

Sell potato upon harvest

Potato is the most important food crop of the world. For vegetable purposes, it has now become one of the most popular crops in India. Potato is an economical food, as it provides a source of low cost energy to human diet. Potatoes are used for several industrial purposes such as production of starch, alcohol, chips, sliced, *etc.*

Last year in 2015-16, the potato production was declined to 438 lakh tonnes as against 480 lakh tonnes in previous year. Hence potato price which ruling about Rs. 700 per quintal in February, 2016 increased to around Rs. 1000 per quintal in April, 2016 and further to Rs. 1200 in July, 2016, and then started decline owing to good monsoon. In current year, the area under potato is estimated 21.24 lakh ha same as last year and production might be normal to higher than last year in the country. About 1.81 lakh tonnes potato was exported in 2015-16 and 1.44 lakh tonnes from April to November, 2016.

In 2016-17 in Gujarat, the potato acreage is estimated more about 1.24 lakh ha (Second Advance Estimate dt. 18-1-2017, Gujarat) as against 1.10 lakh ha in 2015-16 and production is expected about 32.35 lakh tonnes as against 28.57 lakh tonnes in last year.

In current year of 2016-17 the rainfall was normal in North Gujarat and potato production is likely to be bumper. In other states the potato production is likely to be slight more than last year. This will keep the potato price lower side than in last year and currently it is ruling around Rs. 450 per quintal may remain same with slightly ups and down.

Reviewing the production and other reports, the research team of Department of Agricultural Economics, Junagadh Agricultural University, Junagadh, analysed the historical monthly price data of potato collected from Deesa APMC. The econometric analysis revealed that **the prices of potato during March, 2017 may remain in the range of Rs. 90 to 120 per 20 kg and in April, 2016 Rs. 120 to 150 per 20 kg (450 - 750 Rs/ctl).**

Since there is a limited chance for the prices to increase quite high in the near future, it is suggested that farmers may sell potato upon harvest, without going for storage, taking their own decision.