

Farmers can go for cotton sowing

As per USDA report, India stands first among the cotton producing countries with production of 28 million bales (1 bale = 170kg) in an area of 11.9 million ha representing 27.45 per cent of global cotton production during 2015-16. Other major cotton producing countries are China, United States of America, Pakistan and Brazil. According to First Advance Estimate by Ministry of Agriculture, Gujarat holds the first position among the cotton producing states in India followed by Maharashtra, Andhra Pradesh, Haryana and Madhya Pradesh. In Tamil Nadu, cotton was grown in an area of 0.1 million ha with production of 0.53 million bales during 2014-15. The major cotton producing districts are Perambalur, Salem, Trichy, Dharmapuri, Ariyalur and Cuddalore. As per Cotton Advisory Board, the current stock position of cotton is 35 lakh bales in the country.

According to Cotton Association of India, India has exported 6.5 million bales of cotton during 2015-16. Cotton exports from India have nearly halted as local prices have rallied due to tight supplies because of drought, forcing the major importers like Pakistan, Bangladesh and Vietnam to turn to other global suppliers. About 1.2 million bales of cotton have been imported by India and it is expected to import 4 lakh bales more before the arrival of next crop.

According to the trade sources and Indian Cotton Federation, the area of cotton in India may decline upto 35 per cent as the farmers have shifted to crops like groundnut, pulses, paddy and sugarcane. There will be a drastic reduction of 7.3 per cent in cotton production when compared to last season. The whitefly attack in major cotton growing regions during last season and the above normal rainfall during monsoon as per the weather forecast had made the farmers to go for other crops.

The Price Forecasting Scheme of Centre for Agricultural and Rural Development Studies (CARDS), Tamil Nadu Agricultural University analyzed the last 10 years of cotton prices prevailed in Konganapuram Regulated market. As per the results of the analysis, the price of good quality extra-long staple cotton during Dec 2016 - Jan, 2017 may prevail around Rs.6,000-6,200 per quintal. Hence, farmers are advised to take sowing decision accordingly.

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