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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:

Neerbogam / Irrigated Potato will get Good Price during Harvest

The world's favourite root vegetable, the potato comes in innumerable varieties. In India, potato is cultivated in an area of 20.69 lakhs hectares with a production of 480 lakhs tonnes in 2014-15. Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal, Bihar, Gujarat, Punjab, Madhya Pradesh and Assam states accounted for 85 per cent share in total area and 90 per cent of the total production of potato in India during 2014-15.

In Tamil Nadu, potato is cultivated in 6100 hectares with 1.3 lakhs tonnes of production in 2014-15 according to the statistics given by National Horticultural Board (NHB). Potato is grown in the hilly regions of Dindigul, Nilgiris, Krishnagiri and Erode districts of Tamil Nadu.

Potato grown in the Nilgiris fetches higher prices due to medium size, higher starch content of tubers, which is the most important character determining the quality, higher taste as well as longer shelf-life without refrigeration compared to those grown in other states.

In Neerbogam / Irrigated season, it is sown in February - March and harvested during May-June. Potatoes can be stored in cold storage for about five to six months. Potatoes arrive from other states like Karnataka and Madhya Pradesh and stored in cold storage during January to May only for seed purpose. At present, current farm gate price of good quality potato is Rs.15-18 per Kg in Mettupalayam market.

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 past 19 years prices of potato that prevailed in Nilgiris Co-operative Marketing Society (NCMS), Mettupalayam and the results revealed that prices of good quality potato would be around Rs. 24 to Rs.26 per kg in May-June, 2016. Based on this expected price, farmers are recommended to go for sowing potato in Neerbogam.

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