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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:

Sell Sunflower upon Harvest

Sunflower is one of the important oilseed crops in India. It occupies fourth place among oilseed crops in terms of acreage and production. Total world production of sunflower seeds in 2013-2014 is estimated to be 42.77 million tonnes and it was 36.40 million tonnes during 2012 – 2013. Major Producing countries are Ukraine (26.88 %), Russia (23.37 %), European Union (19.93), Argentina (7.10 %), China (5.72 %), Turkey (3.27 %), Myanmar (1.87 %) and India (1.87%).

The import forecast for edible oils into India during 2013 – 2014, includes 8.4 million tonnes of palm oil, 1.3 million tonnes of soybean oil, 1.2 million tonnes of sunflower oil and 10,000 tonnes of other edible oils. In India, sunflower seed production in kharif (2013-14) was 1.85 lakh tonnes and the same was 1.50 lakh tonnes in kharif 2012-13. The major producers in India are Karnataka (81 %), Maharashtra (10.81%), Andhra Pradesh (5.41%) and Tamil Nadu(2.70%). Around 70% of the crop is produced in Rabi (November – March) season, and remaining 30% in kharif (June – September).

In Tamil Nadu the sunflower seed production was around 24,622 tonnes from an area of 13,610 hectares during 2011-12. The productivity of sunflower in Tamil Nadu is 1809 kg/ha which is higher than the national average of 640 kg/ha. About 68 % of the crop is raised under irrigated conditions. Karur, Tiruchirapalli, Dindigul, Thoothukudi, Dharmapuri, Namakkal and Tirupur districts contribute about 79 per cent of area and 80 per cent of the total sunflower production in the State. The major market centres of the state are Vellakovil, Moolanur and Kodumudi. Increase in the

price of sunflower seed and reduction in groundnut area raised queries among the sunflower growers in Tamil Nadu like whether the produce which has started flowing in the market will fetch higher price or not. The 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 sunflower seeds that prevailed in Vellakoil Regulated Market for the past 14 years. The results of the analysis revealed that the prices would be around Rs.32-33 per kg during April, May 2014. The current prevailing price is Rs.33 per kg. The last year price at harvesting time (March, 2013) was Rs. 34 per kg. There are little chances for the prices to increase. Hence farmers are recommended to sell sunflower upon harvest without resorting to storage.

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