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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:

### **Price forecast for Karthigaipattam Crops**

In Tamil Nadu, bengal gram (Chana), coriander and cumbu are the three important food crops grown in Karthigaipattam (Second fortnight of November sowing). To enable farmers to take sowing decisions for getting better prices, the Domestic and Export Market Intelligence Cell (DEMIC) functioning in the Centre for Agricultural and Rural Development Studies (CARDS), Tamil Nadu Agricultural University analyzed the prices of the above crops and suggests the following:

#### **Bajra**

India is the largest producer of bajra (cumbu). It is also one of the most drought resistant crops among cereals and millets. It is also used as poultry feed and green fodder for cattle. In India, during 2011-12, Cumbu was cultivated in 8.39 million hectares with a production of 9.15 million tonnes with a productivity of 1091 kg/ha. Cumbu is mainly grown as a rabi crop in Tamil Nadu and sowing starts in November. In Tamil Nadu, it was grown in an area of about 0.46 lakh hectares with a production of 1.14 lakh tonnes with a productivity of 2453 kg per hectare during 2011-12. Villupuram district has the highest production of 12,823 tonnes followed by Thoothukudi, Madurai, Theni, Thiruvannamalai, Virudhunagar and Dindigul districts. Trade sources revealed that there was a shift towards maize crop during 2012 because of its good market price. Hence this year the area of cumbu may decline. As per the econometric analysis done by Domestic and Export Market Intelligence Cell, on the last 17 years cumbu price of Kovilpatti Regulated Market, the price of Cumbu during Feb-March 2014, (i.e., during harvest of karthigai sown crop) would revolve around Rs 1300 per quintal. Currently the

price of cumbu in Kovilpatti market is Rs.14-15 per kg and the harvest price during Feb, 2013 was Rs.14 per kg. Based on this price farmers are advised to take their decision on sowing of cumbu.

### **Bengal gram**

Bengal gram is a very important pulse crop, used as an edible seed and for making flour. The world's total production of bengal gram was around 11.30 million tonnes during 2011-12 from an area of 12.14 million hectares. Generally the two types, Desi and Kabuli of bengal gram contribute 80% and 20% respectively to the total production. India is the largest producer of this pulse contributing around 70% of the world's total production. Madhya Pradesh produces the major share of around 45% in the Indian production of about 7.58 million tonnes followed by Rajasthan and Maharashtra. India also exports some of its bengal gram to USA, UK, Saudi Arabia, UAE, Sri Lanka and Malaysia. Bengal gram is sown during the months of September to November in India. In Tamil Nadu, it is sown only in Karthigai pattam. During 2011-12 it was cultivated in an area of about 7,800 hectares with the production of nearly 5,500 tonnes and it is mainly cultivated in Tiruppur district with an area of about 3773 hectares followed by Coimbatore district. Udumalpet market is one of the main markets for Bengal gram and price data for last ten years were collected and analyzed. Current price of Bengal gram is Rs.4450 per quintal (Udumalpet market). The Domestic and Export Market Intelligence Cell (DEMIC) analysis confirmed that Bengal gram price will be around Rs.4000 per quintal during February to March 2014 (Harvesting Period). Last year price during harvest was around Rs.3600 per quintal. Based on this price farmers are advised to take their sowing decision.

### **Coriander**

Coriander is one of the seed spices which form the base for most Indian curries. The major producers of Indian Coriander are Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh, Orissa, Tamil Nadu and Uttar Pradesh. The main importers are USA, UK, Malaysia, Singapore, Sri Lanka and Middle East. Besides coriander seeds, India also exports coriander powder and essential oil. In Tamil Nadu, the area under coriander was 10,804 hectares with a production of 5,049 tonnes (2011-12) and Thoothukudi district ranks first in area (3975 ha.) followed by Sivagangai, Ramanadhapuram, Perambalur,

Erode and Madurai. Nearly 91 per cent of the total coriander area is grown as an rainfed crop in Tamil Nadu. During Feb-March 2013, the price prevailed at Virudhunagar market was Rs 5500/ quintal. The prevailing price (October 2013) of Coriander in Virudhunagar market is around Rs.10, 000 per quintal. The DEMIC analysis revealed that the price of Coriander during harvest i.e. in February, March 2014 will be around Rs.8,500 per quintal. Harvesting stage of coriander is most important and harvesting when the seeds turn golden brown in color will fetch a better price. Based on this price farmers are advised to take their decision on sowing of coriander.

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