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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 Potato upon Harvest**

Potato is an important tuber crop which is grown in 150 countries and consumed by more than one billion people throughout the world. India produced 447 lakhs tonnes of potato from an area of 19.65 lakh hectares in 2012-13. Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, Bihar, Assam, Madhya Pradesh, Punjab and Gujarat accounted for 85 per cent share in total area and 89 percent of the total production in 2012-13 in India. India has exported about 11.14 lakh tonnes of potato in 2012-2013, which is 13 per cent more than that of 2011-12. The area and production of potato were 4860 hectares and 97,200 tonnes respectively in Tamil Nadu during 2012-13 according to the statistics given by National Horticultural Research and Development Foundation (NHRDF). In Tamil Nadu, in 2012-13 the area and production decreased by 1 per cent and 7 per cent, respectively compared to 2011-12.

In Tamil Nadu, potato is grown in the hilly regions of Nilgiris, Dindigul, Krishnagiri and Erode districts. During the lean season (February-April), traders are outsourcing potato from Agra, Hasanpur in Uttar Pradesh, Indore in Madhya Pradesh and Kolar in Karnataka to cater the needs of Tamil Nadu consumers. Arrivals from other States are higher during this time period.

The arrival of Nilgiris potato is high during the period from May to December. Peak arrival is during July to September. High cost of cultivation, Water scarcity, labour shortage and huge arrivals from other States at cheap prices made the Nilgiris

farmers to shift to other hilly vegetables. Nilgiris potato is sent to Chennai, Coimbatore, Madurai, Trichy, Salem and Vellore and also to other States. The Nilgiris farmers who have sown Neerbogam potato during February are interested in knowing the price of potato that would prevail during May and June, 2014 after the harvest.

Back Office of Agro Marketing Intelligence and Business Promotion Centre (AMI &BPC) in the Centre for Agricultural and Rural Development Studies (CARDS), Tamil Nadu Agricultural University analyzed the 23 years prices of potato that prevailed during 1991-2014 in Nilgiris Co-operative Marketing Society in Mettupalayam and the results revealed that prices of good quality potato will be around Rs. 20 to Rs.25 per kg in May, June, 2014. Since in the near future there are remote chances for the prices to increase it is recommended that farmers may sell potato upon harvest without storing. Consumers could identify Nilgiris potato from yellow skin colour and hardness which is distinct from potato grown in other States.

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