other Backward Classes (OBCs) and minorities. This is also to be made good in the budget. The budget is expected to revise the special component plan module to benefit the SCs and the STs.

The government spends Rs. 16,000 crore a year on meeting the cost of subsidies alone. It should be noted that taxation in Karnataka, particularly value added tax, is one of the highest in the country and there is hardly any scope for further taxation. As such, the previous government had raised two of the VAT slabs to meet the additional cost owing to drought and it (government) had then said that it will be brought down this year.

The (VAT) slabs of 14 per cent were raised to 14.5 per cent and that of 5 per cent to 5.5 per cent with a commitment that this will continue only till July 31, 2013. The slabs were hiked in August last to mobilise Rs. 1,000 crore for drought relief work. The proceeds purportedly went to fund the crop loan and interest waiver scheme for farmers.

The Chief Minister has made it clear that although he is not a financial expert, it is imperative that "I come up with a budget that can safeguard the interests of the

poor and the farmers. My association with the common man and his problems have given me rich experience. I hope to give a good budget this year”.

Added to this is the fact that the Lok Sabha elections are round the corner and the Chief Minister has to work up a populist budget. The Congress has, in its manifesto for the Assembly elections, promised several schemes for the people and these have to be implemented in a time-bound manner.

At the same time, many of the schemes implemented by the BJP government may be withdrawn.

Mr. Siddaramaiah is expected to give special attention to Bangalore where infrastructure development is the need of the day. The government's special grants to Bangalore may see a big increase given the fact that the Bruhat Bangalore Mahanagara Palike and the Bangalore Development Authority are facing a funds crunch for various development work.

Maize dryers to be set up in Punjab

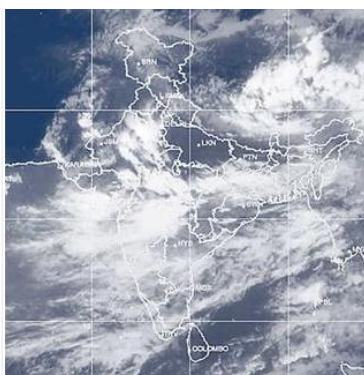
The Punjab Government on Thursday directed the agriculture department to set up maize dryers in all the *mandis* at a cost of Rs.150 crore before the commencement of next kharif season.

The directions were issued by Punjab Chief Minister Parkash Singh Badal here as part of State's crop diversification programme, said an official release.

Mr. Badal also announced to provide 75 per cent subsidy on the purchase of maize seed to growers in 12 districts during the next kharif season-2014.-

“This step will enable farmers to fetch remunerative price of the maize crop in the *mandis* because dried maize fetches better returns as compared to maize with moisture content,” he said.- PTI

weather



INSAT PICTURE AT 14.00 hrs. Observations recorded at 8.30 a.m. on July 12th.

New Delhi (Plm)	36	27	3	220
New Delhi (Sfd)	36	27	0	195
Chandigarh	36	28	0	331
Hissar	37	28	0	183
Bhuntar	34	20	0	208
Shimla	26	17	0	415
Jammu	33	26	0	258
Srinagar	29	17	0	85
Amritsar	35	28	0	214
Patiala	37	28	0	268
Jaipur	33	26	0	201
Udaipur	32	23	72	245
Allahabad	32	27	0	449

Lucknow	33	25	0	358
Varanasi	33	27	0	300
Dehradun	32	23	12	1327
Agartala	33	26	2	407
Ahmedabad	31	25	1	292
Bangalore	27	20	4	224
Bhubaneshwar	33	24	12	337
Bhopal	30	25	0	568
Chennai	30	23	6	231
Guwahati	35	27	2	394
Hyderabad	24	21	86	298
Kolkata	33	26	10	417
Mumbai	26	25	30	1219
Nagpur	31	25	13	570
Patna	33	27	0	154
Pune	27	21	16	332
Thiruvananthapuram	28	23	6	605
Imphal	32	23	27	326
Shillong	25	18	7	416

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

Southwest monsoon has been active over Uttarakhand and east Rajasthan. The axis of Monsoon trough at MSL passes through Bikaner, Sawai Madhopur, Damoh, Pendra and thence southeast-wards.

RAINFALL: Rain/thundershowers have occurred at many places over east Rajasthan and Uttarakhand, at a few places over east Uttar Pradesh and at isolated places over rest of the region. The chief amounts of rainfall in cm are: (6 cm and above) HARYANA: Naraingarh 17, HIMACHAL PRADESH: Renuka 8, EAST RAJASTHAN: Arthun 13, Amer and Nainwa 10 each, Galiakot 8, Udaipur A.P., Mavali, Ramganjmandi, Sapotra, Durgapur and Rajsmand 7, Chechat, Choth ka Barwara and Nathdwara 6 each, EAST UTTAR PRADESH: Musafirkhana 6 and UTTARAKHAND: Uttarkashi 9 and Pithoragarh 6.

FORECAST VALID UNTIL THE MORNING OF 14th July 2013:

Rain/thundershowers would occur at many places over east Rajasthan and Uttarakhand. Rain/thundershowers may occur at a few places over Uttar Pradesh and Himachal Pradesh during next 48 hours and increase thereafter. Rain/thundershowers would occur at one or two places over west Rajasthan during next 48 hours and increase thereafter. Rain/thundershowers may occur at one or two places over rest of the region.

HEAVY RAINFALL WARNING: Heavy rainfall may occur at one or two places over southern parts of Uttarakhand on 13th and 14th July. Heavy rainfall may occur at one or two places over east Rajasthan on 13th and 14th July and over southwest Rajasthan on 14th July.

FORECAST FOR DELHI AND NEIGHBOURHOOD VALID UNTIL THE

MORNING OF 14th July 2013: Generally cloudy sky. Rain/thundershowers may occur in some areas.

THE HINDU Business Line

Italy bans cultivation of GM corn seed



Rome, July 12:

Italy on Friday banned the cultivation of a genetically modified (GM) corn seed made by US company Monsanto, citing environmental concerns.

The agriculture ministry said Italian and European scientific studies had found that the insect-resistant MON810 seed could harm biodiversity, possibly posing a threat to “aquatic organisms.”

Farming lobby Coldiretti backed the government decision, noting that a poll it commissioned in June showed that 76 per cent of Italians oppose GM crops.

Several other European countries — including France, Germany and Poland — have prohibited MON810, even though such national bans are controversial, since the European Union has yet to decide whether to renew an existing authorisation for the seed.

Govt orders sale of cotton procured from open market

The Textiles Ministry has given the green signal to the Cotton Corporation of India to release the entire stock of 14 lakh bales (170 kg each) of cotton in the domestic market as the prevailing prices are high enough to ensure that it would not suffer any more losses.

The CCI will sell the stock in tranches at the prevailing market rates. Currently, Shankar-6, mainly in demand for exports, is ruling at Rs 42,500 for a candy of 356 kg.

Kavuru Sambasiva Rao, Minister for Textiles, told *Business Line* that Cotton Corporation has already been asked to offload the stocks it holds in the domestic market. "The stock will not be released all at the same time as it will affect prices. Every day, CCI would be releasing about 30,000-40,000 (bales). It is all being done in a transparent manner," said Rao.

The Cotton Corporation had built the stocks by buying some 22.65 lakh bales from the open market as part of the Government's market intervention operation after prices dropped below the minimum support level. It has sold 14 lakh bales in the domestic market when prices were ruling lower than the MSP, leading to losses.

Prices of cotton had fallen to Rs 34,000 a candy in February, when the Corporation stepped in and bought cotton from farmers at the support price level of Rs 39,000 a candy. The sale of nearly 7-8 lakh bales has resulted in an approximate loss of Rs 719 crore.

Although there was pressure on the Government from the textile industry to direct the corporation to off-load the remaining stock earlier, the Textile Ministry held on, waiting for domestic prices to rise. In a representation apex textiles body Confederation of Indian Textiles Industry in March had said that cotton prices had

increased about 15 per cent in the last few weeks and the Corporation should dispose of its stocks to curb the price rise.

“By selling the rest of the stock at a higher price of Rs 42,500 a candy, the corporation can recover some of its earlier losses,” the Minister said.

Asked if Cotton Corporation has exported any of the surplus stock, he said, “No exports have taken place from the surplus stocks.”

Cotton may gain on low inventories



Cotton prices decreased marginally on Friday after demand increased at the higher level. However, overall sentiment is not weak as inventories are low. According to traders, the market may gain in coming days.

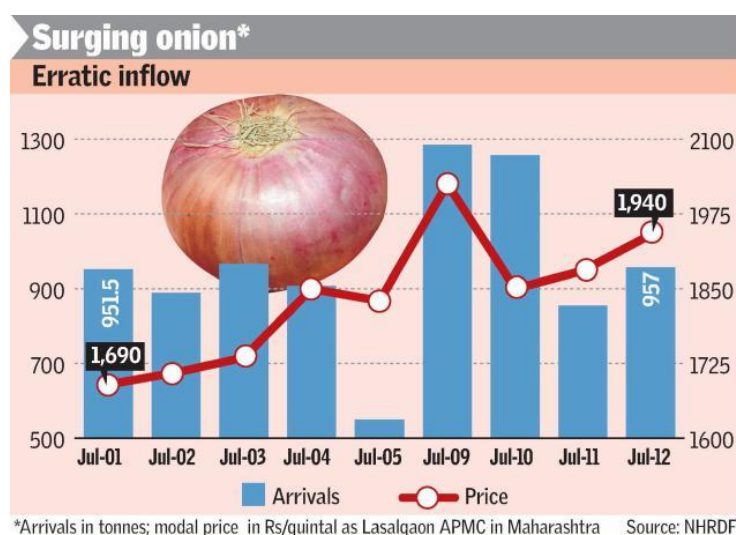
Gujarat Sankar-6 declined by Rs 100-150 to Rs 43,000-44,000 a candy of 356 kg. Kapas or raw cotton was traded at Rs 1,125-1,150 for 20 kg for gin delivery, while in mandis it was quoted Rs 1,100-1,130.

A cotton broker said that export demand has slowed for a while after the recent price rise but overall sentiment is not weak as stocks are very low. According to him, prices may gain over Rs 1,000 a candy this month. China and Bangladesh are importing; orders have also started from Pakistan, Vietnam and Thailand.

Traders expect exports to rise to around 10 million bales (a bale is 170 kg) this year against last year's 12 million.

Meanwhile, cotton futures maturing in December continued to drop on US ICE. On Friday, they

Onion tops Rs 2,000/quintal on supply shortfall



Onion prices have run past Rs 2,000 a quintal this week in markets around growing centres of most States following supply shortfall.

Views on the reason for the supply shortage are divided. Officials and traders are also divided on how onion will behave the next couple of weeks.

“Some people are keeping stocks intact with them. They seem to believe in releasing the stocks slowly to reap benefits of higher price,” said R.P. Gupta, Director of Nashik-based National Horticultural Research and Development Foundation.

“Supply is lower because we have had a 30 per cent lower crop last season (July-June) in view of drought, especially in Maharashtra,” said C.B. Holkar, Vice-

Chairman of National Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Federation. On Friday, the modal price or the rate at which most trades took place was Rs 1,940 a quintal.

Quality produce commanded prices over Rs 2,000.

On Wednesday, the modal price had run up to Rs 2,025. Prices had surged to such levels early in January before the late kharif crop cooled markets.

“Farmers and traders have ample stocks with them. Since they have facility to store kharif onion, they are releasing in tranches,” said Gupta.

“Stocks are limited because of lower crop. Most of the farmers had cashed in on the crop when prices touched Rs 900,” said Holkar.

With monsoon affecting onion crop in Uttar Pradesh, demand for Maharashtra produce is now coming from Delhi and Kolkata, said Holkar, adding that this was also aiding the price rise.

“Prices may not rule higher than Rs 2,000 from now on,” said Gupta.

But Holkar differed saying prices are likely to surge further.

“The drop in prices in the last two days is due to fears of ban on exports. But it is not coming,” he said.

Export demand is good, with shipments gaining in value this fiscal.

During April-June 5.11 lakh tonnes of onion were exported at a value of Rs 776 crore against 5.18 lakh tonnes valued at Rs 506 crore.

Rain keeps away edible oil stockists



Edible oils market witnessed dull trading day on Friday due to heavy rain and bearish futures. Lack of demand led activities to remain isolated and very thin. Stockists preferred to stay away. In Mumbai, groundnut oil extended further gains by Rs 10 tracking continuous bullish trend in Saurashtra market. Sunflower oil was increased by Rs 5-10. Soyabean refined oil dropped Rs 4 for 10 kg. Palmolein, rapeseed and cotton oil were steady.

Towards the day's close, Liberty was quoting palmolein at Rs 547, super palmolein Rs 582 and super deluxe Rs 602. Ruchi quoted palmolein at Rs 547-551, soyabean refined oil Rs 665 and sunflower refined oil Rs 820. Allana was quoting palmolein at Rs 542-546 and super palmolein Rs 580. Gokuls' palmolein's rates were Rs 546 for August.

In Rajkot, groundnut oil extended gains by Rs 40 to Rs 1,590 for *telia* tin and by Rs 25 to Rs 1,025 for loose (10 kg).

Malaysian BMD crude palm oil's August contracts closed lower at MYR 2,310 (MYR 2,382), September MYR 2,300 (MYR 2,372) and October MYR 2,297 (MYR 2,363) a tonne.

The Bombay Commodity Exchange spot rates (Rs/10 kg) were: groundnut oil 990 (980), soya refined oil 661 (665), sunflower exp. ref. 760 (750), sunflower ref.

820 (815), rapeseed ref. oil 695 (695), rapeseed expeller ref. 665 (665)
cottonseed ref. oil 657 (657) and palmolein 538 (538).

Vikram Global Commodities (P) Ltd quoted Rs585/10 kg for Malaysian super
palmolein - July delivery.

Higher imports may boost masoor



Masoor and moong are witnessing an uptrend in Indore mandis for the past few days on rise in buying support even as demand in pulses remained slack.

Masoor (bold) ruled at Rs 4,400-4,500 , while masoor (medium) at Rs 4,000-4,100 a quintal.

With dependency on imported masoor rising and steep rise in dollar, masoor prices should have gone as high as Rs 5,000 a quintal but with large imported stock at the ports, it is ruling about Rs 200 lower in terms of current value of rupee against dollar, said Prakash Vora, a wholesale pulse trader.

However, with depletion of imported stock, masoor may see a bullish trend on higher import.

Masoor dal (average) was quoted at Rs 5,000-25 , masoor dal (medium) at Rs 5,125-50 while masoor dal (bold) ruled at Rs 5,225-50 a quintal.

moong

Improved demand and buying support has also lifted moong (bold) to Rs 5,000-5,200, while moong (medium) ruled at Rs 4,600-4,800.

Long rally in moong, however, appears unlikely with favourable crop report.

Rise in moong also lifted its dal by Rs 100-200 a quintal with moong dal (medium) at Rs 6,000-6,100, moong dal (bold) at Rs 6,600-6,700, while moong mongar ruled at Rs 7,000-7,100 a quintal.

urad

Urad (bold) was at Rs 3,400-50, while urad (medium) ruled at Rs 3,000-3,100.

Urad dal (average) was at Rs 4,000-4,100, urad dal (bold) at Rs 4,500-4,600, while urad mongar ruled at Rs 5,500-5,800 a quintal.

N. India traders continue purchases from AP



Traders in North India continue to buy turmeric from Warangal and Nizamabad in Andhra Pradesh, resulting in prices remaining dormant in Erode.

“Traders in North are buying about 2,000 bags of turmeric every day. Such buying is purely due to price factor, as turmeric is cheaper in Andhra Pradesh and Assam. But Erode turmeric is likely to get orders by month-end,” said Mr. R.K.V. Ravishankar, President, Erode Turmeric Merchants Association.

At the Erode Turmeric Merchants Association sales yard, the finger variety was sold at Rs 4,099-6,609; the root variety Rs 3,791-5,711 a quintal.

Salem Hybrid Crop: The finger variety fetched Rs 5,899-8,027 and the root variety Rs 5,411-6,089. Of the 673 bags that arrived, only 48 were sold.

At the Regulated Market Committee, the finger variety was sold at Rs 5,374-6,474; the root variety Rs 4,939-5,984 . Of the 274 bags on offer, 224 found takers.

At the Erode Cooperative Marketing Society, the finger variety quoted Rs 5,348-6,539; the root variety Rs 5,089-5,760 . Of 426 bags put for sale, 60 per cent was sold.

At the Gobichettipalayam Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Society, the finger variety was sold at Rs 5,011-6,669; the root variety Rs 4,737-5,937. All the 271 bags were traded.

Bearish trend in sugar futures



Spot sugar prices on the Vashi terminal market ruled steady on Friday.

But the S-grade sold Rs 6 a quintal higher at the lower end. Business in M-grade was done at steady level.

Naka and mill tender rates were steady due to limited local demand.

Prices in the futures market were bearish in absence of any positive cues, said sources.

Another trader said: "Millers are not keen to sell at lower prices considering higher production cost but in the absence of neighbouring States buying and export demand, the only way is to dispatch commodity in local markets. Higher sugar output for current and next year also weigh on physical market."

Arrivals at Vashi market were 62-63 truckloads (of 100 bags each) and local dispatches were about 61-62 truck loads.

On Thursday, about 12-13 mills offered tenders and sold about 44,000-45,000 bags to the local traders at steady rates Rs 2,930-3,000 (Rs 2,935-3,000) for S-grade and Rs 3,030-3,110 (Rs 3,030-3,110) for M-grade.

The Bombay Sugar Merchants Association's spot rates were: S-grade Rs 3,072-3,145 (Rs 3,066-3,145) and M-grade Rs 3,192-3,311 (Rs 3,192-3,311).

Naka delivery rates were: S-grade Rs 3,010-3,080 (Rs 3,010-3,080) and M-grade Rs 3,120-3,230 (Rs 3,120-3,230).

Wheat seen in ranges on slack demand



With the domestic demand not picking up, the wheat market is likely to rule in a tight range this month, said trade sources.

Moderate buying kept dara wheat and flour prices unaltered on Friday.

Satish Kumar, a trade expert, told *Business Line* that steady domestic demand and ample availability of stocks are keeping wheat and flour prices stable.

The market may continue to rule around current levels without much fluctuation for the next few days, he added.

Around 1,200 bags of wheat arrived and stocks were directly offloaded at the mills.

In the physical market, after witnessing a continuous fall over the last one week, dara wheat prices ruled flat and sold at Rs 1,470-75 a quintal.

Mill delivery was at Rs 1,470, while delivery at the chakki was Rs 1,475.

On the NCDEX, a positive tone was witnessed in the futures market.

Wheat for August contracts improved by Rs 5 and traded at Rs 1,585 with an open interest of 14,170 lots.

September contracts went up by Rs 4 and traded at Rs 1,596.

While, wheat spot prices on the exchange dropped by Rs 5 traded at Rs 1,472.50.

Flour Prices

Following a steady trend in wheat, flour too ruled flat and quoted at Rs 1,725 .

Similarly, Chokar ruled flat and sold at Rs 1,225 a quintal.

ACE move: Cotton quality marking at ginner's warehouse in Gujarat

In a first of its kind, ACE Commodity Exchange has introduced an option, whereby, a seller can deliver cotton from his/her own warehouse rather than moving it to the exchange-accredited warehouse.

This will be applicable for delivery centres located only in Gujarat. The change in contract specification, to be implemented from the new cotton season starting October, is expected to boost participation of traders in the value chain.

The exchange, anchored by the Kotak Group, had attracted wide participation last year as the contract specification was close to Shakar-6, a widely traded cotton variety.

Speaking to *Business Line*, Dilip Bhatia, Chief Executive Officer, Ace Commodity, said according to the discussion with market participants, it was found that a few ginner's were reluctant to come on the trading platform due to the additional cost of six per cent incurred in moving their goods to the exchange warehouse, besides loading and unloading expenses.

“Now, we have decided to assay the cotton lying at the ginner’s warehouse and put a specially designed exchange logo on cotton bales which pass the Ace quality test,” he said.

This facility of delivery will be available only to traders who are certified by the exchange. The certification process involves the past performance of the trader, financial strength and his market integrity.

If successful, Ace plans to replicate the model for other agriculture commodities including refined soya oil.

“Agreed, we will take an additional risk of about four days between the date when the goods are marked for delivery and it is actually delivered, but we are confident that our risk will be minimised by the screening process that qualifies traders for availing this facility,” said Bhati.

The exchange has also introduced additional delivery centres at Wani and Jalna (Maharashtra), Warangal (Andhra Pradesh), Bhatinda (Punjab) and Sirsa (Haryana).

Cotton delivery at the new centres will be based on request matching. If the request for delivery at new centres does not match, then the buyer has to take delivery from Gujarat. No cash settlement will be allowed, said Bhatia.

Agreeing that the newly introduced commodity transaction tax will impact volumes, Bhatia said the exchange is making efforts to convince the Government to remove the tax on processed agriculture commodities.

Pepper falls on poor buying

Pepper prices declined for want of buying support amid limited supply on Friday.

Because of the high price and tight availability, the small and medium masala makers here and abroad are looking for lower grade pepper, market sources said.

On the spot, five tonnes of pepper arrived and of this seven tonnes were traded at an average price of Rs 385 a kg, they said.

On the NMCE, July, Aug and Sep contracts decreased by Rs 468 and Rs 50 and Rs 307 a quintal respectively to Rs 40,200, Rs 40,580 and Rs 40,150. Total net open position moved up by five tonnes to 111 tonnes.

Turn over increased by 14 tonnes to 47 tonnes. Spot prices remained unchanged at Rs 38,500 (ungarbled) and Rs 40,500 (MG 1). Indian parity in the international market was at \$7,000 (c&f) Europe and \$7,250 a tonne (c&f) for the US and remained out priced, they said.

Prices quoted from overseas markets were: Vietnam black pepper Asta \$6,650 a tonne (c&f) New York; Brazil B1 560g/l: \$6,450/tonne (f.o.b.); Sri Lanka 525g/l: \$5,875-5,900/tonne (f.o.b.) and Indonesia 500g/l: \$6,050/tonne (f.o.b.).

Tea prices set to go up as small growers report 15% fall in output

A 15-20 per cent drop in tea production, particularly by small tea growers, this year is likely to push up tea prices.

Small tea growers account for over a third of the country's total tea production.

According to Samir Roy, Chairman of National Federation of Small Tea Growers, prices are likely to inch up by Rs 5-10 a kg in the short term.

Tea producers with plantations up to 25 acres are considered small tea growers.

“Though there is still some time for the crop to recover during the later part of the year, given the current weather situation, total tea produced by the small tea growers (during 2013-14) might be lower by 10-15 per cent this year,” Roy said at a press meet to highlight the various demands of small tea growers in the country.

There are over two lakh small tea growers in the country. Tea prices have already moved up in the last few weeks.

“Currently, our tea leaves are fetching around Rs 20 a kg, compared with the last year's average price of Rs 16-18,” Roy said. Even as production of tea by small growers has dipped by about 15-20 per cent, the country's tea production during January-May this year was up by about three per cent.

According to a data from the Indian Tea Association, the country's tea production during January-May stood at 255.55 million kg (mkg), compared with 248.72 mkg in 2012.


However, in May 2013, the country's total tea production was down by 2.3 per cent to 101.18 mkg.

The National Federation of Small Tea Growers has sought the status of a plantation sector from the Tea Board.

“Small tea growers are not in a position to register their plantations under the Tea Act. The Tea Board should take appropriate measures so that the respective State Governments should provide no objection certificate (NOC) in favour of such growers,” Roy said.

Giving the plantation sector status would enable small growers to route their produce through the auctions, thereby, fetching better price for their produce, he said. This apart, the sector can also avail the subsidies under the Tea Act.

Cotton, oilseeds planting gains on bountiful monsoon

Rising acreage		(in lakh hectares)	
	This year	Last year	
	Rice	110.07	97.50
	Pulses	25.95	13.04
	Coarse cereals	96.58	39.86
	Oilseeds	135.99	67.70
	Sugarcane	48.40	50.04
	Cotton	92.44	65.22
	Jute & Mesta	8.21	8.12
	Total area	517.65	341.49

Source: Ministry of Agriculture

The area under kharif crops has expanded, with acreages of oilseeds and cotton exceeding three-fourth of the normal area on good rains across the country.

The planting of soyabean is almost complete, with the acreage exceeding 103 lakh hectare area (ha) as on July 11, almost twice the acreage in the same period last year.

Similarly, groundnut acreage has crossed the half way mark of the normal area at 26 lakh ha. The normal area for groundnut is pegged at 49 lakh ha for the season.

The good progress in sowing of soyabean and groundnut has boosted total oilseed acreage to 136 lakh ha, more than twice the area this time last year. States such as Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra and Gujarat have also reported a significant increase in oilseeds acreage.

In case of cotton, planting is almost over in about 80 per cent of the normal area of 117.53 lakh ha.

A higher acreage in Gujarat and Maharashtra has boosted overall acreage to 92.44 lakh ha over last year's 65.22 lakh ha.

Rice acreage has seen a 13 per cent increase at 110.07 lakh ha over last year on higher plantings in Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh.

Widespread rains across the country continued to progress well, giving a fillip to kharif plantings. The total rainfall since the onset of monsoon season is 19 per cent higher over the same period last year, with about 60 per cent of the country receiving excess rains.

Prompted by the good progress in sowing so far, Agriculture Minister Sharad Pawar recently said that kharif foodgrain output would break the previous records.

Kharif foodgrain output had touched a record high of 131.27 million tonnes in 2011-12.

So far, the acreage under pulses has also doubled to 26 lakh ha over last year's 13.04 lakh ha.

The acreage under tur or arhar has risen 55 per cent to 10.4 lakh ha over last year with Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh and Andhra reporting higher acreages.

The acreage under moong and urad, too, has seen an increase at 5.45 lakh ha and 8.14 lakh ha, respectively.

Coarse cereals such as bajra, maize, and ragi have also seen a rise in acreage at 96.58 lakh ha.

Maize area stood at 56 lakh ha with farmers planting more in Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra and Rajasthan.

Coonoor tea prices plunge to year's lowest

Prices plummeted to year's lowest average of Rs 88.25 a kg at Sale No: 28 of the Coonoor Tea Trade Association (CTTA) auction, which ended on Friday.

Prices averaged Rs 91.23 last week, which itself was the second lowest this calendar.

For the first time in the 50 years of CTTA auction, average prices shot over Rs 100-a-kg mark on March 8 and remained at that level till April 26.

Thereafter, prices plunged but this is the first time this calendar that prices have fallen to Rs 90-a-kg level.

The offer of 20.40 lakh kg was the highest so far this calendar.

Only 13.10 lakh kg was sold.

Mixed trend in spot rubber

Spot rubber was mixed on Friday. There were neither sellers nor buyers in the market and hence, trading activities remained almost paralysed though the local prices were ruling high.

According to reports, production of natural rubber in the country fell almost 13 per cent year-on-year in June to 54,000 tonnes.

Meanwhile, monsoon rains were 21 per cent above average in the rubber growing Kerala for the week ending July 10.

Sheet rubber finished unchanged at Rs 195 a kg at Kottayam and Kochi, according to traders and the Rubber Board.

But the remaining counters finished firm though the reports from the domestic and international trend setters have not been impressive.

July futures inched up to Rs 192.90 (Rs 192.62) while the August futures weakened to Rs 185 (187.98), September to Rs 175.50 (Rs 179.13), October to Rs 167.89 (Rs 171.44), November to Rs 163.51 (Rs 166.95) and December to Rs 168 (Rs 169) on the National Multi Commodity Exchange.

RSS 3 (spot) closed marginally higher at Rs 154.72 (Rs 154.10) at Bangkok.

July futures closed at ¥229.1 (Rs 138.02) on the Tokyo Commodity Exchange.

Spot rubber rates Rs/kg: RSS-4: 195 (195); RSS-5: 187 (185); Ungraded: 176 (175); ISNR 20: 176 (175) and Latex 60%: 143 (142).

Prices drop at Kolkata tea sale

This week at Sale Number 28 at Kolkata tea auction, the average prices of orthodox and CTC varieties were lower than last week (Sale 27), according to J. Thomas & Company Private Ltd, the tea auctioneers. The price of orthodox was lower at Rs 253.82 (Rs 257.95) and CTC at Rs 153.60 (Rs 156.68) a kg. Last year at Sale 28, the prices of orthodox and CTC were Rs 229.07 and Rs 154.35 respectively.

This week, 88.24 per cent (94.09 per cent) of orthodox and 65.75 per cent (69.70 per cent) CTC volumes were offered and sold.

This week, the total offerings (packages) at Kolkata, Guwahati and Siliguri were 3,98,673 (3,64,110 in sale No. 28 last year).

The offerings at Kolkata comprised CTC/dust 1,27,510 (1,35,884); orthodox 35,465 (17,273) and Darjeeling 9,186 (5,833). The offerings at two other centres handling mainly CTC/dust were: Guwahati 1,32,699 (1,11,987) and Siliguri 93,813 (93,133).

Liquoring Assam CTC brokens continued to meet with strong enquiry while fannings were irregularly lower. Remaining Assams were barely steady to irregularly lower with plainer sorts, Cachars and reprints meeting with selective enquiry at easier rates. Better Dooars sold irregularly lower while the remainder eased in value. Tata Global operated selectively on the liquoring sorts; Hindustan Unilever operated on the mediums brokens and were more forceful on the dust grades; Western India operated actively for the on liquoring teas. There were good enquiries from other internal and local sections. The interest of the exporters was selective.

Orthodox

Limited weight of Darjeeling whole leaf varieties showing seasonal improvement in quality sold well. Remainder sold irregularly lower. Brokens and fannings met with useful enquiry and were readily absorbed at higher rates. Tata Global and Hindustan Unilever were selective. Traditional exporters operated for few improved teas.

Darjeeling

Limited weight of Darjeeling whole leaf varieties maintaining seasonal quality were readily absorbed. Liquoring brokens and fannings sold readily at dearer

rates. Hindustan Unilever and Tata Global lent useful support. Traditional exporters operated keenly. Brokens & fannings witnessed export enquiry.

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Rainforest Alliance keen to nurture sustainable agri practices in India

Rainforest Alliance (RA), the international organisation that works to conserve biodiversity and promote sustainable agricultural practices, would like to step up its footprint in India.

“We would like to be more active in India’s domestic tea marketing,” Joke Aerts, Manager, South Asia, RA, told *Business Line* here recently. “A beginning has been made with Goodricke and we’re looking for more such opportunities.”

When contacted, Arun Singh, CEO of Goodricke, confirmed that the arrangement with RA presupposed certification for Darjeeling tea to be sold in packets in the domestic market with the RA logo. “We’ve already launched it,” Singh said, pointing out that the company’s five gardens in Darjeeling produced about 7,50,00 kg of tea annually, of which approximately 100,000 kg was for the domestic market. RA certification had been in use for production of Darjeeling tea, including organic tea, for the past couple of years; it was now being extended to domestic marketing of tea, he said.

Globally, Joke pointed out, RA certification was in force for international brands such as Tetley, Lipton, Yorkshire Tea and Typhoo. In India, RA’s presence in the tea sector dated back to 2008. “In tea, RA certification is being used by 396 gardens under 25 plantation companies, covering 38,000 hectares in Assam, Darjeeling and Nilgiris (not Dooars) and producing 62,000 tonnes annually, mostly for export,” she said, adding that RA certification in India was also being

used in coffee and spices. “We would like to diversify into fruits, mango, to start with.”

RA is a member of SAN (Sustainable Agriculture Network), a coalition of non-profit rural development groups that promotes efficient agriculture biodiversity conservation and sustainable community development. RA is also the owner of the RAC (Rainforest Alliance Certification) seal and controls the use of the seal worldwide. “In India, we also work in partnership with a Mysore-based NGO,” she said.

Joke conceded that there were challenges in observing norms to be eligible for RA certification but the benefits of it in the long run would be substantial. “In India, the biggest task is to make people realise that the short-term challenges are worth taking for reaping much larger benefits in the long run,” she added.

Tea prices may go up by Rs 5-10 per kg

Kolkata, July 12 A 15-20 per cent drop in production in the tea gardens of North and South India so far during this year is likely to push up prices.

According to Kosi Baby, Vice-Chairman, Tea Board India, and Vice-President of the National Federation of Small Tea Growers, India, tea prices might inch up by Rs 5-10 a kg.

“Tea production is down by 15-20 per cent across the country. This might push up prices,” Baby said at a press meet to discuss the various issues confronting the small tea growers in the country.

Business Standard

Saturday, July 13, 2013 | 09:48 AM IST



Tea prices are expected to increase 5-10 per cent in FY14, as [unfavourable weather](#) might cause production to fall by 15-20 per cent in the current financial year.

According to [Samir Roy](#), member, [Tea Board](#) and chairman, [National Federation of Small Tea Growers India](#), production had already seen a dip.

“We are hoping to manage production but a 15-20 per cent dip in production is likely in the current fiscal,” he said here on Friday. India produced 1,135 million kg of tea in FY13.

Kosi Baby, vice-chairman of Tea Board India, told reporters this would lead to a price rise. “The range would be 5 to 10 per cent,” he added.

When asked if the newly-launched sustainability code named ‘Trustea’ would have an impact on prices, Roy replied in the negative. The new code, which encompasses all aspects of tea production, seeks to embrace sustainability

principles to boost productivity, maintain safety standards to improve quality compliance, and include all stakeholders in the mainstream.

Apart from low production, the other major problem small growers are facing is the delay in getting no objection certificates (NOC) from state governments, said Roy.

Farmers to get interest-free loans up to Rs 2 lakh, says Karnataka



The [Siddaramaiah](#)-led [Congress](#) government in [Karnataka](#) on Friday announced a slew of measures to please most in its first Budget. The chief minister, who presented the revised Budget for 2013-14, announced [interest-free loans](#) to farmers up to Rs 2 lakh and at one per cent interest for loans between Rs 2 lakh and Rs 3 lakh.

Earlier, short-term loan up to Rs 1 lakh was provided at zero interest and at one per cent interest from Rs 1 lakh to Rs 3 lakh.

“This is an inclusive Budget and stress has been on agriculture, education, health, infrastructure, rural development, irrigation and energy. We have given ample stress to the infrastructure of Bangalore city,” the minister said.

To address the issue of uncertainty in prices of agricultural commodities faced by farmers, the minister announced setting up of Agricultural Prices Commission on the lines of a similar body at the Centre. This would comprise farmers, experts and agro-economists. The government would fix suitable prices based on scientific recommendations of the commission, he said.

To ensure the farmers get the minimum support price, price intervention and support price operation will be started in advance. The revolving fund for this would be raised to Rs 1,000 crore this year, he said.

He also announced the establishment of Calamity Mitigation Fund, with an initial corpus of Rs 500 crore. This would help farmers during the natural disasters.

Siddaramaiah also announced measures for schoolgirls, women and transgenders. To encourage enrolment and attendance of girls in first standard in government schools, Rs 2 would be given to girls for each day's attendance.

The government intends to provide scholarship and free education to students, whose parents are affected with human immunodeficiency virus or leprosy, for higher education. Also, free ten sanitary napkin pads would be provided to 3.25 million females.

"Manaswini" would be introduced to provide monthly pension of Rs 500 to unmarried women below poverty line who have crossed 40 and for divorced women below the poverty line.

"Mythri" would be launched for providing monthly pension of Rs 500 to transgenders.

Among other major announcements were construction of fishing port in Kulai, Mangalore and Hejamady in Udupi and allocation of Rs 229 crore, distribution of fibre glass boats to 2,000 inland fishermen for the programmes under fisheries department. He also announced Rs 9 crore to tackle Naxal activities in Karkala region and construction of truck terminal in Mangalore and other places in the state.

He said the government would spend Rs 9,812 crore for irrigation projects during 2013-14. Creation of irrigation potential of 108,590 hectares and construction of field irrigation channels in 80,000 hectares. He said the government would also increase the height of Almatti dam from 519 metres to 524 metres to tap an additional water of 177 tmc in Krishna river basin.

INDIAN CITIES

INTERNATIONAL CITIES

Chennai

Chennai - INDIA

Today's Weather



Cloudy

Rain: 0

Humidity: 66

Wind: normal

Saturday, Jul 13

Max Min

34° | 26°

Sunrise: 05:49

Sunset: 06:39

Barometer: 1006

Tomorrow's Forecast



Cloudy

Sunday, Jul 14

Max Min

34° | 25°

Extended Forecast for a week

Monday
Jul 15



35° | 25°

Cloudy

Tuesday
Jul 16



34° | 24°

Overcast

Wednesday
Jul 17



34° | 24°

Overcast

Thursday
Jul 18



34° | 24°

Overcast

Friday
Jul 19



34° | 24°

Overcast

Airport Weather

Delhi

Rain: 21.2 Sunrise: 05:31

Humidity: 79 Sunset: 07:21

Wind: normal Barometer: 1003



Schools where both students and teachers are farmers

NAGPUR: There can be no better teacher for farmers than a farmer himself. Following this principle, the MS Swaminathan Research Foundation (MSSRF) is promoting sustainable farming technologies among farmers with the help of other farmers. For this, the foundation is setting up 'farm schools' where the farmers can learn farming techniques from other farmers who have already implemented them successfully.

MSSRF has set up two farm schools in [Tamil Nadu](#) and one each in Kerala and Odisha. The fifth, and the only one in Maharashtra, was inaugurated in Takarkheda village in Arvi block in Wardha district on Friday by the foundation chairman MS Swaminathan. The school has come up on the premises of Sri Sant Lahanuji Maharaj Sansthan with support from Suresh Pawde, an agriculture expert who is also the secretary of the sansthan and engaged in running the Village Resource/Knowledge Centres (VRCs) by the foundation in Wardha district.

Swaminathan told TOI that the farm school was based on the idea of 'land-to-land' where a successful farmer shares his technology with fellow farmers from the area. The school at Takarkheda has brought together farmers who cultivate same crops and will be conducting season-wise training and demonstration programmes. "Basic purpose of these farm schools is to facilitate increase in knowledge and skills of farmers through land-to-land approach. The farmer-to-farmer learning can be an effective method of transferring technology and

innovations among farmers to help them overcome the risks and challenges associated with agriculture," said Swaminathan.

Keeping with the foundation's thrust on ensuring food and nutrition security at all levels and leveraging agriculture for this, the Takarkheda school in particular will focus on training and awareness about production practices related to food crops that have high nutritive value. Besides addressing the farm community in general, programmes will also be designed to address specific needs of [women](#) farmers with whom the MSSRF is working in the region.

The farm school is governed by a steering committee comprising agricultural experts from government departments in the district, Krishi Vigyan Kendra, research institutions and progressive farmers of the region. Good agriculture practices will be also documented and disseminated to the farmers of the region. The first-of-its-kind in the region, this school will also be able to use two soil testing laboratories already established in the VRCs in Wardha and Yavatmal districts by MSSRF in partnership with Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited, Mumbai.

Basically, the farm schools project is a CSR initiative of Indian Overseas Bank (IOB) being implemented by MSSRF. The foundation's executive director Ajay K Parida, Aswin Kumar Jamadagni, chief regional manager of IOB Bhavani RV and Nancy J Anabel from the foundation were also present on the occasion.

Farm School concept

* A residential school set up on an agriculture field where farmers learn cultivation methods being practised by successful farmers

* Run on the principle of land-to-land transfer of technology from one farmer to another

* Scientists basically teach new technologies to progressive farmers and they pass it on to other farmers through horizontal transfer of knowledge

Good rains promise farm bounty

NAGPUR: Good rains received at the start of monsoon this year in the state are expected to yield a bounty for farmers in the kharif season. A top officer of the state agriculture ministry indicated that farm output could see a jump of 40%.

One reason for the high expectations is that thanks to timely and plentiful rains, interspersed with sunny days, sowing could be finished in 74% of the cultivable area before the second week of July. Last year it could be done in only 49% of land by this date. Marathwada region, where many districts have received sparse rains for second consecutive year, remains a worry.

With whole of Vidarbha receiving rainfall in excess of average for months of June and July, kharif season work is well in progress. Except for transplantation of paddy saplings which takes time, sowing operations for other crops is nearing completion. Joint divisional director of agriculture for Nagpur division Vijay Ghawate said in the six districts of the division, sowing was completed on 28.94 lakh hectares out of the total targeted area of 32.83 lakh hectares. Thus, 83% sowing was achieved as per latest data compiled on Friday.

Farm officials are surprised by the fact that farmers of eastern Vidarbha have

taken more to cotton. Till some days ago it looked like they would go for soyabean. Technical officer K R Bais told TOI cotton has been sown on 3.18 lakh ha against the targeted 2.38 lakh ha making it 161% of estimate. Soyabean has been taken up on 5.06 lakh ha against expected 6.63 lakh ha- only 76% of the target. Paddy, a major crop in this division, has seen only 12% transplantation till date while tur has been sown on 1.39 lakh ha.

Amravati joint divisional director of agriculture's office reported sowing was completed on 88% of crop area and in that division soyabean has stolen a march over cotton. Till Friday, soyabean sowing was completed on 14.26 lakh ha, over 130% of the target. On the other hand, cotton was sown only on 7.96 lakh ha or 74% of the area. Besides soyabean, there seems to be some shift from cotton to tur, urad, moong, til (linseed) and groundnut as also sugarcane that was planted on 62,000 ha.

BUDGET 2013-14: Tonic for agriculture sector

The shrinking food and agriculture sectors are all set to get a shot in the arm with the state budget offering incentives and sops for their revival.

The state's [agriculture sector](#) has witnessed slump in the growth from 12.4% in 2007-08 to 1.8% in 2012-13 largely because of successive droughts. Keeping this in view, chief minister [Siddaramaiah](#) has earmarked Rs 4,378 crore for agriculture and allied sectors to infuse a new lease of life.

"A separate agriculture budget presented by the previous BS Yeddyurappa-led BJP government had failed to revive the sector because of poor spending. So we

decided to discontinue it and follow the old system," said Siddaramaiah.

While retaining many of the populist schemes of the previous BJP regime, Siddaramaiah has taken the 'zero per cent interest' farm loan scheme one step forward. The earlier scheme, where farmers used to get loan up to Rs 1 lakh for zero per cent interest from cooperative sectors, has been enhanced to Rs 2 lakh. The loans from Rs 2 lakh to Rs 3 lakh will attract one per cent interest. The existing interest at 3% to medium and long-term loans up to Rs 10 lakh will be continued. The state government has also decided to constitute Agricultural Prices Commission to advise it on the fixation of prices of agricultural commodities. "If necessary, the price commission will resort to market intervention through support prices, for which a revolving fund has been enhanced to Rs 1,000 crore," CM said. The government has decided to revise the natural calamity guidelines, so that farmers receive better compensation.



Farmers hold rally in Naya Raipur to push their demands

One of the key demands of the farmers is that the unemployed locals be offered 30 per cent reservation in the jobs at the Mantralaya. They also demanded that the Government needs to educate them on traffic laws and issue licenses by holding public awareness camps as the police was insisting on following traffic rules in Naya Raipur.

Farmers take Rs1,316 cr short-term loan from co-op societies

According to Government sources, this encouraging result could be seen in the villages of the State, because of the continuous decrease in the interest rate on the short-term loan being given to the farmers.

The officers of Chhattisgarh State Cooperative Bank said that it was the second consecutive year the State government has been giving loan facility to farmers at 1 per cent interest, in accordance with the declaration of chief minister Dr Raman Singh.

The Government has set a target to give short-term loan Rs3,000 crore at the minimum rate of interest this year, out of which Rs2,300 crore would be given during the current Kharif season and the remaining Rs700 crore during the Rabi season.