

## Gram price likely to remain below MSP, sell upon harvest

Gram is widely grown in about 50 countries in the world. India is the largest chickpea producing country contributing about 70 per cent in world production. It is a protein-rich supplement to cereal-based diets. There has been a steady increase in the area under gram in India in the last decade from 83 lakh ha in 2011-12 to 114 lakh ha in 2021-22. However, its production shows variations owing to rainfall pattern, unfavourable weather and disease incidence *etc.*

Owing to improved acreage and adequate rainfall, India is likely to produce record pulse crops of 269.6 lakh tonnes in 2021-22 (2<sup>nd</sup> Advance Estimate dt. 16-2-2022), which is about 12 lakh tonnes (of which 10 lakh tonnes from Gujarat) more as compared to last year (254.6 lakh tonnes). It is quite higher than our total consumption requirement of around 245 lakh tonnes. In current year in Gujarat, the area under gram is estimated about 11 lakh ha as against 8.16 lakh ha in last year and crop condition was good. The production is also estimated higher about 24 lakh tonnes, *i.e.* about 10 lakh tonnes more as compared to last year (14.38 lakh tonnes).

India imported 3.71 lakh tonnes gram in 2019-20 decreased to 2.95 lakh tonnes in 2020-21 and also exported 1.59 lakh tonnes. The import of total pulses also decreased from 29.98 lakh tonnes in 2019-20 to 25.05 lakh tonnes in 2020-21. In Current year from April-December, 2021 about 1.80 lakh tonnes gram and 20.47 lakh tonnes of total pulses has been imported in the country. Hence, the gram price which was ruling around Rs. 800 per 20 kg in April, 2020 increased to about Rs. 960 per 20 kg in April, 2021. Then after it remained around this level with slight ups and down till current February, 2022 in various markets of Gujarat, now expected remain at this level with slight ups and down in current year too. The Government of India has fixed MSP of gram Rs. 1046 per 20 kg (Rs. 5230 per quintal) for current *rabi* season of year 2021-22 over Rs. 1020 in last year. In crop year 2020-21, a total of 6.28 lakh tonnes of gram was procured by NAFED in country including 1.48 lakh tonnes from Gujarat (*i.e.* about 10.32% of total production).

Considering all these the research team of Department of Agricultural Economics, Junagadh Agricultural University, Junagadh, analysed the historical monthly price data of gram collected from Dahod Regulated Markets. Based on the econometric analysis and production reports, it is concluded that **the prices of gram during March to April, 2022 at harvest, may remain in the range of Rs. 900 to 1000 per 20 kg (4500 to 5000 Rs/qtl).** Hence, keeping above situation in view, farmers are suggested to sell gram upon harvest (at MSP centers in APMCs), without going for storage, taking their own decision.

Owing to higher production of total pulses, particularly gram in country; there is less chances for gram price to go up in future. However, MSP will provide good support to market.