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Vegetable prices rising on crop damage reports

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There has been a sharp rise in vegetable prices over the past five weeks, on reports of crop damage.

Tomatoes in Bengaluru are ₹90 a kg in the retail markets, with its wholesale price around ₹70 a kg. In Delhi and Mumbai, it is quoted at ₹17.50 a kg and ₹28.50 in the wholesale mandis, with its retail price at ₹35 and ₹50 a kg, respectively. Other vegetables have moved in line.

Rising temperatures due to monsoons caused damage to vegetable crops. Flower pods in winter-sown crops were burnt. Consequently, vegetable production is seen as declining this season, despite almost

flat output growth forecast by the National Horticulture Board (NHB).

"Yield has been severely lower this year, with farmers witnessing 25 per cent recovery of major vegetables, after summer heat. As against eight tonnes per acre of tomato output in the normal case, farmers are harvesting two 2 tonnes or less. The quality of harvest is also poorer than expected," said Shri Ram Gadhave, president, Vegetables Growers Association of India.

NHB in its first advance estimate for crop year 2015-16 had forecast vegetable production at 168.5 million tonnes, a marginal decline from 169.48 mt the previous year. The fall was estimated on proportionate decline in sowing at 9.47 mn

hectares for 2015-16, from 9.54 mn ha the previous year. All essential vegetables in day to day life have become costlier. The cheapest of the entire group, cabbage, has become costlier by 57 per cent to sell at ₹11 a kg in wholesale markets. Okra (ladies finger) has surged by 43 per cent to ₹17.5 a kg and cauliflower by 36 per cent to ₹26.7 a kg in the wholesale mandis in Delhi.

"Consumers are unlikely to get a respite as there will be no new crop arrivals for the next two months," said a senior official at the wholesale yard at Vashi, Navi Mumbai.

There has also been a sharp decline in arrivals due to crop losses. At Vashi, arrivals of okra were 18 tonnes on Friday, from 132 tonnes a day in early May.



VEGETABLE PRICES-DELHI MARKET

| (₹/quintal) | Apr 29 | May 31 | Jun 10 | %Chg* | %Chg** |
|---------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| Tomato Local | 600 | 820 | 1,750 | 113.41 | 191.7 |
| Okra | 2,000 | 1,220 | 2,500 | 104.92 | 25.0 |
| Cabbage | 525 | 700 | 1,175 | 67.86 | 123.8 |
| Brinjal Round | 875 | 1,300 | 1,925 | 48.08 | 120.0 |
| Cauliflower | 2,085 | 1,960 | 2,740 | 39.80 | 31.4 |
| Peas | 5,500 | 4,000 | 5,500 | 37.50 | 0.0 |
| Bitter Gourd | 1,750 | 1,350 | 1,750 | 29.63 | 0.0 |
| Brinjal Long | 925 | 1,375 | 1,700 | 23.64 | 83.8 |
| Potato Fresh | 1,110 | 1,470 | 1,670 | 13.61 | 50.5 |
| Garlic | 7,000 | 9,000 | 9,625 | 6.94 | 37.5 |
| Ginger | 2,285 | 3,666 | 3,833 | 4.56 | 67.7 |
| Chilly | 3,450 | 2,600 | 2,650 | 1.92 | -23.2 |

*Month to date, **since May, compiled by IS Research Bureau

Source: NHB

Arrival of cauliflower were 48 tonnes, from 82 tonnes a day in the earlier period.

"Vegetables sown now with the onset of the monsoon rain would be harvested only by the end of August. Till then, consumers will have bear with high prices," said Gadhave.

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