

Sell gram upon harvest at MSP

India is the largest chickpea producing country followed by Pakistan, Turkey, Mexico, Canada and Australia covering an area of 178 lakh ha and production about 172 lakh tonnes at globe. In India accounting for nearly 45 per cent of the total pulses production. There has been a steady increase in the area under gram in India in the last decade from 91.86 lakh ha in 2010-11 to 107 lakh ha in 2019-20 (as per latest estimates). However, its production shows variations owing to rainfall pattern, unfavourable weather and disease incidence *etc.*

During the current year 2019-20, gram production is estimated about 112.2 lakh tonnes (2nd Advance Estimate dt. 18-2-2020) which is about 13 per cent more as compared to last year (99.4 lakh tonnes). The crop condition remained good throughout the season. The total pulses production was 220.8 lakh tonnes in 2018-19 and in current year it is estimated about 230.2 lakh tonnes, but is quite less than our total consumption requirement of around 240 lakh tonnes. In current year in Gujarat, the area under gram is estimated about 3.70 lakh ha as against 1.73 lakh ha in last year and crop condition is good in the state. The production is also estimated higher about 4.50 lakh tonnes, *i.e.* about double than the last year.

India imported 9.81 lakh tonnes gram in 2017-18 declined to 1.86 lakh tonnes in 2018-19 and also exported 2.28 lakh tonnes. The import of total pulses also declined from 56.08 lakh tonnes in 2017-18 to 25.28 lakh tonnes in 2018-19. In Current year from April- December, 2019 about 3 lakh tonnes gram and 22.84 lakh tonnes of total pulses has been imported in the country. Hence, the gram price which was ruling around Rs. 700 per 20 kg in April, 2018 increased to about Rs. 840 per 20 kg in April, 2019 and currently it is ruling around Rs. 800 per 20 kg in various markets of Gujarat, now expected remain at this level with slight ups and down in current year. The Government of India has fixed MSP of gram Rs. 975 per 20 kg (Rs. 4875 per quintal) for current *rabi* season of year 2019-20 as against Rs. 924 in last year.

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, 2020 at harvest, may remain in the range of Rs. 750 to 820 per 20 kg (3750 to 4100 Rs/qtl)**. Hence, keeping above situation in view, farmers are suggested to sell gram upon harvest at MSP centres in APMCs; or they may store it, till May, 2020 taking their own decision.

If Government policy of restricted quota of pulses import will be continued, there is some chance that gram prices may go up slightly after the harvesting season is over.