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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:

Small Onion Prices to Increase

According to the First Advance Estimates (2012-13) of National Horticultural Board, area and production of onion in Tamil Nadu was 41570 ha and 667740 tonnes and in 2011-12, they were 37120 ha and 556450 tonnes respectively. More than 70 per cent of the area is occupied by small onion.

Last year, the farm gate price of small onion was Rs.10-11 per kg during April, May. But this year the price is ranging between Rs. 30-35 per kg at farm level. Traders revealed that sowing was less and combined with lower rainfall, this has caused a dip in supply. The arrivals are ranging between 2500-3500 bags per marketing day (75kg/bag). But last year it was 5000 bags. More export demand is there from Malaysia.

Currently onion from Coimbatore, Dindigul, Theni, Perambalur and Tiruppur districts sown in Thai, Masi are arriving to the market. Nearly 60 per cent of the arrivals are cultivated through seeds and the quality of the produce is also good. The shelf life of onion produced by cultivation through seeds is less than that of cultivation through bulb.

Karnataka is a major competitor for small onion and the arrivals from Karnataka decide the small onion price in Tamil Nadu. Karnataka arrivals has come to a halt now and from Tamil Nadu onion bulbs are transported to Karnataka for seed purpose. In Karnataka next sowing will start from May onwards. The next arrivals from Karnataka will start from August. There is very less chances for the price to decrease.

To help the farmers in taking a proper marketing decision, small onion prices that prevailed in Dindigul market for the past 15 years were analysed by Domestic and Export Market Intelligence Cell (DEMIC), TNAU. Market surveys were also conducted. The results revealed that the farm gate price for small onion will range from Rs.32 to Rs.35 per kg and for the best quality it will be more than Rs.40 per kg. The best quality onion bulb should be round shaped, diameter 27 mm and above, and colour pink to red. CO1, CO2, CO3, CO4, CO5, MDU5, Bangalore rose are important multiplier onion varieties raised by farmers of Tamil Nadu. To get best quality farmers are advised to sow CO5 variety. Prices are likely to increase in May, June. The price rise will cover both the storage cost and interest put together. Hence farmers are recommended to store the onion harvested and sell in May, June 2013 for higher prices.

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