



Tamil Nadu Agricultural University  
Coimbatore – 641 003

Dr. E. Somasundaram, Ph.D.,  
Public Relations Officer

Phone: 0422 - 6611302  
Fax: 0422 – 2431821  
E-mail: [pro@tnau.ac.in](mailto:pro@tnau.ac.in)

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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:

**Farm Prices of Coriander to Increase: Cumbu and Ragi Prices to Remain Stable**

Coriander is one of the important spice crops used in all curry powders. Coriander is used as a condiment for its medicinal properties and the green leaves are also used for culinary purposes. The major varieties cultivated in India are Gujarat Coriander 1 and 2, RCR41, UD20, Rajendra Swati (RD-44), CS287, CO1, CO2, CO3, Sadhana, Swati and Sindhu.

In Tamil Nadu, coriander was cultivated in an area of 10,804 hectares leading to a production of 5,049 tonnes. Thoothukudi had the maximum area followed by Virudhunagar and Ramanathapuram districts. The NAIP-DEMIC collected the price data from Virudhunagar market and analyzed and concludes that the price of coriander seed during March & April 2014 will be in the range of Rs.7000 -7500 per quintal. Since the farm level prices are expected to rise to Rs.9000-9500 per quintal in May, June 2014 farmers are recommended to store & sell coriander in May, June 2014.

Cumbu

Cumbu is considered as bread and butter of the rural people, particularly in dry land regions and it is an important crop in our country. Cumbu is cultivated mostly in two seasons viz., May-June and October – November. Mainly it is sown during October, November based on the rainfall occurrence. During summer it is grown in

Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Punjab and Gujarat as an irrigated crop. This year the yield of cumbu has come down drastically due to poor rainfall.

In Tamil Nadu, it was grown in an area of about 0.46 lakh hectares with a production of 1.14 lakh tonnes through a productivity of 2453 kg per hectare during 2011-12. Villupuram district has the highest production of 29,870 tonnes followed by Thoothukudi, Madurai, Theni, Virudhunagar, Dindigul and Cuddalore districts. Farmers are interested in knowing whether the price will increase in future so that they can store and sell the produce. To help them to take a right decision, the NAIP-Domestic and Export Market Intelligence Cell (DEMIC) functioning in Centre for Agricultural and Rural Development Studies (CARDS), Tamil Nadu Agricultural University analysed the monthly prices of cumbu that prevailed in Villupuram Regulated Market for the past 12 years. The results of the analysis revealed that the farm level prices would be around Rs.14-15 per kg during March to April 2014. Since there are limited chances for the prices to rise, farmers are recommended to sell cumbu harvested and stored immediately.

### Ragi

Ragi is one of the ancient millets in India. Which is rich in carbohydrate having high dietary fiber, minerals, and amino acids compared to white rice and also used as a substitute for rice among the diabetic patients and also the diet conscious people.

Tamil Nadu produced 2.24 lakh tonnes of ragi from 0.83 lakh hectares during 2011-12. Tamil Nadu is having the highest productivity of 2716 kgs comparing to India's average productivity of 1641 kg per hectare. In Tamil Nadu, Krishnagiri, Dharmapuri, Salem, Erode and Vellore districts together accounted for 96 per cent of the total area of 0.83 lakh ha under this crop. The area and production showed declining trend during the last decades from 1981's to 2011 onwards whereas the productivity showed an increasing trend. Ragi is grown mainly as rainfed crop in Kharif season (July – August) and to certain extent under irrigated conditions during November, December which comes to harvest during February-March.

Under this circumstance, Tamil Nadu ragi farmers are to be informed whether to store the harvested ragi or sell immediately. Scientists in the Back office of Agro Marketing Intelligence and Business Promotion Centre (AMI &BPC), Centre for Agricultural and Rural Development Studies (CARDS) in Tamil Nadu Agricultural University analyzed the last 11 years prices of ragi that prevailed in Tindivanam market.

Bumper production of ragi in Karnataka and Tamil Nadu is expected to reduce the price of ragi in the current scenario. Trade source indicated that Ragi is substituted with maize in feed preparation whenever the price of ragi is lower than maize price. Also the current farm gate price of maize is Rs.1200 per quintal where as ragi is being sold at Rs.1700 per quintal. This will not support the increased use of ragi in the feed preparation.

Econometric analysis predicted that farm gate price of ragi will rule around Rs.1800-1850 per quintal during March to April, 2014. After April there is limited chances for increase in price. Hence farmers are recommended to sell immediately upon harvest.

**For further details contact:-**

Domestic and Export Market Intelligence Cell (DEMIC),  
Centre for Agricultural and Rural Development Studies,  
Tamil Nadu Agricultural University,  
Coimbatore-641 003.  
Phone - 0422-2431405

**For Technical Details contact:-**

1. Professor and Head,  
Department of Spices & Plantation Crops,  
Tamil Nadu Agricultural University.  
Coimbatore-641003.  
Phone: 0422-6611284
2. Professor and Head,  
Department of Millets,  
Center for Plant Breeding and genetics,  
Tamil Nadu Agricultural University,  
Coimbatore-641003.  
Phone: 0422-2450507

Public Relations Officer