

## **This year too, cumin price likely to remain high**

India is the largest producer and consumer of cumin. It is also cultivated in countries such as Syria, Iran, Turkey, China and Latin America; but its production comes late by June-July. Gujarat and Rajasthan are the two major cumin-producing states contributes more than 95 per cent in the total production of the nation. Cumin has a significant demand as a spice, all over the globe, especially in the places where spicy food is preferred.

In last year 2021-22 cumin area and production was estimated about 30 per cent less over previous year as the crop was damaged due to unseasonal rain and frost. The export of cumin has also decreased from 2.98 lakh tonnes in 2020-21 to 2.17 lakh tonnes in 2021-22. Besides, from April to December, 2022 about 1.46 lakh tonnes cumin has been exported due to short supply, resulted in higher prices. Hence, cumin price, which was ruling around Rs. 3000 per 20 kg in January, 2022 in various markets of Gujarat, increased to around Rs. 3800 per 20 kg in May, 2022 and further to around 6000 in January, 2023. Then after, it started declining with arrivals of fresh crop and currently it is ruling around Rs. 5500 per 20 kg in last week of February, 2023, is expected to remain firm at this level.

In current year of 2022-23 in Gujarat, the area under cumin is reported less about 2.92 lakh ha (2<sup>nd</sup> Advance Estimate dt. 7-1-2023) as against 3.07 lakh ha as in last year. Its production is estimated about 2.47 lakh tonnes as against 2.22 lakh tonnes in 2021-22. As per some agencies' report, in Rajasthan, cumin acreage may be slight higher than the last year, but production will be less, as the crop was damaged due to warm weather earlier and later on frost. Hence, cumin production in current year in the country is expected less than last year around 4 lakh tonnes, which is inadequate to meet current domestic consumption and export demand, as last year's ending stock is negligible.

Considering these all and reviewing some agencies' reports, the research team of Department of Agricultural Economics, Junagadh Agricultural University, Junagadh, analysed the historical monthly price data of cumin collected from Rajkot APMC. The econometric analysis revealed that the **prices of cumin during March to April, 2023 (at harvest) may remain in the range of Rs. 5500 to 6100 per 20 kg (27500 - 30500 Rs/qtl)**. Hence, farmers are suggested to take note of the above situation and take their own decision to store cumin and sell after April, 2023. If export opportunities continue to remain better, there is some chance that, cumin price may go up in future.