

Cassava Price will Cheer Farmers

Cassava is the third most important source of calories in the tropics, after rice and maize. Food and Agriculture organization estimated that the world production of tapioca as 288 million tonnes during 2015. Nigeria ranks first representing 19.73 per cent of global tapioca production followed by Thailand (11.63 %), Indonesia (8.48 %), Brazil (8.37 %) and others (51.79 %). India occupies tenth position in the global cassava production. As per Second Advance Estimates of Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare, in India cassava was cultivated in an area of 0.21 million hectares with the production of 4.8 million tonnes during 2015-16. Major tapioca producing states are Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Andhra Pradesh and Nagaland.

Cassava products such as sago is used for edible purpose and starch is being used for various industrial purposes. Thailand is the largest supplier of modified starch to India accounting for imports worth USD 1.17 crores during September' 2015- September' 2016 followed by Indonesia. Vizag Sea, Nhava Sheva Sea and Chennai Sea are the major ports importing starch. As per trade source, in SAGOSERVE the current stock position of starch is 30,000 bags and sago is about 2.5 lakh bags.

Due to unfavorable weather conditions, the production has been affected in the major states growing cassava and drastic reduction in price due to bumper production during last season has led the farmers to shift to other crops like pepper, cashew and vegetables. Whitefly attack has also been observed as the major problem for lower production in few regions of Tamil Nadu. So, the demand has increased for cassava and better price can be expected in the coming months.

The Price Forecasting Scheme of Centre for Agricultural and Rural Development Studies (CARDS), Tamil Nadu Agricultural University analyzed the last 15 years of cassava prices prevailed in Salem market. As per the results of the analysis, the farm gate price of good quality raw tuber during harvest may prevail around Rs. 9,000 – 10,000 per tonne. Hence, farmers are advised to take selling decision accordingly.

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