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To
The Editor,

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Sir,

I request that the following matter may kindly be published in your esteemed daily:

Store and Sell Small onion

Bellary onion (*Allium cepa var. cepa*) and multiplier onion (*Allium cepa var. aggregatum*) are the two major onion groups cultivated in India. Tamil Nadu accounted for 5 per cent of country's area under onion and more than 70 per cent of this is shared by small onion. According to the Second Advance Estimates (2012-13) of National Horticultural Board, area and production of onion in Tamil Nadu were 36,310 ha and 3,98,930 tonnes, respectively and in the year 2011-12, they were 37,120 ha and 5,56,450 tonnes, respectively.

To investigate the recent times price volatility in onion, the Domestic and Export Market Intelligence Cell functioning in the Centre for Agricultural and Rural Development Studies (CARDS) of Tamil Nadu Agricultural University analysed the past 15 years Dindigul market price and conducted surveys with producers and traders.

According to trade sources, small onion is mainly cultivated in three seasons, i.e., Thai, Vaigasi and Purattasi pattams and stored to make it available in the market throughout the year in Tamil Nadu. Farmers are of the opinion that crop duration, lesser cost of cultivation, storability and better profits compared to other crops lead them to prefer onion instead of other crops. Tamil Nadu and Karnataka states fulfill the demand for small onion in Kerala state.

Out of total small onion production normally around 30-35 percent is going for export. Indonesia is the major importing country for Indian small onion. Thailand is the

major export competitor for small onion and in this year Thailand has faced with crop failure. This created more export demand for Indian small onion.

During April to June 2013, the farm gate price of small onion was Rs.40 to Rs.50 per kg because of less arrivals. Arrivals from Karnataka has started in June and it is going to end now, but quality is not good due to rain damage. The Mysore onion price is ranging between Rs.24-30 per kg. Currently small onion from Theni, Dindigul, Madurai, Trichy, Kovilpatti, Tirunelveli districts are arriving to the markets. At present in Tamil Nadu, small onion price is ranging between Rs. 35-43 per kg in Dindigul market. The future arrivals are from Coimbatore, Tiruppur, Namakkal districts from August end onwards.

The prices are likely to increase from mid September upto October since onion bulbs are to be purchased for sowing in Purattasi pattam. Based on this prevailing situation, farm gate price of small onion is expected to be above Rs.45 per kg during harvest period viz., September and October 2013. Hence farmers are recommended to store and sell from mid October onwards.

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