

## **Price of Sunflower seeds will remain stable during Harvest**

Sunflower oil one of the most commonly used vegetable oil in food industry. According to Solvent Extractors Association of India (SEAI), the sowing data of sunflower for the current Rabi season is 1.74 lakh hectares as on December, 2016. It has reported that the area coverage for the last Rabi season was 2.23 lakh hectares. As per USDA, in India during 2016, sunflower was sown in an area of 5 lakh hectares with production of 4.5 lakh tonnes. Karnataka is the leading producer of sunflower seeds followed by Andhra Pradesh, Odisha, West Bengal and Maharashtra. Major districts growing sunflower in Tamil Nadu are Karur, Thoothukudi, Virudhunagar, Dindugal, Ariyalur and Trichy.

India's import of edible oil increases by 7-8 lakh tonnes per year on rising demand due to increase in per capita consumption. As per SEAI, India has imported 1.58 lakh tonnes of crude sunflower oil during November 2016.

As per trade sources in Tamil Nadu, the area under sunflower cultivation has reduced drastically in areas like Thuraiyur, Musiri, Kovilpatti, Virudhunagar and Erode due to failure of the North East Monsoon. But in the areas like Harur, Pappireddipatti and some parts of Trichy, normal sowing is expected in the forthcoming month. The area under sunflower has also reduced considerably during recent years in other major production centers of the country. However, the price of sunflower seeds may remain stable as we import large amount of sunflower oil from Ukraine, Argentina and Brazil.

The Price Forecasting Scheme of Centre for Agricultural and Rural Development Studies (CARDS), Tamil Nadu Agricultural University analyzed the last 16 years of sunflower seed prices prevailed in Vellakoil regulated market. As per the results of the analysis, the farm gate price of good quality sunflower seed

during February - March, 2017 will be around Rs.3300-3400 per quintal. Hence, farmers are advised to take sowing decision accordingly.

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