

Cotton spot rate remains unchanged

KARACHI: Trading of new cotton crop 2020-21 has been started on the cotton market.

Market sources told that a ginning factory in Sanghar has prepared 150 bales of new cotton crop but they stopped the production after the intervention of Pakistan Cotton Ginners Association. It is expected that ginning factories will resume their operations after the announcement of the budget on June 15.

Cotton Analyst Naseem Usman told that 300 bales of new Phutti of Sindh were sold in Punjab (Burewala). 200 bales were sold at Rs 8500 per maund and 100 bales were sold at Rs 8450 per maund. He also told that if positive measures related to the agriculture sector will be taken in the budget it will be beneficial for the cotton crop.

Naseem told that there is a forecast of heavy rains in the country this year. If there is more rains in this current month and July there is a possibility of flooding in Sindh barrages. Due to the availability of water at the barrages there is a possibility of good production of other crops including cotton and rice.

Adviser to the Prime Minister on Finance and Revenue, Dr Abdul Hafeez Shaikh has assured Farmers Association of Pakistan (FAP) that agriculture package of Rs50 billion would be targeted after the association sought reduction in duty on import of fertiliser, waiver of agri-loans and reduction in power tariff for tube-wells in the budget for next fiscal year.

The government has approved this package with a view to extending relief to the farmers' community and its direct disbursement to the farmers and crop growers remains a key objective of the government, he said, while chairing a meeting with the FAP delegation.

The delegation on Monday met the adviser as well as members of the government's economic team, and submitted budget proposals seeking possible reduction of electricity tariff for tube-wells, reduction of import duty on fertilizers, reduction of mark-up and waiver of agricultural loans, deregulation of the import and export of agriculture products and livestock.

Similarly, the government was also willing to extend further relief to the farmers as and when required, and proposed by the Ministry of National Food Security and Research for the growth of agriculture and betterment of farmers.

The adviser conceded that the agriculture sector had the potential in a post-Covid-19 scenario to generate employment, boost growth, alleviate poverty, and enhance food security.

Shaikh asked the FAP and the ministries concerned to sit together in the coming days to further fine-tune and improve the disbursement mechanism of the agriculture package, and bring up any other suggestions or recommendations to further support the farming community and boost the agriculture sector.

Earlier, Speaker Punjab Assembly Chaudhry Pervez Elahi showed his dissatisfaction on the measures taken by the Punjab government for the uplift of the agriculture sector of the province.

While giving his remarks during the question hour on agriculture Elahi said that it looks that government is not serious in solving the problems of the farmers. He also said that farmers are not getting good quality seeds.

Pervez Elahi also said that agriculture universities had done nothing in the field of research. He said that no university had produced seed of international quality.

Agriculture minister Punjab Malik Noman Ahmad Langrial admitted on the floor of the House that no Pakistani university has produced any seed of international standards. He said that one of the major reasons for the decline in cotton production is below normal rainfall however whatever amount of cotton produced is of best quality.

Naseem Usman said that the next cotton crop is facing a severe threat of locust attack. However, federal and provincial governments along with Pakistan Army had taken steps on war footings to control the attack.

He also said that Spot Rate remained unchanged Rs8300 per maund. The rate of cotton in Sindh and Punjab is in between Rs6500 to Rs8400 per maund. The polyester fiber was available at Rs155 per kg.