

Food Briefs National

- ❖ Just like the previous years the sugar industry will be carrying over surplus waiting for the crushing of sugar cane and yet calling for subsidies on export. The Whole supply chain runs on the free market model which favours the millers more compared to the farmers.
- ❖ In spite of the fact the sowing was 3 % low compared to last year, Punjab has still met 78% of its target of 16.5 m acre. Due to massive wheat surplus, Punjab has not shown much enthusiasm about the sowing target. But it does not want to miss its revised acreage target anyway. The federal government had fixed a target of 17.2m acres for Punjab, but the province spared 700,000 acres for what it calls crop-diversification efforts.
- ❖ The major part of the milk production in Pakistan which is 61.6 % is covered by buffaloes. Its population of 35.6m heads is generally owned by small landless farmers, each possessing 2-3 animals only. They include the best dairy breeds Nili Ravi and Kundi.
- ❖ Small farmers dealing in basmati rice has been badly affected by the decrease in basmati rice exports. The causes of this decrease are difficult to understand, and both national and provincial governments are facing criticism for their failure to act.
- ❖ In spite of being a major part of export for Pakistan the live stock industry has been neglecting the standard, quality or value-addition and is thus performing much below their potential. This was highlighted by stakeholders of the red-meat industry who had gathered at the University of Veterinary and Animal Sciences earlier this month.
- ❖ Due to unfavorable weather conditions causing losses in production Kinno export target has been cut down to 200,000 tonnes from 350,000 tonnes last year. Pakistan Fruit and Vegetable Exporters, Importers and Merchants Association (PFVA) Chairman Waheed Ahmed said kinno exports got under way from Dec 1, 2015 but quantities were the lowest in years.
- ❖ The rise in temperature and unseasonal rains have been termed as the major causes of destruction of honeybees and reduction in honey production by the Environmental and beekeeping experts. Dr. Mehmood Khalid Qamar, a PhD in forests, said that the main reason for the decline of natural honey production was rapid deforestation in KP and upper Punjab areas.
- ❖ Prospects look good for the export of potato as their early harvesting begins in Punjab. In spite of differences in opinion between the farmers and government they both agree that this year the production will be in surplus to domestic requirement. The Punjab Govt. needs to find ways of ascertaining the exact size of the potato crop before promoting them for export. The farmers think that the crop's actual size might be a little less than 6m tonnes this year. Meanwhile, the provincial agriculture minister, Dr. Farrukh Javed, has put the figure at 3.9m tonnes almost 33pc less than what the farmers claim. ♦

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- ❖ As of three years ago, Guy Callebaut has been chairman of Global GAP. The Belgian native earned his stripes in the cultivation of fruit, and is known as a board member of BelOrta and VBT, the Association of Belgian Horticulture Cooperatives. He talks about the certificate and GlobalGAP's ambitions.
- ❖ The Federal Agriculture Minister Lawrence MacAulay and Manitoba Agriculture, Food and Rural Development Minister Ron Kostyshyn have announced a government investment of nearly \$380,000 in the potato processing plant of Mc Cain which produces about 430 million pounds of Manitoba-grown potatoes a year increase efficiency, reduce waste and support the sustainable growth of Manitoba's potato industry.
- ❖ With offices in the Netherlands, Germany and Canada, Prinsen Agricultural & Handling Solutions specializes in post-harvest processing technology. The family enterprise deals with development and supply of bespoke machines.
- ❖ Despite storms the Tasman Berry growers are expected to go through a busy season. Tasman Bay Berries owner Maree Holland says, "They are still assessing the impact of the storms, but definitely have enough berries for the busy holiday season." It's hard to tell the impact at this stage, especially when it's so busy," she further added. "But definitely have enough for Christmas orders, enough for our shop and enough for hand picking."
- ❖ Tomatoes are the most important protected vegetable crop in Andalusia, accounting for 54.4 % of the total acreage devoted to organic production in green houses. It has seen an expansion in the organic tomato by about 66.3% compared to previous year, according to data from the Prices and Markets Observatory of the Council of Agriculture, Fisheries and Rural Development of the Government of Andalusia, consulted by Hortoinfo. Most organic tomatoes are grown in Almería, with 303.57 hectares, 86.6 percent of the total. Granada has 28 hectares (8%) and Malaga 18.22 hectares (5.2%).
- ❖ Canned products are considered essential in any pantry. They are one of those affordable luxuries that, perhaps because of their moderate price and our being accustomed to seeing them on the shelves, we do not fully appreciate. Canned vegetables also deserve the spotlight. While the autumn and winter are usually associated with a quiet period in agriculture, this is far from the truth in Navarra, where the pepper, chard, asparagus and artichoke seasons take place in succession.
- ❖ In Uganda, losses due to potato late blight reach up to 60%, forcing farmers to spray fungicides up to 15 times to protect their crops. About 300,000 smallholder households grow potatoes for their subsistence living and income generation.
- ❖ The Council of Ministers approved a royal decree for the launch of the National Programme for the control and eradication of *Triozomyia* and the national prevention program. This program is prepared and adopted in case of the detection of bacteria, the vector or both and movement restrictions have been established. ♦