

### AFRICA

#### Africa holds 60% of the world's arable land and contributes 10% to agriculture globally

The African continent has the agricultural potential not only to feed itself, but to provide food security for millions of people worldwide.

The Global Forum for Innovations in Agriculture taking place at the Durban Exhibition Centre in Durban is intended to showcase innovations for sustainable agriculture. Ministerial delegations from Rwanda, Somalia, South Africa, and Zambia are in attendance.

Michael Hailu, the Director of the Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation (CTA) said delegates there was every reason to be optimistic. Mohamed Abdullah, the former Prime Minister of Somalia, said that the African continent must seize the opportunity to secure food security. He said Somalia had rich and fertile land but "what is required is considerable investment and commitment from the private sector, supported by a non-corrupt government.

Tony Nsanganira, the Minister of State in Charge of Agriculture for Rwanda, said that the African Union's vision of an integrated, prosperous Africa simply is not possible without complete transformation of Africa's agricultural landscape.



Africa holds 60% of the world's arable land, it is still only contributing just 10% to agriculture globally 'said Mr Nsanganira. "Innovation is the greatest catalyst of agricultural development and ultimately poverty reduction."

### BRAZIL

#### Sugar prices soar, as Brazil mills focus on ethanol

Sugar futures rebounded by more than 6% after data showed mills in Brazil's key Centre South region continuing to lose ground against ethanol in the battle for cane. New York raw sugar futures for March soared to 14.87 cents a pound at one point before easing back to 14.70 cents a pound in late morning deals, a gain of 5.1%. The jump followed the release of data by Unica, the Brazilian cane industry group, showing that mills diverted just 42.2% of their cane to

making sugar, rather than ethanol, in the Centre South in the second half of October. That compared with expectation of a 43.1% figure, according to an analysts' survey by Platts. Although, with more cane processed than expected, actual sugar production came in at 2.1 million tonnes, marginally ahead of market forecasts, the idea that sugar prices needed to fight harder to win their share of cane was deemed bullish, said a London analyst. Sensitive market. In current market conditions, even the slightest news, bearish or bullish, can provoke a big swing in prices. Cumulative sugar output, meanwhile, is down 6.7% at 27.5million tonnes.

### CHILE

#### 100,000 tonnes of Cherries exported during 2014- 2015

The Fruit Exporters Association of Chile AG, ASOEX, and the Committee of Cherries were satisfied with the record of shipments of 100,000 tonnes of cherry exports during 2014 - 2015. Ronald Bown, President of ASOEX, said that this new achievement for the Chilean fruit industry export, shows that the producers and exporters of cherries have achieved significant volumes maintaining high standards of quality and safety.

He further said this has been a very challenging season because of the large volume of cherries there was and the weather conditions during the campaign (December 2014) made the industry pay more attention to quality care after the rains ensuring a consistent product at destination.



## GERMANY

### German salad available throughout the whole year

German salad available throughout the whole year and at present a wide varieties of lettuce is available from German cultivation, in this context, consumers are more interested in the commercially available variety throughout the whole year.

One of the most popular salads in Germany is the iceberg lettuce. Iceberg lettuce tastes very fresh for a long time long due to its tight and well-hydrate state of Colima have very favorable conditions for the production of the highest quality crop.



## INDIA

### Agriculture sector attracts \$1,764 million FDI in 2000-15

Foreign direct investment into agriculture services stood at \$1,763.57 million, or Rs 8,747.4 crore, higher than FDI into sectors such as textiles, mining and electronics during April 2000 to June 2015.

However, FDI inflow in agriculture services during the above period has been lower compared with computer software and hardware, telecommunications, automobiles etc., said Minister of State in Agriculture Mohanbhai Kalyanjibhai Kundaria in a written reply in Lok Sabha.

In agriculture machinery, FDI inflows during the same period have been \$418.65 million. To attract more foreign funds in the agriculture sector, 100% FDI

has been allowed in coffee, rub cardamom, palm oil tree and olive oil tree plantations, besides tea plantation in which FDI has already been allowed.

### Country exported 55.26 lakh tonnes of rice in April-September 2015-2016

India has exported 55.26 lakh tonnes of rice, valued at over \$3.17 billion, in the first six months of the current financial year 2015-16. During the April-September period, the country has exported 20.84 LT of basmati rice valued at over \$1.91 billion and 34.42 LT of other varieties valued at over \$1.25 billion.

In a written reply to the Lok Sabha, Commerce and Industry Minister Nirmala Sitharaman also informed that India exported 1.19 crore tonnes rice valued at \$7.8 billion in the last financial year. According to the data shared by the Minister, the maximum quantity of 5.98 lakh tonnes was exported to Saudi

Arabia, followed by 5.08 tonnes to Senegal and 4.15 lakh tonnes to UAE.

In a separate reply, the Minister informed that import of 'plastic rice' (Rice made from potatoes, sweet potatoes, and synthetic resin molded into the shape of real rice) has not been permitted. Import of rice is allowed through Food Corporation of India (FCI) and its import is also subject to clearance by FSSAI.

### NAFED, SFAC to procure 40,000 tonnes pulses for Rs 350 crore

To create a buffer stock, the government has asked co-operative NAFED and Small farmers Agri-Business Consortium (SFAC) to procure 40,000 tonnes of pulses at an estimated cost of Rs 350 crore. In view of higher dal prices in the retail market, the government had decided to create a buffer stock so that it can intervene in the market in case of future price rise. The Union government has decided to set up a buffer stock of pulses, Minister of State for Agriculture Mohanbhai Kundaria said in a written reply to the Lok Sabha.

To create a buffer stock in the current Kharif marketing season by Nafed, SFAC and the Food Corporation of India (FCI) at prevailing market prices is being done with assistance from Price Stabilisation Fund.

NAFED and SFAC have been directed to procure 30,000 tonnes of tur and 10,000 tonnes of urad at an estimated cost of Rs 350 crore, while Rs 50 crore have been released to FCI for undertaking the procurement.



## PORTUGAL

### **Berry brothers one of the largest red berry companies in Europe**

Berry brothers are one of the largest red berry companies in Europe with a cultivation area of over 70 hectares. Berry brothers grow red berries on 1.5 hectare and blueberries on 3.5 hectares in Portugal, of which most is sold in Portugal and Spain. Around 25% of this harvest is available for the Dutch market. Berry brothers grow in the north of Portugal, as the ideal climate conditions are there, which means they can start the European season early.



## URUGUAY

### **Imports of Grape and Mango from Peru**

The Directorate General of Agricultural Services of the Ministry of Livestock, Agriculture and Fisheries of Paraguay has decided to enable the entry of fresh mango and grapes from Peru into the country, certain phytosanitary requirements must be met. This aims to prevent risks, regardless of the applicable customs procedure (importation, temporary admission, free zone transit or bonded warehouses).

To import mango -*Mangifera indica* the goods shall have a phytosanitary cer-

tificate or a re-export certificate, if applicable, that includes the following additional declarations: the fruit must come from a production site registered for export by the National Agrarian Health.

Furthermore the shipments should indicate if they have been subjected to hydrothermal treatment, which consists of immersing the fruits in water at 46.1°C for 75 to 90 minutes, and will be subject to official inspection and analysis when they enter the country.



## UNITED KINGDOM

### **Raw sugar export flow seen easing as mills prioritize whites**

Raw sugar exports are likely to slow down after world prices softened, with mills prioritizing sales of low-quality whites to the domestic and international markets.

Expectations for Indian sugar production in 2015-16 and 2016-17 due to prolonged dry weather, augured for firmer domestic prices.

European trade sources estimated that some 50,000 tonnes of Indian raw sugar exports had been contracted so far in the 2015-16 (October/September) season, for shipment in the fourth quarter.

The deal had been finalized coinciding with a rally in the futures market. Benchmark ICE raw sugar futures hit a 10-month peak of 15.78 cents a pound on November 24, 2015 triggered by expectations that the world market was shifting into deficit after years of surpluses.

World expect export 200,000 tonnes of raw sugar in the first quarter of 2016, followed by 200,000 tonnes in the second quarter and 50,000 in the third quarter. India expected to export 300,000 tonnes of low-quality whites in the fourth quarter, followed by 300,000 tonnes in the first quarter of 2016, and 150,000 tonnes in each of the next two quarters.



## USA

### 2016 Soybean acres to outpace corn

2016 is looking to be the year of soybeans. Frayne Olson, crop economist from North Dakota State University is predicting corn acreage to be 1.5% to 2% lower and soybean acreage to be around 2% higher for the Midwest's 2016 growing season. With Hurt's soybean estimate hitting 84.8 million acres, a new record would be set for total U.S. soybean acreage.

Based on Indiana budgets projected for 2016, quality of land appears to have a \$30 to \$40 better return for soybeans. Indiana is currently the fifth largest corn-producing state in the U.S. With lenders watching their farm clients closely and some putting restrictions on how much they'll loan for operating capital, this could have a big influence on 2016 planting decisions.

This shift toward planting soybeans rather than corn has been happening since 2012. Hurt attributes the preference change to the Chinese demand for soybeans, amongst other factors. Although China's demand is expected to be lower, soybeans have been offering farmers the best return over their variable costs.

Olson estimates that the strong number of wheat acres in his state will remain about the same, corn acres may drop a bit but not dramatically, and soybean acres will either remain the same or come in slightly higher than 2015. For North Dakota corn growers, the high input costs and risk of growing corn that far north deter farmers from wanting to pursue the crop. The state is currently



ranked 11th amongst corn-producing states.

Hurt and Olson are both watching South America closely, along with U.S. farmers. Prices for corn and soybeans will be influenced by what happens in South America over the course of the next 100 days or so.

Purdue's estimates found that a farmer paid \$34 per acre for seed corn in 2005, on average Indiana farmland. In 2016, farmers are estimated to pay a whopping \$123 per acre for seed corn, which is a 362% increase in price. Because soybean seed hasn't seen as much genetic advancement, soybean prices have stayed more reasonable. In 2005, farmers paid \$36 per acre for soybean seed. In 2016, they're estimated to pay \$74 per acre for soybean seed.

### Geographic protection 'not an easy issue' in TTIP

Tom Vilsack, the United States Secretary of Agriculture, said that Washington "respects" Europe's claim for geographic protection of food in the

transatlantic trade talks, but he said this should not prevent similar US products from being marketed under brands used on the American market.

President Obama set an aggressive target for the US and suggested that our emissions would be reduced by 26% to 28% within the next ten years based on 2005 levels. And he has used that directive as a way of discussing opportunities with China, India and other large emitters to get them to make similar types of commitments.

As far as agriculture is concerned, the US is prepared to double its rate of emission reduction over the next ten years and we have a specific plan based on what we refer to as ten building blocks, and we have specific mile posts on an annual basis that we want to reach to be able to get to that reduction level which will be the equivalent of 120 million metric tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> equivalents.

That will represent roughly 2% of emission reductions, which will go on the way towards the goal the president set. In terms of global food security, what would you suggest the EU agriculture sector do in order to produce more with less? What about the EU system of geographical indications? Europeans give special attention to this issue in the TTIP talks.

In America, there are 11 million people employed as a result of trade. In agriculture, it's about 1 million people, which is roughly equivalent to the number of farmers that are producing most of the product that is subject to export. ♦

