

The Madras Agricultural Journal

(ORGAN OF THE M. A. S. UNION)

Vol. XXXVI

November 1949

No. 11

Editorial

Cotton and Sugarcane: The out put of raw cotton is to be increased by five laks of bales. This was the decision arrived at the conference of provincial agricultural ministers recently held in Bombay. Preference is to be given to long staple cotton, which has hitherto been largely imported from countries outside India. The cotton industry is now facing a crisis. The inadequate supply of raw cotton has resulted in keeping many mills idle and throwing the industry out of gear. Though the food problem is by far the most important facing the country, the question of feeding our industries cannot be neglected without serious detriment to the national economy. It was the appreciation of this fact, we believe, that has led the conference to arrive at the decision of increasing the out put of cotton in the country. How far the increase in cotton production will interfere with the Grow More Food Campaign it is difficult to surmise. But it has been pointed out that it is not necessary to encroach on the area meant for food crops but cotton could be profitably grown as a mixed crop with groundnut without serious detriment to the latter. Moreover, savings in foreign exchange resources effected by non-purchase of cotton from outside will to some extent off set the price we have to pay for import of food from abroad. There is reason to believe that surplus wheat production which has been reported from America, Australia and parts of Europe may result in lowering the prices of cereals in the world market. The net gain in our national economy will therefore be on the whole beneficial to the country if it is made less dependent on foreign countries for its cotton and other raw materials for its industry. With regard to sugar the reason for shortage is not clear. The Sugar Committee which may be presumed to have full knowledge of the facts concerning the industry are of the opinion that the present scarcity is artificially created. If it were so, it is up to the people responsible to rise above their private interests and remedy the existing state of affairs

The appeal of Sardar Patel to the industry appears to have had some effect and we hope that before the present season is over the supply of sugar would be sufficient to meet the needs of the country.

The Prime Minister and Deputy Prime Minister: India is fortunate in having two such men as Pandit Nehru and Sardar Patel at the helm of its affairs at the present juncture. During these two years of stress and strain they have proved themselves to be supermen and though bereft of the guiding hand of their master they have faced the tasks set before them with undaunted courage and outstanding ability. The country is grateful to them and the Madras Agricultural Journal joins in rendering its respectful homage to them and wishes them all success in their great endeavour of making India a great nation.

Cyclone havoc in Andhra Desa: The Cyclone havoc in the Andhra Districts has now been roughly estimated and large tracts of valuable paddy lands have at least temporarily been laid waste and a large number of harvested and standing crop lost; cattle have been washed away. To rebuild this area an appeal for funds has been sent out. We add our appeal to our readers, to donate liberally for the cause of this relief

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