Business Line dt. 14.2.23.

APEDA eyes $30 billion in agri produce exports this fiscal

Our Bureau
Bengaluru

The Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA), which completed 37 year of operations, is set to ship agricultural products worth $30 billion in the current financial year.

APEDA, which began operations with exports of mere $0.6 billion in 1987-88, shipped out agricultural products worth $24.77 billion in 2021-22. In the current financial year, out of the targetted $23.56 billion, exports till December were $19.69 billion and the remaining target is expected to be completed within the stipulated period, an official statement said.

APEDA shipped out agricultural products worth $24.77 billion in 2021-22

NON-BASMATI RICE

Non-basmati Rice has emerged as India's top export item among the many agricultural and processed food product exports under the APEDA basket. With the export of $4.663 billion in nine months of 2022-23, it is recorded a significant contribution in the current fiscal. Other top products in the APEDA export basket in 2022-23 include basmati rice, cereal preparations and miscellaneous processed items and meat, dairy & poultry products.

As a part of promoting Indian millets on the web, APEDA has designed, developed and launched the Millets Portal. It has also created a separate portal, Indian Millet Exchange, to promote millets.

Considering the importance of food safety and traceability required by the importing countries of developed economies, APEDA has taken a number of initiatives in the area of quality development such as preparation of standards, procedures for identified potential products, development of residue monitoring protocol, recognition of laboratories and implementation of traceability systems among others.Aiming to take export of agricultural products to a new level, APEDA has promoted IT-enabled activities for ease of doing business in the promotion and development of exports from India.

Business Line, 15.2.23

Soyameal exports may double this season as demand rebounds

REGAINING MARKETS. Meal shipments rise 65%; crushings up 52% on higher bean availability

Vishwanath Kulkarni
Bengaluru

With the rebound in demand for Indian soyameal, especially from the South-East Asian and Far Eastern countries, the industry expects meal shipments to more than double to 14 lakh tonnes (lt) in the current oil season (October 2022-September 2023).

Soyameal exports are off to a good start. In the first four months of the season, shipments have increased by 65 per cent to 6.31 lt (3.83 lt).

"With global soyameal prices moving up due to the weather concerns over the upcoming crop in Brazil and Argentina, we are seeing good demand for the Indian meal from Vietnam and Japan among others. In the first four months of the season, we have almost reached last year's levels of 6.4 lakh tonnes and expect the total shipments to be in the range of 14-15 lakh tonnes," said DN Pathak, Executive Director, The Soyabean Processors Association of India (SOPA).

BEAN BOOST. With global soyabean meal prices moving up on weather concerns, Indian meal is in demand

In fact, the soyameal exports declined sharply in the 2021-22 season to 6.4 lt from 19.20 lt in 2020-21 as the Indian meal was out-priced in the world market. With world prices staying high, the Indian meal has turned competitive, attracting the buyers' interests. The modal price (rates at which most trades take place) of soyabean are ruling steady and is hovering a little above ₹5,000 per quintal at various agricultural produce marketing committee (APMC) *mandis* in Madhya Pradesh, the largest producer of the oilseed. Prices of soyameal (FAQ) are ruling in the range of ₹45,000-45,300 per tonne in Indore on ex-factory basis.

CRUSHING UP

As per the latest demand-supply data, released by SOPA, soyabean crushings are up 52 per cent for the period under review on improved availability of the oilseed due to higher market arrivals and growing demand for soyameal.

Soyabean crushings stood at 43.50 lt in the October-January period compared with 28.50 lt in the same period a year ago. Arrivals of soyabean increased to 61 lt (48 lt).

According to SOPA estimates, production of soyabean stood at 120.40 lt. With a carry-forward stock of 25.15 lt, the total availability of soyabean was 145.55 lt during the year. After retaining for sowing, the availability for crushing is estimated at 134.55 lt (113.27 lt0.

Total soyameal production during the first four months stood at close to 35 lt against 22.75 lt logged a year ago. Besides rising exports, the domestic demand for the meal — from both the feed and the food segments — is on the rise. Soyameal offtake by the feed sector stood higher at 24 lt during the October-January period against 21.50 lt. The consumption of soyameal by the food segment was up at 4 lt compared with 2.70 lt in a year ago.

Business Line dt. 15.2.23.

Marine products exports to grow by 9% in FY23

Our Bureau
Kolkata

India's export of marine products is likely to grow by nearly nine per cent to $8.47 billion in 2022-23 — up from $7.76 billion in 2021-22 backed by steady demand from existing markets and addition of newer markets.

According to Dodda Venkata Swamy, Chairman, MPEDA, exports are up by nearly three per cent till December 2022 at $6.28 billion.Shrimp is the major item in quantity and value terms, accounting for nearly 53 per cent in quantity and close to 75 per cent of the total revenue.

The US accounts for the largest share in the overall shrimp exports with a market share of close to 43 per cent, followed by China and Europe at close to 15 per cent and South-East Asia at 10 per cent.

Incidentally, there has been close to 23 per cent decline in exports to the US during FY23 at $2.08 billion as of December 2022 against $3.37 billion in the same period last year.

"This is the first time we were given export targets and this is because of the good growth in exports last year. Though there has been a decline in exports to the US, other markets, including China, Europe and Japan, have been growing," Swamy told *businessline* on the sidelines of a press conference to announce the 23rd edition of the India International Seafood Show (IISS) to be held in the city from February 15-17.

(from left) Rajarshi Banerjee, regional President, SEAI; Jagdish V Fofandi, National President, SEAI; DV Swami, Chairman, MPEDA, and M Karthikeyan, Director, MPEDA, at the press meet DEBASISH BHADURI

PRODUCTION BOOST

India currently produces close to 10 lakh tonnes of shrimp annually and the total area covered is close to 1.75 lakh hectares. There is scope to ramp up production by bringing in more area under shrimp cultivation across various states and also by increasing productivity.

"There is potential to scale up production in close to 5 lakh hectares of land. We are working with various State Governments to see how we can take this forward.

We are hopeful of increasing production to close to 15 lakh tonne in the next three years by increasing the area under production and improving productivity," M Karthikeyan, Director, MPEDA, said.

SEAFOOD SHOW

The 23rd edition of India International Seafood Show (IISS) will showcase India's attempt to remain buoyant in seafood exports in the post-pandemic phase, the face of stiff global competition, and a stringent inspection regime imposed by the European Union and Japan on shrimp consignments.

The biennial showpiece event in the marine sector, organised by the Marine Products Export Development Authority (MPEDA) in association with the Seafood Exporters Association of India (SEAI), will offer a platform to various industry stakeholders for inking business deals, forging new contacts, leveraging market linkages, and introducing new technologies and products to the global market.

Business Live dt. 16.2.23 !

Deluge of edible oil imports hits refiners

ON THE RISE. Shipments into the country surge 31.3% during Nov-Jan with RBD palmolein consignments trebling

Our Bureau
Mangaluru

Import of edible oils witnessed a 31.56 per cent growth in the first quarter of the oil year 2022-23 (November to October) following a surge in the import of soft oils such as sunflower oil and soyabean oil.

Data from the Solvent Extractors' Association (SEA) of India revealed that India imported 47.46 lakh tonnes (lt) of edible oils from November to January of the current oil year 2022-23, against 36.07 lt in the same period a year ago.

BV Mehta, Executive Director of SEA, said import of sunflower oil increased to 4.61 lt in January, nearly triple the average monthly imports, as top exporters such as Russia and Ukraine sought to reduce their stockpiles. India's monthly sunflower oil imports averaged around 1.61 lt in the oil year 2021-22.

He said the surge in the import of sunflower oil and soyabean oil could dampen India's palm oil imports and weigh on palm oil prices.

During the first quarter of the oil year 2022-23, India imported 4.91 lt of crude soyabean degummed oil from Argentina, followed by 3.30 lt from Brazil. Russia exported 2.15 lt of crude sunflower oil, and Ukraine exported 2.35 lt during the period.

PALM OIL BUYING UP 72%

India imported 24.26 lt of crude palm oil (CPO) during the review period, against 14.12 lt a year ago, registering a growth of 71.77 per cent. However, the import of RBD palmolein nearly trebled from 2.16 lt to 6.32 lt.

The imports were nearly 20 per cent of total palm oil shipments into the country. This deprived the domestic industry of capacity utilisation. India's palm oil refining industry is suffering from low capacity utilisation due to excessive import of RBD palmolein and are getting transformed into mere packers, he said.

Indonesia and Malaysia were the major suppliers of RBD palmolein and CPO to India. During the review period, Indonesia exported 13.63 lt of CPO and 5.15 lt of RBD palmolein. Malaysia exported 8.06 lt of CPO and 1.12 lt RBD palmolein.

DOMESTIC INDUSTRY HIT. India's palm oil refining industry is suffering from low capacity utilisation due to excessive import of RBD palmolein

PORT STOCKS RISE

Mehta said the stock of edible oils at various ports is estimated at 8.92 lt as on January 1. This includes 4.97 lt of CPO, 1.95 lt of RBD palmolein, 1 lt of degummed soyabean oil, and 1 lt of crude sunflower oil. The pipeline stock was at 23.31 lt as on January 1 and total stock at 32.23 lt.

The total stock increased by 4.51 lt as of January 1 to 32.23 lt, from 27.72 lt from December 1, due to the record import of edible oils during peak crushing season, he said.

The overall import of vegetable oils, which includes edible oil and non-edible oil, stood at 47.73 lt during the first three months of the oil year 2022-23 against 36.71 lt in the corresponding period of the previous oil year.

Business Line dt. 16.2.23

Govt hikes minimum import price for arecanut by ₹100/kg

AJ Vinayak
Mangaluru

The Centre has increased the minimum price (MIP) for the import of arecanut by ₹100 a kg.

In a notification dated February 14, the Directorate-General of Foreign Trade (DGFT), under the Department of Commerce, increased the minimum price for the import of arecanut from ₹251 a kg to ₹351 a kg.

However, the notification said the given conditions should not be applicable for imports by 100 per cent Export Oriented Units (EOU) and units in the SEZ subject to the condition that no DTA (domestic tariff area) sale is allowed. Considering the increase in the import of arecanut and the cost of cultivation, the co-operatives in the arecanut sector, including the Central Arecanut and Cocoa Marketing and Processing Cooperative (Campco) Ltd, were seeking an increase in the MIP.

Union Minister of State for Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare Shobha Karandlaje, who was in Puttur of Dakshina Kannada district on February 10 to participate in the agri machinery fair of Campco, said her department had forwarded a proposal to the DGFT to increase the MIP from the existing ₹251 a kg to ₹351 a kg.

Expecting the price of arecanut to go up, Kishore Kumar Kodgi, President of Campco, said now the importer has to pay a minimum rate of ₹351 a kg plus the Customs Duty of 108 per cent.

IMPORTS UP

Data provided to a query in the Lok Sabha on February 8 showed that India imported 61,452.21 tonnes of arecanut till November of 2022-23 against 25,978.98 tonnes during the entire financial year of 2021-22.

The value of the imported arecanut went up from $90.18 million in 2021-22 to $217.8 million in the first eight months of the financial year 2022-23.

Business Line dt. 16.2.23.

Speed up permits to import raw material for value-added seafood exports, says SEAI

V Sajeev Kumar
Kolkata

Seafood Exporters Association of India (SEAI) has voiced concern over the delay in issuing Special Import Permits (SIP) for importing raw materials that go into the production of value-added marine products, which are exported.

Jagdish Fofandi, national president of SEAI, said it takes a minimum 3-4 weeks or sometimes more to obtain an SIP.

To speed up the process of SIP issuance, he said the Agriculture Ministry could delegate such a function to Marine Products Export Development Authority (MPEDA) and the Agriculture Ministry could ratify it later. SEAI has sought urgent intervention of the Ministry in fast-tracking this procedure, he said.

India, Fofandi says, has now an opportunity to emerge as a leading international value-added seafood processing export hub such as Thailand, China and Vietnam.

The Ministry's intervention would result in a substantial increase in joint venture investment by international seafood majors with Indian exporters for value added exports, he said.

SMALL DROP THIS YEAR

Post Covid, he said, marine products recorded a growth of 30 per cent, reaching a record high of $7.8 billion. However, the current year will witness a small drop in the export value by 3-5 per cent as well as quantities due to adverse market situations globally.

Addressing the India International Seafood Show 2023, Fofandi also raised apprehensions over the recent notification of the Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying in allowing import of Specific Pathogen Free (SPF) brood stock of crustaceans from South-East Asian countries.

The disease of Early Mortality Syndrome (EMS) originated in South-East Asian countries like Thailand decimates their production of aquaculture shrimps. .

This has impacted Vietnam, China and several others. India is one of the few countries which did not encounter this dreaded disease due to the banning of SPF broodstock from Thailand and other S-E Asian countries, he said.

He pointed out that the country's exports of ₹57,000 crore are threatened with this notification. SEAI is making a representation to the Prime Minister on this issue urgently.

TRADE PACTS

FTAs with EEC and UK should clearly focus on getting zero duties incorporated for Indian marine products into EEC and UK in line with competing countries like Ecuador, Vietnam, Bangladesh and Indonesia offering. India should also offer 'zero to zero' duty structure for marine products imported, Fofandi added.

Business Line dt. 16.2.33

Goods exports drop 6.58% in Jan as key items take a hit

Our Bureau
New Delhi

Trade data

Export of goods continued its fall in January, dropping 6.58 per cent to $32.91 billion from $35.23 billion in January 2022, as the slowdown in global demand hit sectors such as gems and jewellery, engineering goods, drugs and chemicals, textiles and garments, leather and meat products.

Imports, too, declined last month, although at a lower rate of 3.53 per cent to $50.66 billion from $52.57 billion in the same month last year, according to quick estimates issued by the Commerce department on Wednesday. Trade deficit at $17.75 billion was almost at the same level as in January 2022, but much lower than December's $23 billion.

'IMPRESSIVE EXPORTS'

In the April-January 2023 period, goods exports grew 8.5 per cent to $369.25 billion while imports increased 21.89 per cent to $602.2 billion. Trade deficit widened to $232.95 billion against $153.79 billion in the same period last fiscal.

Export growth in the said period was impressive given that FY22 exports were at a record $422 billion, said Commerce Secretary Sunil Barthwal. Exports from 17 of the 30 key sectors grew in the 10-month period, led by electronics, petroleum products, tobacco, chemicals, leather, marine products and pharmaceuticals.

THE UKRAINE ADVANTAGE

"The growth momentum can be maintained in the remaining months of the fiscal if revival takes place in China, which is emerging from its Covid-19 restrictions and the attempts made by the governments in the US and the EU, to boost their economies, start showing results," Barthwal said in response to a question.

Barthwal added that in the area of petroleum products, India had taken advantage of the Ukraine conflict, by importing more crude, refining and exporting it. "That is why there is a strong improvement in our exports of petroleum products," he said.

Services exports remained strong and were projected to grow at 31.86 per cent during April-January 2023 to $272 billion. In the area of imports, 17 out of 30 key sectors exhibited a fall in January, which included silver, gold, electronic goods, pharma, machinery, leather and chemicals.

China lifts suspension on 99 Indian seafood export processing units

V Sajeev Kumar
Kolkata

China has lifted its suspension on 99 Indian seafood export processing units imposed in 2021 after it complained of some irregularities, including the presence of the Covid-19 virus. The lifting of the suspension will likely boost India's seafood exports in 2023, DV Swamy, Chairman, Marine Products Exports Development Authority (MPEDA), has said.

"China acknowledges source control assurance by India and lifted the suspension on 99 Indian establishments. Efforts by MPEDA, EIC, Indian Embassy, Beijing and Department of Commerce has yielded fruit to further trade with China", MPEDA said in a tweet.

Speaking to *businessline* on the sidelines of the India International Seafood Show, the Chairman said India is doing well in the Chinese markets with an export of $1,175 million in FY22 compared with $939 million in FY21, a growth of 25 per cent. China is the second-largest market after the US for Indian shrimps.


DV Swamy, Chairman, MPEDA

VIRTUAL INSPECTIONS

With all the removal of barriers, he said exports to China will pick up this year as they need Indian products such as ribbon fish, pomfrets, shrimps, etc both for domestic consumption as well as value-added products exports.

China started virtual inspection of Indian establishments from December 2020. As many as 110 units were suspended after virtual inspection of which 11 were lifted.

To a question on Ecuador posing a threat to Indian shrimps in the US markets, the MPEDA chairman said the Latin American country is a threat to India due to logistical advantages. They are supplying whole shrimps in that market and India is trying to focus on value-added products to gain an advantage which would overcome the competition.

Focusing on G20 countries, he said MPEDA has charted out a two-point strategy to increase exports. The first strategy is to support the states to overcome the challenges including infrastructure. The second is country-wise plan focusing on 25 major economies to promote Indian marine products.

On the proposed FTA, the Chairman said, "we have recommended including marine products in the proposed FTAs with Canada, the UK and the EU which would be beneficial for both the parties".

India is doing well in the Chinese markets with an export of $1,175 million in FY22 compared with $939 million in FY21, a growth of 25 per cent

The writer is in Kolkata at the invitation of MPEDA