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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 major oilseeds containing 35-50% of oil and 17-25% of protein. High fibre, low protein and high wax content are the major constraints in obtaining better yield of oil. Total world production of sunflower seeds in 2012-2013 may amount to approximately 36.36 million tonnes (40.29 million tonnes in 2011-2012). Ukraine, Russia, Argentina, China and Turkey are the major producers of sunflower seeds globally.

In India, sunflower seed production in kharif (2012-13) was 1.50 lakh tonnes and the same was 1.20 lakh tonnes in kharif 2011-12. The major producers of sunflower are Karnataka, Maharashtra and Andhra Pradesh. The total area and production of sunflower in Tamil Nadu during 2011-2012 were around 20,000 hectares and 30,000 tonnes respectively and productivity was 1742 kg/ha. Karur, Tiruchirapalli, Thoothukudi, Dharmapuri, Virudhunagar, Dindigul, Tirunelveli, Thiruvannamalai and Namakkal are the major sunflower producing districts in the state.

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) has reported that the import of vegetable oils in India during 2012-13 will increase to 9.7 million tonnes. The import forecast includes 7.6 million tonnes of palm oil, 1.1 million tonnes of soyabean oil, 1 million tonne of sunflower oil and 10,000 tonnes of other edible oils. India imports vegetable oils from Indonesia, Malaysia, Argentina, etc.

The Karthigai sown sunflower has started arriving to the market. Farmers are to take a decision whether to sell the harvested sunflower immediately or store for two to three months in anticipation of higher prices. To facilitate the farmers in taking a better marketing decision, the NAIP- Domestic and Export Market Intelligence Cell (DEMIC) functioning in Tamil Nadu Agricultural University analysed the monthly prices of sunflower seeds that prevailed in Vellakoil Regulated Market for the past 12 years. The results of the analysis revealed that the prices would be around Rs.36-38 per kg during April-June, 2013. Because of less rainfall, this season sowing reduced and less arrivals will lead to the above price. The possibilities for increase in price is very limited. Hence, farmers are recommended to sell sunflower upon harvest without resorting to storage. They are also advised to sell through Regulated Markets in nearby area to reap better prices.

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