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Agri Policies

The Central government has extended the ambit of employment for workers registered under Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) to sectors such as dairy farming, fishing, Khadi and coir industry in Kerala.

Guar acreage up by 53% in Rajasthan. Guar has been trading weak as the sowing improved in Rajasthan. Traders attribute this to the good pre-monsoon showers seen in Rajasthan lately.

GM Seeds

Gujarat organic farmers to develop seed banks to take on GM seeds. About 500-odd organic farmers in Gujarat are trying to develop individual seed banks in a bid to resist the onslaught of genetically modified seeds.

The biggest advantage of developing seed banks is reduced cost. A bank of organic seeds will not only ensure reduced cost, but also assure good yield and above all good health to people.

Wheat

Wheat procurement has declined by 33 per cent to 25.08 million tons so far in the 2013-14 marketing year mainly due to lower arrival of wheat in the mandies with aggressive buying by private traders in the range of Rs 1,500-1,600 per tonne at a higher price than the government's minimum support price (MSP) of Rs 1,350 per quintal.

Cotton

The government has decided to reimburse Rs 719.41 crore to the Cotton Corporation of India (CCI) for losses incurred while buying the fiber at minimum support price operations in the cotton season 2012-13. The government under the Price Support System for the cotton season 2012-13 fixed the MSP for Long Staple and Medium Staple varieties of raw cotton at Rs 3,900 per quintal and Rs 3,600 per quintal, respectively. Currently prices in the spot market were ruling at 4,100 a quintal.

Paddy

The Centre has announced a hike in the support price of paddy marginally by Rs 60 to Rs 1,310 per quintal for the

2013-14 crop year. While MSP for common paddy has been raised to Rs 1,310 from Rs 1,250 per quintal, the support price of grade 'A' variety of paddy has been hiked by Rs 65 to Rs 1,345/quintal. Area under sowing for paddy is 16.40 lakhs hectares.

Pulses

In pulses category, the MSP (minimum support price) of *tur* dal has been raised by Rs 450 to Rs 4,300 per quintal, while that of *moong* by Rs 100 to Rs 4,500 per quintal. However, the support price of *urad* has been retained at last year's level at Rs 4,300 per quintal.

The MSP of yellow soybean has seen a hike of Rs 320 to Rs 2,560 a quintal and for soybean (black) to Rs 2,500 a quintal a rise of Rs 300.

Oil Seeds

In the oilseeds category, CCEA has approved a hike of Rs 300 in the MSP of soyabean (black) to Rs 2,500 a quintal; Rs 320 rise in MSP of soybean (yellow) to Rs 2,560 per quintal.

The MSP (minimum support price) of sesame seeds is increased by Rs 300 per quintal at Rs 4,500. The support prices of sunflower seed and *niger* seed have been kept unchanged at Rs 3,700 per quintal and Rs 3,500 per quintal, respectively.

Potato

Potato crop in Uttarakhand, which contributes about 10 per cent to the country's total output, is expected to get damaged due to recent flash floods. However, there may not be any significant impact on availability and prices because the state has very less share in the country's overall kharif potato output.

Tea

Plummeting auction prices and fall in tea production is worrying the tea planters in Assam. The state accounts for over 50 percent of India's production.

Due to erratic weather conditions the premium

on the tea production and tea planters are expecting sharp fall in production in July. Prices of green leaf have soared up to Rs 24 per kg in some areas as there is less tea leaf.

Sugar

Market is projecting a fourth year of surplus for sugar in 2013-14. It is estimating production of 3.7 million tonne of sugar, suggesting no near-term respite for international sugar prices. Maize

Maize

Maize prices in India are likely to ease from August onwards as global supply increases making Indian exports unviable due to higher export prices. The prices are also likely to be pressurized by expectations of higher kharif production on normal monsoon forecast by Indian Meteorological Department.

Spice

Cultivation base of pepper has come down sharply in the last decade hitting production and export. Export of Indian pepper in 2012-13 came down by 40 per cent compared to the previous year. While the country shipped 26,700 tonnes of pepper in 2011-12, exports fell to 16,000 tonnes in 2012-13. According to pepper growers and traders, factors ranging from vagaries of climate to afflictions wilting pepper vines, contributed to fall in production and shrinkage of cultivated area.

Copra

Copra prices increased but coconut oil prices decreased on Friday at the *Avalpoondurai* Regulated Market Committee. Copra prices increased by Rs 100 a quintal. Sellers from Erode, *Gobichettipalayam* and *Pollachi* area brought 1,000 quintal (2,000 bags) of copra for sale. Buyers were from various coconut oil crushing belts in Tamil Nadu. Coconut oil price decreased by Rs 20 for 15-kg loose pack at Rs 980 against Rs 1,000 last week.

Other Agri Related News

The Finance Ministry has directed banks to set internal targets for lending against Negotiable Warehouse Receipts and increase servicing of such receipts. The Food Ministry has recognized over 125 such commodities, 26 horticultural produces and registered over 374 warehouses that can issue such receipts which can be transacted without physical transfer or used as collateral to raise loans.

Urea

Following the move to hike the price of gas, fertilizer companies have demanded that the Government free the pricing of urea. Currently, urea is highly subsidised; the Government incurred a subsidy of around Rs 36,000 crore on the fertiliser in 2012-13. The gas price revision will take effect from April 1, 2014. Subsequently, for every increase of \$1 in the gas price, the impact will be Rs 3,155 crore annually from 2013-14 for the 23 million tonnes of urea produced in the country.

Delhi Milk Scheme corporatization

The Cabinet has deferred a decision on corporatisation of the loss-making Delhi Milk Scheme (DMS). The DMS has milk production and packaging capacity of 5 lakh litres per day, besides a network of 1,298 outlets in the NCR. DMS has 800 employees, but milk production is only about 2.75 lakh litres per day. Gujarat Cooperative Milk Marketing Federation (GCMMF), which owns the Amul brand, has evinced interest in running the DMS plants.

Israeli Crop Protection Products Maker Makhteshim-

Agan is finalizing plans to double the capacity of its Indian manufacturing facility at Dahej, expecting a growth in domestic demand for herbicide, fungicide and weedicide in the coming years. The plant, which has a capacity of 1.20 lakh litres a day, will be adding another 1.20 lakh litres a day capacity, half of which will be for production of herbicide products.

US based Cargill Inc, which derives close to Rs. 10,000 crore from marketing and processing edible oils, staples and food ingredients in the country, proposes to step up investment in India as it seeks a greater share of the Rs. 3.85 lakh crore domestic processed food and beverage market.

Good rain spurs sowing of pulses and oilseeds, two crops which play an important role in both food and non-food inflation.

SOWING SHEET (in million ha)

Crops	2012-13	2013-14	% change
Pulses	Nil	0.37	—
Oilseeds	0.31	0.81	161
Paddy	1.62	1.64	1.23
Sugarcane	4.93	4.45	-9.73
Cotton	3.13	2.81	-10.22
Jute	0.80	0.81	1.25
Total	10.82	10.90	0.92

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5. Head R&D, 10-15 years, Mumbai, India's Largest Agribusiness Company
6. Head Operation (Shipping/Chartering/Bulk Cargo), 12-15 years, Delhi (NCR), 15000 Crores Indian Company
7. Food Technologist (New Product Development), 5-7 years, Delhi, Quick Service Restaurant Chain