

Date : 30.09.2013



Ensuring a need-based support system

COIMBATORE

30 farmers from across the state presented their views

Heeding the call of the State Government to provide need-based support to farmers, Tamil Nadu Agricultural University (TNAU) held a Farmers' Conference, here on Friday, to collect inputs from stakeholders. It was chaired by Agriculture Minister S. Damodaran.

The event, where 30 farmers from as many districts, presented their views, was a culmination of a month long exercise that started with obtaining feedback at the Panchayat Union, Taluk and district-levels, the media, and political parties. Commissioners and Directors of six allied departments were also present to hear what the farmers had to say.

According to Vice-Chancellor K. Ramasamy, this is the first step in the Government's plan to transform agriculture in the State that would lead to increasing the production twofold and the farmer income threefold.

That the exercise was a serious effort was seen from the fact that the output received so far was released in the form of a booklet and distributed to the 500-odd farmers. Mr. Damodaran said this first-of-a kind initiative was to formulate schemes and measures for farmers based on their need. This would be in keeping with the Chief Minister's policy that "people are not for schemes, but schemes are for people." "All the suggestions are good and acceptable so much so that nothing can be rejected. Farmers have gone into much detail to come up with these and it will go a long way in transforming agriculture. We will try to implement these suggestions," he said. Suggestions pertaining to other departments such as Revenue and Public Works will also be represented to the respective ministers and officials," he added.

Stress on preserving indigenous variety of seeds for posterity

BANGALORE

Onus lies on every farmer to reclaim traditional seeds, says expert



good turnout:As many as 600 varieties of paddy seeds, 150 varieties of millet seeds and eight varieties of pulse seeds were on display at 40 stalls at the Bangalore Seed Festival on Saturday.— Photo: K. Gopinathan.

Preserving and conserving indigenous variety of seeds for posterity is the responsibility of every farmer in the country, according to Devinder Sharma, food and trade policy analyst.

Speaking after inaugurating the two-day seed festival at the Veterinary College in Hebbal here on Saturday, Mr. Sharma explained how big corporations were trying to destroy and displace the traditional varieties of seeds. He urged farmers to rediscover and reinvent the traditional variety of seeds.

The seed festival was jointly organised by the Sahaja Samrudha and the Alliance for Sustainable and Holistic Agriculture (ASHA).

The festival attracted a heterogeneous crowd that had farmers, students and researchers who had come from across the country to take a look at the rich heritage of traditional seed diversity. As many as 600 varieties of paddy seeds, 150 varieties of millet seeds and eight varieties of pulse seeds were on display at 40 stalls at the seed festival. Farmers who came to exhibit seeds from various parts of the country, including Jharkhand, Odisha, West Bengal, Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Uttarakhand, had several stories to share.

While Surendra N.R., a fifth generation farmer, spoke to visitors on how he had exchanged more than a thousand seeds with other farmers, another farmer, Rechanna from Bagalkot district, explained how seed saving was becoming the norm as organic vegetables were the “trend”.

While some visitors, including school and college students, were busy scribbling notes and making the most of the educational trip, older visitors turned nostalgic and remembered their roots.

Explaining the need to conserve seeds, Soumik Baneerjee, an agricultural researcher, who works with self-help groups in Sundarparahari block in Godda district of Jharkhand, said: "There is a need to save indigenous variety of seeds which are on the brink of extinction as they are facing a stiff competition from hybrid variety of seeds. The traditional seeds yield crops that have high nutritional content. Moreover, the traditional seeds need less irrigation and fertilizer compared to the hybrid variety of seeds." Another young sixth generation farmer, Surendra N.R. (26) from Ramanagaram, who had a stall with several varieties of paddy and vegetable seeds told the customers that he can explain to them how a seed needs to be cultivated if he is told the colour of the seed.

A stall that attracted most visitors was that of the Edavaka Gram Panchayat of Wayanad. On display there were 35 varieties of tubers that are grown by the tribal people.

For visitors like Vijay Mahantesh C.K., an engineer, the visit to the seed festival was an "exciting experience".

Pushpa, another visitor said, "This festival is witness to the frustration that is coming out of hybrid variety of seeds. I hope that there is a revolution and farmers shift back to traditional seeds."

The festival is open on Sunday between 10 a.m. and 6 p.m. at the Veterinary College, Hebbal.

'Stage set for farmer-friendly industrialisation'

MUMBAI

'Poor rehabilitation of displaced tribals is root cause of Maoism'

The pathetic track record of rehabilitation and resettlement of more than three crore displaced tribals since independence is the main cause of the Maoist problem but the new land acquisition law will ensure that they and farmers get their due rights, Union Rural Development Minister Jairam Ramesh said on Sunday.

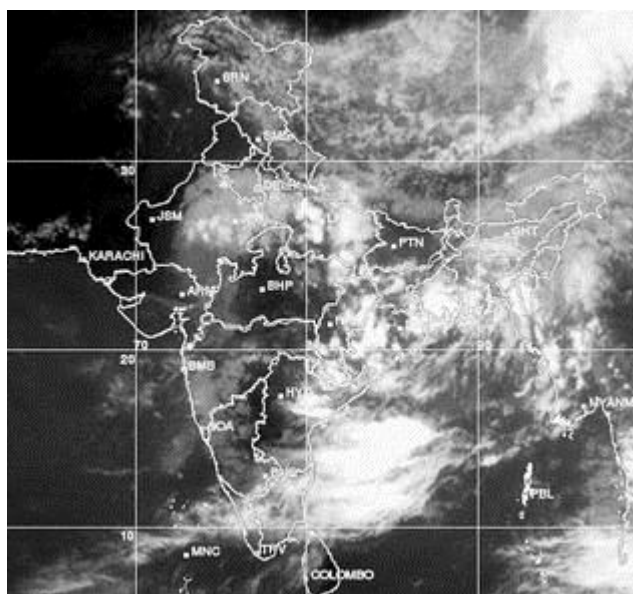
Addressing a press conference here, he said the Right to Fair Compensation and Transparency in Land Acquisition, Rehabilitation and Resettlement Act, 2013 was signed by the President and expected to be notified within the next two months.

This has come in the place of the 119-year-old Act, which was said to be the root cause of struggles by tribals and farmers against forcible acquisition of their land.

But opposing the new Act, activists such as Medha Patkar claimed that it was less progressive than expected, while a few business groups said it was against industrialisation. Mr. Ramesh, however, said the concerns were exaggerated. The new Act would pave the way for a less conflict-driven and tribal and farmer friendly industrialisation,” he said. The new Act would also be applicable to land acquisitions for all future Special Economic Zones.

weather

NEW DELHI



INSAT PICTURE AT 14.00 hrs. Observations recorded at 8.30 a.m. on September 29th.

	Max	Min	R	TR
New Delhi (Plm)	36	28	0	583
New Delhi (Sfd)	35	26	0	847
Chandigarh	34	23	0	839
Hissar	34	24	tr	605
Bhuntar	29	17	0	428
Shimla	24	14	8	896
Jammu	31	21	0	1369
Srinagar	27	12	1	250
Amritsar	33	23	0	761
Patiala	34	24	0	738
Jaipur	32	24	2	695
Udaipur	25	22	29	759
Allahabad	35	27	0	996

Lucknow	35	24	0	742
Varanasi	35	25	1	809
Dehradun	29	21	tr	2852
Agartala	32	25	25	889
Ahmedabad	31	25	4	942
Bangalore	27	19	0	693
Bhubaneshwar	31	24	22	985
Bhopal	33	22	3	1155
Chennai	33	24	10	647
Guwahati	35	23	35	817
Hyderabad	33	23	0	680
Kolkata	31	26	5	1631
Mumbai	30	25	18	2365
Nagpur	34	23	tr	1443
Patna	34	24	3	612
Pune	30	21	0	754
Thiruvananthapuram	33	25	0	1066
Imphal	29	20	9	1053
Shillong	24	16	11	995

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

RAIN AT MANY PLACES

The withdrawal line of South-west monsoon still continues to pass through Kalpa, Hissar, Jodhpur and Nalia.

Rainfall: Rain/thundershowers have occurred at many places over east Rajasthan, at a few places over Jammu and Kashmir and west Rajasthan and at isolated places over rest of the region. The chief amounts of rainfall in cm. are: (5 cm. and above) HARYANA: Jagadhari 5, EAST RAJASTHAN: Mount Abu 27, Mount Abu tehsil 22, Pisagan, Devel, Dungerpur Tehsil and Kherwara 17 each, Mangliwas 16, Beawar 14, Kenwa and Salumber 13 each, Ajmer and Puskar 11 each, Bhinay and Aspur 10 each, Ganeshpur, and Vallabhnagar 8 each, Nasirabad, Srinagar, Vijaynagar, Asind, and Chhoti Sadri 7 each, Tatgarh, Hurda, Badisadri, Veja, Jhodai and Sarara 6 each and Sabla, Bhim, Sirohi, Reodar and Girva 5 each, WEST RAJASTHAN: Merta city 17, Bhopalgarh 15, Jaitaran 13, Jodhpur 10, Billara, Luni and Raipur 8 each, Sojat 7, Degana, Khivensar and Rohat 6 each and Barmer 5 and EAST-UTTAR PRADESH: Gorakhpur

6. FORECAST FOR REGION VALID UNTIL THE MORNING OF 1st OCTOBER 2013 : Rain/thundershowers may occur at many places over south east Rajasthan during next 48 hours and decrease thereafter. Rain/thundershowers may occur at many places over south west Rajasthan during next 24 hours and decrease thereafter. Rain/thundershowers may occur at a few places over north east Rajasthan and east Uttar Pradesh during next 48 hours and

decrease 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 south east-Rajasthan during next 48 hours and over south-west-Rajasthan during next 24 hours.

FORECAST FOR DELHI AND NEIGHBOURHOOD VALID UNTIL THE MORNING OF 1st OCTOBER 2013: Partly cloudy sky. Rain/thundershowers could occur in some areas.

Government encouraging oilseeds, oil palm growers

PERAMBALUR



Darez Ahmed, Collector, inspecting a field near Perambalur on Friday

The Agriculture Department has been implementing special schemes for stepping up oilseeds and oil palm cultivation in the district.

A comprehensive programme is being implemented under the National Agriculture Development Programme and oil palm area development programme. “The Agriculture Department has sanctioned farm implements worth Rs. 73.31 lakh to 275 oil palm growers in the district,” said Darez Ahamed, District Collector.

He said efforts were made to develop coconut cultivation. The Coconut Development Board had sanctioned Rs. 10.67 lakh and distributed the same to 61 coconut growers. “Seed village programme” had been introduced in select areas to produce quality coconut saplings. About Rs. 86.39 lakh had been spent so far benefiting 11,519 farmers.

Cotton cultivation

In a release here on Saturday, the Collector said that under the NADP and “Cotton Mission” programme, demonstration plots had been set up to explain the quality cultivation practices in cotton. About 8,975 cotton cultivators underwent training on quality-based cultivation.

Earlier, the Collector inspected the demo-plots at Ezhumur, Andi Kurumbalur, and Perumathur villages where maize and cotton cultivation had been taken up under the “one hectare one lakh” scheme. He said that 16 agricultural officers were imparting training to farmers on quality-based cultivation techniques in maize and cotton.

The Collector said the Agriculture Department had been sanctioned Rs. 3.51 crore this year for implementation of various schemes this financial year.

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- *‘Seed village programme’ introduced in select areas*
 - *8,975 cotton farmers given training in quality cultivation*
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GI registration sought for Salem mango, Hosur rose

THANJAVUR



Geographical Indication (GI) registration has been sought for Salem mango, Hosur rose, Srivilliputhur palkova, Kodali karuppur sari, Kandangi cotton sari, and 10 other products of Tamil Nadu, said P. Sanjai Gandhi, president, Intellectual Property Rights Attorney Association and Additional Government Pleader, High Court, Madras, here on Sunday.

Mr. Gandhi told presspersons at an event got up to mark the 10th anniversary of implementation of Geographical Indication of Goods (Regulation and Protection) Rules, 2002,

that applications had been filed with the GI registry for getting GI registration for the above products.

Salem mangoes are unique because of their distinct sweet taste. They have got an impeccable aroma. There are six varieties of mangoes grown in Salem for which GI registration is sought and every variety is different from each other.

Hosur, best known for cut roses, is evolving as the floriculture hub of India. Hosur region in Krishnagiri district is home for more than 40 varieties of roses such as “Taj Mahal”, “Kohinoor”, “Avalanche”, “Grand gala”, and “Bordeaux”. Hosur roses are one of the best quality roses owing to the climatic condition of the region

Srivilliputhur Palkova, with its fine grained texture, shows rich quality from other palkovas.

Kodalikaruppur sari derives its name from Kodali Karuppur village from where it originates near Kumbakonam. It is fine cotton muslin in which discontinuous supplementary “zari” patterns are woven in “zamdani” technique.

A typical Kandangi sari is thick coarse cotton which can endure the roughest washes. These saris are hand woven by artisans of Karaikudi. “These goods will soon get the GI registration,” said Mr. Gandhi. That would give protection to their originality.

Geographical Indications Registry has registered 193 Geographical Indication goods in India between September 2003 and September 2013 out of 453 GI goods.

Karnataka has highest number of 32 registered GI goods. Tamil Nadu comes second with 24 goods followed by Andhra Pradesh with 22 legally registered GI goods.

Some of the GI goods of Karnataka are Mysore Silk, Channapatna toys and dolls, Mysore sandal soap, Coorg orange, Udupi jasmine, Monsooned Malabar Arabica coffee, Coorg green cardamom, Dharwad pedha and Bangalore blue grapes.

Tamil Nadu GI goods include Salem fabric, Kanchipuram silk, Thanjavur paintings, Thanjavur Art Plate, Swami Malai bronze icons, Thanjavur doll, Thanjavur veena, and Nachiyarkoil Kuthuvilakku.

Andhra Pradesh GI goods include Pochampalli ikat, Kondapalli bommalu, Tirupathi Laddu, Machilipatnam Kalamkari, Guntur sannam chillies, Venkatagiri saris, Bobbile veena, and Mangalagiri saris.

“Our aim is to get GI registration for maximum number of goods from Tamil Nadu and thus make the State number one in having the maximum number of GI registered goods,” Mr. Gandhi added.

Best weaver award

THANJAVUR

S.K.Murali, weaver and a member of Thirubuvanam Silk Handloom Weavers Co-operative Society (Thico silks) at Thirubuvanam in Thanjavur district has been selected as the best weaver of the State and a cash award of Rs. 1 lakh and a certificate was presented to him recently. A release here by Thico silks on Sunday said Chief Minister Jayalalithaa has announced the award for the best weaver who introduces innovations and new designs in his product and work with dedication. Accordingly, 44 products were sent by Handloom Silk Weavers' Co-operative Societies in the State for selection. Mr. Murali has been selected as the best weaver. S.Sundaraj, Minister for Handlooms, presented the award and certificate to him at a function held in Chennai on September 26. Harmander Singh, Principal Secretary, Handlooms, P.Muthuveeran, Director, Handlooms, and K.V.Manoharan, Chairman, Co-optex, and V.Sahayam, Managing Director, Co-optex, took part in the function, said the release.

Dairy farmers seek incentive

TIRUCHI

Faced with a sharp rise in the prices of cattle fodder, dairy farmers have appealed to Chief Minister Jayalalithaa to provide incentive for milk producers on the lines of a scheme implemented in Karnataka.

They were faced with a rise in cost of production as fodder prices had increased 50 to 100 per cent. "The cost of paddy straw and maize has gone up by 100 per cent," said K.A. Sengottuvel, president, Tamil Nadu Milk Producers' Welfare Association.

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- *Dairy farmers get Rs. 4 a litre as incentive in Karnataka*
 - *They say the price of fodder has gone by up to 100 per cent*
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Mettur level

TIRUCHI

The water level in the Mettur Dam stood at 102 feet on Sunday, against its full level of 120 feet. The inflow was 4,100 cusecs and the discharge 23,014 cusecs.

Water level

TIRUNELVELI

Water level in Papanasam dam on Sunday stood at 108.80 feet (maximum level is 143 feet). The dam had an inflow of 517.18 cusecs and 1,502.25 cusecs is discharged from the dam. The level of Manimuthar dam stood at 57.93 feet (118 feet). The dam had an inflow of 50 cusecs and 325 cusecs is discharged.

Nagercoil

Water level in Pechipparai dam stood at 23.90 feet, while it was 62.15 feet in Perunchani, 9.38 feet in Chittar I, 9.48 feet in Chittar II and 33.79 feet in Mambazathuraiyaru dam.

Homemakers reap the harvest together

KERALA



*Reaping gold: Members of the Sreyas Joint Liability Group at Perumthotty in Idukki district engaged in farming.—
Photo: G.K.R.*

In this little-known village of Perumthotty in Idukki, a group of homemakers have woven a success story in joint farming under the initiative of the Kudumbasree Mission.

The three years' work of the four women of the Sreyas Joint Liability Group (JLG) took them to the Global Agriculture Meet at Gandhinagar in Gujarat, where on September 2 they won the award for the best Kudumbasree unit from the State this year.

Their farming initiative is now being studied by a three-member team of a non-governmental organisation from New Delhi, which arrived here last week, for adoption in other States as a model under the National Rural Livelihood Mission.

The women have been members of the Kudumbasree Mission in Vathikudy grama panchayat since the beginning. After forming the JLG, they took up cultivation of just two varieties of vegetables – the bitter gourd and the yard-long bean, locally known as *kuruthola payar* – for which the soil and the climatic conditions here were best suited.

“Earlier, we cultivated tapioca, yam, ginger, plantain, and vegetables. It was only three years ago that we started concentrating on these two vegetables,” Bindu Scaria, a member of the Sreyas JLG and current chairperson of the Kudumbasree Mission of Vathikudy, said.

She received the best JLG award at the Gandhinagar meet after a brief stay in Jharkhand where she narrated her experience to various groups under a government initiative for women empowerment there.

While earlier too, pesticide and fertilizer application was minimal, the group completely switched over to organic cultivation from the last crop, Ms. Scaria said.

The JLG took 1.5 acres of land on lease for cultivating the two vegetables. For the organic cultivation, cow dung was used as fertilizer and a combination of a juice made from tobacco leaves for pest control, she said. The produce was sold directly to the Swayasraya Karshaka Vipani of the Vegetable and Fruit Promotion Council, Keralam.

“Last year, our Kudumbasree unit was selected as the best one engaged in farming and won the Mahila Sree award at a meeting organised by the Social Welfare Department to honour 100 noted women representing various fields,” she said.

In 2011, of the total turnover of Rs.3 lakh from the bitter gourd and beans sale, Rs.1.5 lakh was the group’s profit, she said.

Last season, their profit margin was lesser, she said, probably owing to the shift to organic cultivation.

This time, they delayed the sowing of seeds owing to incessant rainfall, she said. “We farm mainly in the morning and the evening.”

It is not only profits but also interest in farming that drives these women. Besides Ms. Scaria, Omana Somarajan, Kunjumol Jose, and Mini Babu are the other members in the team.

Vathikudy is a complete farming village with the three VFPCCK markets at Thopramkudy, Rajamudy, and Daivamedu collecting produce daily from the farmers. The ‘nenthran’ plantain

variety from here reaches as far away as New Delhi. However, it is the Perumthotty model that is being looked up to for empowering women in rural India.

The Sreyas Joint Liability Group won the award for the best Kudumbasree unit in the State this year.

Flower show

KOLLAM

The annual Kollam Flower Show organised by the Kollam Agri-Horticultural and Zoological Society will be held at the Asramam Guest House compound from December 27 to January 6.

The decision was taken at a meeting of the society, chaired by District Collector B. Mohanan, who is also the ex officio president of the society, on Saturday.

The show is held annually in association with the district administration, the district panchayat, the Kollam Corporation, and the District Tourism Promotion Council. Cultural programmes will be held at the venue on all days of the show. A pet show and a food festival will be held.

There will be various competitions such as painting and cookery.

Jangalu rat traps still popular among paddy farmers

NALGONDA



Life and livelihood: Jangalus, carrying rat traps on their bicycles, visiting a village on Nagarjunasagar-Nalgonda road in Nalgonda district on Sunday.—PHOTO: Singam Venkataramana

While the rice producing nations across the globe are spending millions of rupees on controlling the rat menace in paddy fields, Jangalus, a nomadic tribe from Nalgonda district, use traditional traps made up of palm tree leaves to catch the rodents. They offer their services to farmers and earn their livelihood.

A 3-member Jangalu team, who was on their way on two bicycles in search of livelihood, was spotted by *The Hindu* on the Nagarjunasagar-Nalgonda road near Haliya.

Speaking to this correspondent, Ramaesh Jangalu, a member of the team, said that he, along with his elder brother Mallaiah and 12-year-old nephew left home some 15 days ago to earn some money by offering their services to farmers. The Jangalus, residents of a hamlet near Nereducherla mandal head quarters, travel during the cropping season and visit hundreds of villages. They carry about 200 rat traps made up of palm leaves along with them.

“Palm leaves are safe because rats can’t cut through them,” he said. “We place about 100 traps in each acre of land for which we get Rs. 250 per night and the farmers feed the team for the day. We carry spare clothes and take bath in the fields itself,” he said.

Old technique, but better result

His elder brother, Mallaiah, explains about the techniques they follow to catch the rodents. “We place the traps strategically after identifying the areas where rats move frequently,” he says.

Asked about the success rate, Mr. Mallaiah says it is somewhere between 50 to 80 per cent. “If the farmer is happy with the performance, we get more money apart from the agreed amount,” he quips, adding that one good catch fetches them more orders from the neighbourhood.

Mr. Ramesh further says that they spend almost two months outside home during kharif and rabi seasons, especially when the crops reach ripening stage.

Cost-effective method

Despite the availability of modern techniques to control rodents, the Jangalus are still popular among the paddy farmers, says Assistant Joint Director Agriculture M.D. Jameel Shamed Siddique.

Oil palm farmers for transparency in oil recovery

ELURU

The Oilfed Farmers Association has emphasised the need for transparency in recovery of oil from the oil palm fresh fruit bunches (FFBs). The association State president N. Raghava Rao, Vundavalli Venkatarao and G. Sivaramprasad made a plea to this effect at a meeting attended by A. Ramakrishna, member of the Oil Recovery Formula Committee, held on the premises of the State-run palm oil processing unit at Pedavegi in West Godavari district on Sunday.

They said there was a veil of secrecy in making public the data relating to the oil recovery rates. Besides, uniformity in the recovery rates was also conspicuously missing in the State-run

factories and the private processing units. Mr. Venkata Rao said the oil recovery rate at the Pedavegi factory dropped from 18 per cent to 17 per cent in the last one year due to a variety of reasons. As a result, the price fixed for the FFBs also fell accordingly, causing financial losses to the growers, Mr. Rao said.

They accused the State-run factory management at Pedavegi of shifting the 'healthy' fruit with prospects of more oil recovery to the neighbouring private processing units for crushing allegedly under the influence of bribes. The factory at Pedavegi settled for crushing only the low-grade fruits which yielded poor oil recovery, the leaders said. Ramesh, manager of the oil factory however attributed the drop in the oil recovery to the unripe fruit supplied by the growers. Mr. Ramakrishna asked the factory management to look into the complaints of the farmers and seek views from the experts on improvement of oil recovery. The meeting constituted a vigilance committee with representatives from the oil palm growers to oversee the oil recovery rate at the Pedavegi factory.

Efforts on for tea park in Coimbatore

COIMBATORE

Efforts are on by the stakeholders to set up a tea park in Coimbatore. The project will get 30 per cent of the total cost as assistance from the Union Government under the ASIDE Scheme (Assistance to States for developing Export Infrastructure and Allied Activities) of the Ministry of Commerce, according to R. Ambalavanan, Executive Director of the Tea Board.

He told presspersons here on Saturday that a special purpose vehicle will be formed by the industry and they will bring in about 20 per cent of the project cost as their contribution.

The total cost for the Coimbatore park was yet to be finalised.

The land would have to be finalised. Nearly nine acres has been identified for the park and first a warehouse would be established. It would also have facilities for blending, tea packaging, etc.

Folklore varsity to document indigenous farming methods

HUBLI



BACK TO BASICS

Encyclopaedia on native farm science

Native farm methods of southern States to be documented

States covered are Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Kerala

1,000-page encyclopaedia in two volumes

Encyclopaedia first in Kannada, then in English

Karnataka Folklore University at Gotagodi in Haveri district has embarked on an ambitious project of documenting these indigenous farming methods practised in the southern States.

Even as agricultural scientists are trying to improve the yield and develop pest-resistant varieties, several farmers have achieved better yields and healthy crops using indigenous methods. And these indigenous methods are practised in a particular region and most often are not passed on to the next generation or to the farmers in other regions.

But now the Karnataka Folklore University at Gotagodi in Haveri district has embarked on an ambitious project of documenting these indigenous farming methods practised in the southern States and bringing out an encyclopaedia on what it calls native farm science.

The “Encyclopaedia on South Indian Native Agricultural Knowledge Systems” will have information on the native farming techniques from Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh and Kerala. A team of experts from Karnataka are engaged in preparing the content to be published in two volumes in Kannada. The English version is to come later.

“Farmers followed indigenous methods to get better yield and quality crops. The ‘indigenous farm science’ of southern India dates back to the Harappan civilisation and there has been mention of it in the ancient texts,” says S.C. Ramesh, university Registrar (Evaluation), who is the editor of the encyclopaedia.

The research and compilation of techniques assume importance in the backdrop of growing importance of organic farming and such an encyclopaedia would be handy for farmers, Prof.

Ramesh said. University Vice-Chancellor Ambalike Hirianna is the Principal Editor and retired professor from Mysore University R.V.S. Sundaram is its executive editor.

“Our effort is to recall the forgotten native farming methods where the focus was on cultivating healthy foodgrains. We have documented them and there will also be district-wise survey reports on native farm science,” Prof. Sundaram said over telephone.

Index

The encyclopaedia will also have an index on scientific names of different species and also the native names in Kannada, Telugu, Tamil, Malayalam, Kodava and Tulu languages.

“Already, work on nearly 600 pages of the encyclopaedia has been completed and the work on getting the articles on native farm science from other languages is under way. It will take another three months for the encyclopaedia to be ready,” Prof. Sundaram said.

THE NEW INDIAN EXPRESS

IIHR makes veggies, fruits bigger, better

Arka Sahan is a variety of custard apple which weighs between 800 grams and 1.2 kg and can be scooped up like ice cream and eaten while Arka Bheem is a hybrid of onion having a shelf-life of up to three months. These hybrids, which have characteristics that sound as fancy as their names, have been developed by the city-based Indian Institute of Horticultural Research (IIHR).

IIHR has developed more than 18 hybrids of vegetables and fruits as well as flower and medicinal plants. These are touted as being large sized, resistant to drought and pests, seedless and having long shelf lives. Some even have more than one of these unique characters.

Seeds of vegetables such as tomato, chilli, onion, French beans, field beans, cowpea, green peas, brinjal, coriander and pumpkin and ornamental crops like China aster and marigold are sold at IIHR, National Seeds Corporation and Karnataka State Seeds Corporation. Many private nurseries are already using these seeds to cater to farmers.

Fruit crops like Arka Prabhath (papaya), Arka Kiran/Arka Mridula (guava) and Deanna (fig) as well as ornamental crops such as Arka Ambara/Arka Kanak (crossandra), Arka Kesar (gladiolus), Arka Flame (carnation) and Arka Parimala (rose) are sold as planting materials (grafts, bulbs and seedlings).

Weather

Chennai - INDIA

Today's Weather



Partly Cloudy

Monday, Sep 30

Max 34° | Min 27°

 Rain: 0
 Humidity: 66
 Wind: normal

 Sunrise: 05:58
 Sunset: 05:59
 Barometer: 1006

Tomorrow's Forecast



Cloudy

Tuesday, Oct 1

Max 35° | Min 26°

Extended Forecast for a week

Wednesday Oct 2	Thursday Oct 3	Friday Oct 4	Saturday Oct 5	Sunday Oct 6
34° 26° Cloudy	34° 25° Overcast	34° 24° Overcast	34° 24° Overcast	34° 22° Overcast

Airport Weather

 Chennai

 Rain: 0 Sunrise: 05:58
 Humidity: 89 Sunset: 05:59
 Wind: normal Barometer: 1003


THE ECONOMIC TIMES

Good monsoon: 39% of country gets excess rains, IMD data say



However, despite the increase in the rainfall in some parts of the country, parts of eastern India namely Bihar and Jharkhand and almost the entire Northeast continued to receive "deficient rainfall".

NEW DELHI": With the performance of monsoon improving this week, over 39% of the country received excess rainfall this year, an increase by 6% over last week.

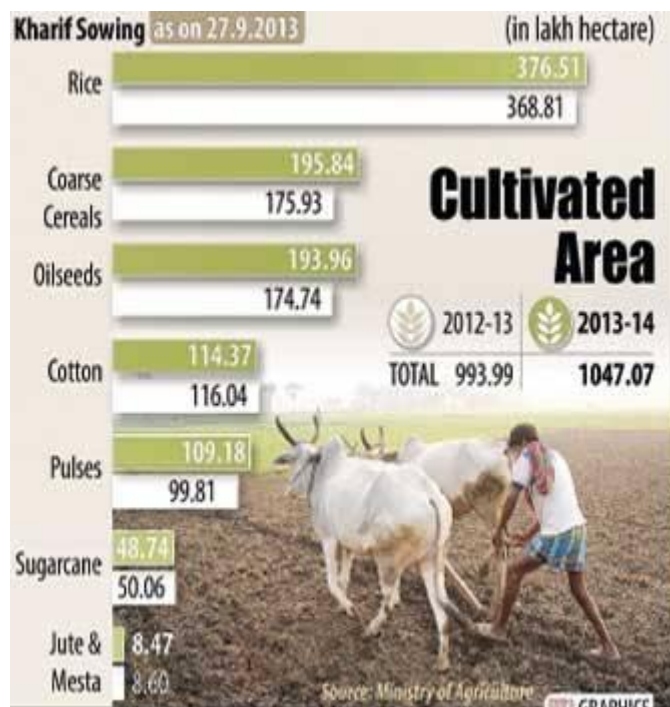
According to the Meteorological Department, as per the data collected from June 1 to September 25, over 47% of the country received normal rainfall.

Overall the country received rainfall of 905 mm as compared to 864 mm — which is 5% more than the normal rainfall, while some parts saw a deficit in the rainfall to the tune of 29%.

Last week, the IMD reported that over 33% of the country had received excess rains, while 53% received normal rainfall.

"There are some regions that received normal rainfall until last week, yet they were on the border line. As these areas received better rains this week, these areas were upgraded as the ones that had received excess rainfall," said a senior scientist at the IMD. The regions that received excess rainfall are the western coast of India, parts of western Gujarat, Maharashtra, eastern Rajasthan, parts of Odisha, Kerala, Karnataka and Jammu and Kashmir. This year,

central India received rainfall of 1149 mm as compared to normal rainfall of 954 mm — which is 21% more. However, despite the increase in the rainfall in some parts of the country, parts of eastern India namely Bihar and Jharkhand and almost the entire Northeast continued to receive "deficient rainfall".



The region normally receives rainfall of 1393 mm, but this year it has only received rainfall of 995 mm — which is 29% less. The Bihar government has already declared "drought" in 33 of 38 districts.

"This is a normal phenomena. We have observed that whenever central India receives normal or excess rainfall, parts of eastern India and the Northeast receives deficient rainfall.

"Similarly, whenever the eastern part of the country receives better rainfall, it has been observed that there is less rainfall in Central India," the scientist added.

New approach needed to address seasonal hike in onion prices



Since much of onions are stored in Maharashtra, this state sets the price trend for others including Delhi, Consumer Affairs Secretary Pankaj Agrawal said.

NEW DELHI: A new approach is needed to address seasonal spike in onion prices as farmers have started storing the winter grown crop and marketing it later in the lean period of August-October for better returns, Consumer Affairs Secretary Pankaj Agrawal.

"Firstly, everyone has to understand that rabi (winter) onion is a commodity that is being marketed. Stored onion is a good product to be released slowly in the market during the lean period of August-October," he said, adding that a new approach needs to be adopted to address the seasonal spike.

Since much of onions are stored in Maharashtra, this state sets the price trend for others including Delhi, he said. Even Madhya Pradesh traders, who also supply onions to the national capital, take price cues from Lasalgoan in Maharashtra, he added.

Agrawal said retail prices of onions in the southern region are softening due to arrival of early summer crop from Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh.

Prices, however, remain high at Rs 66-75 per kg in Delhi and other parts of north India as the south crop is costlier in terms of transportation and demand is being met through stored crop, he added.

"There is about 4 per cent fall in onion production. But supplies in the country were down by 34 per cent in August and 39 per cent so far in September. The percentage fall in output does not match with the percentage of shortages. Do they correspond? It means someone is hoarding," Agrawal said.

"Farmers, especially in Maharashtra, are holding back onions as the government is encouraging them to create storage capacity for the crop. Farmers are getting good price this year, he said, adding that dehoarding onions from their godowns is not the solution to address the price rise issue.

If farmers store, you cannot dehoard. If we dehoard, it will be for the first time that Indian farmers will be arrested for hoarding, he said.

"Would you like to do that? Do you want to impose Inspector Raj on farmers? That is not the way we want to work. There are certain challenges," Agrawal said.

Of 27 lakh tonnes of onions stored across the country, Maharashtra -- the largest onion producing state -- has stored 15 lakh tonnes. It has sold most of the stored onions and currently has about 2 lakh tonnes, Agrawal said.

Agrawal said the government has the option of declaring onion as an essential item and take action on hoarding. "Before taking such a step one needs to understand that 17-18 million tonnes of onions are not produced in one season and then hoarded."

About 60 per cent of produce arrive in April-May, the rest 20 per cent each in September and November, he added.

Onion sale begins in fair price shops

BERHAMPUR: After lifting of ban due to the imposition of the model code of conduct for urban polls in Odisha, the Ganjam district authorities today resumed sale of onions in fair price shops (FPS) at Rs 40 per kg in Berhampur town.

The onion is now available at 14 fair price shops and one can purchase up to 2 kg of onion at a time, official sources said.

Though the administration had made such facility earlier, the shops were closed due to the urban polls. "We hope the buyers prefer the onion from the ration shops this time as the difference of price from market to ration shop is around Rs 10 per kg," said assistant civil supply officer, Berhampur Purushottam Lenka.

Sub Collector, Berhampur BK Das reviewed the price of onion at a meeting with the officials and traders. He appealed officials to make convenient to supply the onion at the affordable price in the ration shops. "Some more ration shops in the town are likely to be asked to sale the onions in the coming days" sub collector said.

District administration has taken decision to sell the onion at fair price in the FPS when the prices have soared to around Rs 50 to Rs 55 per kg in the retail market in the town, depending on their quality. The price rise of the onion was due to lower supply from the producing regions, the traders said.

Kharif sowing crosses 1047 lakh hectare



Area under kharif crops has grown by about 10-lakh hectare during the week ending on September 27th.

NEW DELHI: Area under kharif crops has grown by about 10-lakh hectare during the week ending on September 27th. The total sown area, as per reports received from states, stands at 1047.07 lakh hectare as compared to 993.99 hectare at this time last year and 1038.27 lakh hectare on September 20 this year. As per the India Meteorological Department the withdrawal line of southwest monsoon continue to pass through Kalpa, Hissar, Jodhpur and Nalia.

Rain and thundershowers occurred at most places over Saurashtra and Kutch; at many places over Gujarat region, Assam & Meghalaya and Konkan & Goa; at a few places over Lakshadweep and Andaman & Nicobar Islands and at isolated places over Gangetic West Bengal, Odisha, Haryana, Tamil Nadu and coastal Karnataka. Weather remained mainly dry and dry over rest parts of the country on Friday. As per the weather forecast for the next three days rain would occur at most places over Saurashtra & Kutch during next 24 hours and at many places thereafter. Rains would occur at many places over Gujarat region, Konkan & Goa, Rajasthan, northeastern states, a few places over West Bengal, Sikkim, Bihar and Jharkhand. Odisha, coastal Karnataka, Andaman & Nicobar Islands and Lakshadweep would also receive spells of rains. At isolated places over east Uttar Pradesh, east Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh rain and thundershower would occur during next 24 hours and increase thereafter. Isolated rain would occur over rest parts of the country.

The details of the area covered so far and that covered during this time last year are given: in lakh per hectare. Crop Area sown in 2013-14 Area sown in 2012-13

Rice	376.51	368.81
Pulses	109.18	99.81
Coarse Cereals	195.84	175.93
Oilseeds	193.96	174.74
Sugarcane	48.74	50.06
Cotton	114.37	116.04
Jute & Mesta	8.47	8.60
Total	1047.07	993.99



THE TIMES OF INDIA

Farmer bags Progressive Mushroom Grower award

COIMBATORE

A mushroom grower hailing from Villupuram district has bagged the Progressive Mushroom Grower award for this year for his outstanding contribution to the mushroom industry in Tamil Nadu.

A R Mohamed Khan from Kallakurichi in Villupuram district was earlier trained at Mushroom Research and Training Centre in Tamil Nadu Agricultural University (TNAU) in 2010.

The average mushroom production at his farm is 100 kg per day and he has also established a mushroom spawn laboratory with the production capacity of 300kg per day, said a statement from TNAU. Apart from this, he is the only manufacturer of mushroom rusks in Tamil Nadu having the production capacity of 500 kg rusk a day.

Mohamed has also engaged around 10 dealers to supply mushroom rusks in Tamil Nadu and Kerala. His other products include mushroom pickles and mushroom pakodas and he has also developed the technology for producing mushroom noodles and mushroom bathing soap.

Considering such outstanding achievements in the mushroom industry, the award was presented to him by Directorate of Mushroom Research, Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR).

Dr Vijay Singh Thakar, Vice-Chancellor of Dr.Y.S.Parmar University of Horticulture & Forestry at Solan in Himachal Pradesh presented the award during the National Mushroom Mela held recently at Solan. TNAU officials said that his keen interest in providing support to small and marginal mushroom growers and efforts taken to popularise mushroom consumption needs special mention.

Mohamed Khan also gives free consultations to budding entrepreneurs and is a pioneer in introducing value addition of mushroom.

DECCAN Chronicle

15-yr pan-Indian research yields riches



Picture for representational purpose only.

Coimbatore

After conducting pan India research, the Forest College and Research Institute (FC&RI) in Mettupalayam, near Coimbatore, has come out with a slew of traditional and under-utilised crop varieties with high-nutritional value that are suitable for cultivation in Tamil Nadu.

The FC&RI, in collaboration with the Indian Council of Agricultural and Research, undertook a national-level co-ordinated research network on under-utilised crops since 1982 to promote such under-utilised and traditional crops for human use in Tamil Nadu.

“After an intensive 15 years of study, we have found a high-yielding variety of the grain, amaranth, which has immense health benefits and is suitable for cultivation in Tamil Nadu’s conditions,” said A. Balasubramanian, professor and researcher at FC&RI.

Amaranth can be used as porridge, like popcorn and to manufacture biscuit. “This grain contains components like lysine and squalene, which is utilised for preparation of medicines

meant to cure cancer and reduce cholesterol. It can also be preferred as a low-sugar food,” Prof Balasubramanian said.

Amaranth, which was cultivated in the Kolli Hills and the Nilgiris, was the main food crop centuries ago. “The crop variant has now been brought from Gujarat, where it is sown for export to international markets,” the researcher said.

Like in the case of amaranth, FC&RI has also brought out crops like rice bean, an intercrop, and simarouba, a tree variety from South America, with high health benefits, and which can be grown in TN.

“These few varieties of crops were found suitable for our state after research on hundreds of crops which have been proved successful. While the rice bean has high protein content, simarouba can be used to produce edible oil, which has low melting point and can be used for making chocolates. The desired varieties of amaranth are capable of yielding eight quintals per acre if raised during the kharif and late rabi season,” said Prof Balasubramanian, adding that efforts would now be taken to promote these crops among farmers.

Business Standard

Paddy production likely to be higher this year in WB in spite of floods

Experts say factors like use of high-yielding seeds, good rainfall may boost rice productivity this year



Paddy field image via Shutterstock

In spite of crop damage due to floods in parts of West Bengal, paddy production is likely to be higher than usual this year.

Factors like use of high-yielding seeds and a good rainfall are expected to boost rice productivity this year, according to experts.

"Initial estimates show this year paddy productivity is much more than usual. While it is early to predict actual production, rice production this year is likely to be higher than what it was last year," said Pranab Chatterjee, professor at Bidhan Chandra Krishi Viswavidyalaya (BCKV).

In 2012-13, West Bengal produced 15.3 million tones of rice, an increase of 5.5 percent over previous year

"This year, new seed varieties and better pesticide and insecticide management contributed to good growth of crop," said Ramaprasad Biswas, a farmer in Nadia.

This year, the state government has set the target of increasing rice productivity by 500 kg per hectare, on account of new varieties of seeds introduced as part of the second green revolution in the east, said Chatterjee. The average rice productivity in West Bengal is close to 2500 kg per hectare.

In July-August, floods in nine out of 19 districts, including high rice productivity districts of Burdwan, Hooghly, Birbhum and Nadia, in West Bengal had destroyed a part of standing paddy crop.

Paddy production in West Bengal takes place in three seasons - aus, aman and boro, of which the kharif paddy (aus and aman) output accounts for about 70 per cent of paddy production in the state.

Last year, in spite of a delayed monsoon, the price of paddy crashed due to excess, but low quality production.

The crash was on account of higher production in the boro season, which discouraged the farmers to sow paddy seeds during kharif season. West Bengal contributes 14-16 per cent of India's rice production.

The price of paddy in the domestic market had crashed to as low as Rs 850-900 per quintal, against the minimum support price of Rs 1,080 per quintal, due to import of rice from Jharkhand and Orissa. The state government had procured about 3.04 million tonnes of paddy during 2011-12.

Till May this year, the state had procured 2.71 million tones of paddy was procured up to May 2013..Rice is cultivated in 18 districts of West Bengal. Out of which 4 districts are under high productivity group, 9 districts are under medium productivity group, 3 districts are under medium-low productivity group and 2 districts are under low productivity group.

THE HINDU Business Line

S. Indian tea output to fall by 10 mkg on adverse weather

Bangalore, Sept. 29:

South India tea production is set to decline for the fifth year in succession.

“There has been a cumulative decline in the tea crop till August 2013. The decline is to the tune of 10 million kg (mkg), which is unlikely to recoup in the remaining four months of this year,” said Peter Mathias, President, United Planters’ Association of Southern India (UPASI).

South India tea production during the January-July period is estimated at 5.7 mkg. But according to the initial estimate of UPASI, the crop is lower by 25 per cent which means a lower crop of 4.3 mkg.

Mathias said the main reason for the lower crop in South India is due to the adverse climatic conditions which prevailed all these months.

“Initially, the crop was lower on account of drought-like situation during the first quarter, which was followed by excessive rain and overcast conditions which were not conducive for the crop prospects in the second and third quarters.”

“In the first-two months of the third quarter, the excessive rain and low sun shine hours resulted in the cumulative loss of South India crop by around 10 mkg,” he added.

Domestic demand

The tea prices are buoyant as a result of low crop coupled with higher domestic intake.

The domestic consumption is evident from the higher volume of tea routed through auction, which is higher by three million kg.

“This is attributed to the change in the product mix in favour of cut, tear, curl (CTC) teas to satisfy the increased domestic demand requirement,” Mathias said.

The average price realisation of South India teas for January-August period is Rs 102.23 for a kg, compared to Rs 84.24 during the corresponding period last year, which is an increase of Rs 17.99.

Mathias said “The CTC price is higher by Rs 17.99 and orthodox (process where tea is hand-processed or machine-rolled) tea prices are also trading higher by Rs 19.10.”

Demand perks up Kochi tea prices

Kochi, Sept. 29:

A good demand perked up prices of some varieties of tea at the Kochi tea auctions.

In sale no 39, the quantity on offer in dust CTC grades was 10,76,500 kg.

The market for good liquoring teas and those which came under selection of AVT were barely steady to firm.

Others were irregular and lower by Rs 3-5 and sometimes more to the tune of up to Rs 10.

Well-made clean black medium and plainer varieties were firm to dearer.

Kerala Loose Tea Traders, Kerala State Civil Supplies and upcountry buyers lent useful support.

There was also some export enquiry on blacker teas, the auctioneers Forbes, Ewart and Figgis said.

Of the quantity of 7,000 kg on offer in dust orthodox category, the market was steady to firm.

Exporters absorbed a small quantity of orthodox dust offered.

In the best CTC dusts, PD varieties quoted Rs 110-131, RD grades ruled at Rs 126-162, SRD fetched Rs 139-166 and SFD stood at Rs 139-168.

In the leaf sale, the quantity on offer in orthodox grades was 123,000 kg. The market for Nilgiri brokens and whole leaf was firm to dearer. Fannings from the same origin was irregular and lower. Well made clean black tippy grades, brokens, whole leaf was appreciated in value. Others were irregular and tended to ease. Corresponding fannings sold around last level.

The quantity on offer in CTC grades was 59,000 kg and the market for good liquoring teas was fully firm to dearer. Others were irregular and lower. Exporters and internal buyers were active.

In the dust category, Sholayar SFD quoted the best prices of Rs 171 followed by Kallyar SRD, Mayura SFD and Waterfall SFD at Rs 170. In the leaf varieties, Pascoes Woodlands Hyson Green Tea fetched the best price of Rs 304 followed by Chamraj FP – Sup at Rs 261.

Rains in Gujarat boost cotton, groundnut yields

Cotton production to go up by 10-15 per cent



The rains would put off harvest and arrivals will be delayed by around 15-20 days.

New Delhi, Sept. 29:

The recent heavy downpour in Gujarat is proving to be beneficial for two major standing crops - cotton and groundnut - further boosting their yields.

During the week ending September 25, Gujarat received 740 per cent more than normal rains, while the downpour in Saurashtra was 433 per cent excess triggering floods in the State.

Experts and trade sources believe that these rains will give a further fillip to the output of cotton and groundnut in the State.

“There will be a 10-15 per cent increase in cotton output and we expect production to be at 130 lakh-135 lakh bales from the earlier estimates of 115 lakh-120 lakh bales,” said Anand Poppat, Secretary of the Saurashtra Ginners Association.

Cotton is currently in the boll formation stages in Gujarat, where the acreage this year stands at 26.88 lakh ha, marginally higher than last year’s level.

The latest rains have provided a big boost for the cotton crop in Gujarat and Saurashtra.

“In fact, they are sort of a game-changer,” said K.R. Kranti, Director of the Nagpur-based Central Institute of Cotton Research (CICR).

He said the downpour would be good for cotton as a dry spell for about two weeks prior to the rains was proving to be slightly stressful for the standing crop.

As the crop was currently in the flowering to boll formation stage, any increase in soil moisture would help boost the yields, Kranti said.

In Rajasthan, Punjab and Haryana, the cotton crop is in the boll bursting stages, while in Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh and Maharashtra, the crop is currently in the flowering to boll formation stages.

The Agriculture Ministry in its first advance estimate has pegged the cotton crop size at a record 353 lakh bales of 170 kg each, while the Cotton Association of India has estimated it at 375 lakh bales.

Poppat said the rains would put off harvest and as a result, arrivals will be delayed by around 15-20 days.

Cotton arrivals start normally from early October in Gujarat.

M.B. Lal, Managing Director of Shail Exports Pvt Ltd, said the rains will help the crop size expand by 5-6 lakh bales in Gujarat alone.

“Though there will be some discolouration of the pods that have already burst, the rains will benefit the crop by boosting yields,” Lal added.

Groundnut, the other major crop in Gujarat, will also stand to gain from the recent rains.

“The rains will benefit the groundnut crop boosting yields,” said Vijay Data, President, Solvent Extractors Association of India.

Govind Bhai Patel of Rajkot-based GGN Research said though the quality of first picking may be affected, overall, it will help improve the yield.

Pepper to remain firm till end of the year

Kochi, Sept. 29:

Even though there has been a slackness in the pepper market in the futures and spot, the mismatch in supply and demand is likely to keep the markets firm or steady at least till the end of the year.

Still, Tamil Nadu based dealers were covering from the high ranges of Kerala.

Low bulk density pepper mostly from Kerala was also being bought by the trade at prevailing prices.

Upcountry market pipelines continued to remain partially empty as the dealers were covering only to meet their immediate requirements because of the high cost of inventory involved from Karnataka of low bulk density material at Rs 400-405 a kg delivered anywhere in the country.

Active contracts on the NMCE last week moved up. Oct and Nov contracts increased by Rs 582 and Rs 51 a quintal respectively to the last traded price (LTP) of Rs 43,490 and Rs 43,500 a kg.

Total turn over decreased by 14 tonnes to 172 tonnes. Total open interest fell by 19 tonnes-20 tonnes.

Spot prices fell by Rs 200 a quintal to close at Rs 40,100 (ungarbled) and Rs 42,100 (garbled). Indian parity in the international market remained nearly steady at \$7,125 a tonne (c&f) for Europe and \$7,375 a tonne (c&f) for the US and remained competitive.

He said since Vietnam has exported over 1,00,000 tonnes till August 2013, with their limited carry-over stocks combined with lower production of pepper in Lampung (Indonesia) and an average crop reported in Brazil during the year, “the supply position of pepper is not going to be improved between September and December 2013. The stability of pepper price during the year has helped the local farmers to sell their good without waiting for higher price”, he said.

According to him, black pepper output in Lampung this year is significantly lower by 15,000 tonnes from around 55,000 tonnes in 2012. In Brazil this year production is estimated to be normal. In Vietnam, current stock is estimated to be limited. Out of around 1,18,000 tonnes harvested this year a volume of around 1,00,000 tonnes have been exported during Jan-Aug 2013.

It is reported that the Lampung crop is almost exhausted and there is no selling pressure from Brazil. As the rain gods have been kind the crop of 2014 is likely to be better than that of 2013, hence, the farmers are advised not to hold many stocks this year.

In the coming session in Kuching, the IPC will further evaluate the position and one can come to a well defined conclusion which affects the pepper industry in general.

He advised the pepper farmers to sell their current year and carryover stocks during 2013 and keep less stocks, if preferred.

Heavy arrivals pull down tomato prices



Karnal, Sept. 29:

Heavy arrivals in the market coupled with a steady domestic demand pulled tomato prices down by Rs 500-1,000 a quintal on Sunday.

Vikas Sachdeva, a trade expert, told *Business Line* that easy availability of stocks mainly pulled tomato prices down.

Arrivals have improved over the last 10 days and it may increase gradually in the coming weeks. Not only the heavy arrivals but lower quality is also a reason behind the fall in prices, said trade sources.

Around 1,000 crates (of 25 kg each) of different varieties of tomatoes arrived at the Karnal wholesale vegetable market and were quoted at Rs 1,800-3,500 a quintal. Around 2,200 crates of Nashik, Lalsona, Himsona and hybrid were received. About 20 per cent stock was of low quality; 70 per cent was of medium while about 10 per cent was of superior quality. Prices of superior quality dropped by Rs 1,000 at Rs 3,000-3,500.

The prices of medium quality produce went down by Rs 800 and quoted at 2,200-2,500 while the low quality produce was at Rs 1,800-2,000, Rs 500 down from the previous levels. About 57 per cent remained unsold. Tomato prices have decreased by Rs 650-1,500 a quintal over the last 10 days.

Stocks are easily available and price may fall marginally in the coming days, said Vikas Sachdeva.
