Potatoes cost 10 taka per kg in Akkelpur, farmers face a price hike

Akkelpur :: According to the records of the Agriculture Department, the area under potato cultivation in Akkelpur, Joypurhat has increased to about 700 hectares. The yield has also been bumper due to favorable weather conditions. Supply has increased in the wholesale market. However, the price of potatoes has fallen in the market due to lack of buyers. On the other hand, farmers are not getting slips for storing potatoes in cold storage due to syndicates. Since it is a perishable crop, farmers are not getting a proper price even if they bring it to the market instead of keeping it at home, which is why they are losing interest in marketing it.

Over the past few weeks, the price of red potatoes in the Akkelpur retail market has dropped to 15 taka per kg. In the wholesale market, potatoes have further decreased to 4 taka per kg. On the other hand, Diamond variety Holland potatoes and Granula white variety potatoes are being sold at 3 taka per kg. Farmers claim that traders have been manipulating potato seeds to get higher prices, so farmers have been buying seed potatoes at higher prices. They have to buy seed potatoes for 100 taka and produce them and sell them for 10 taka per kg of potatoes. Far from making a profit, potato farmers have been struggling to raise production costs.

A visit to the wholesale potato markets in Akkelpur College Bazar, Tilakpur, Gopinathpur Jamalganj and Raykali Unions has shown that there are piles of potatoes everywhere, there is no demand from traders, and they are also not motivated to buy. As a result, the producer farmers or traders are waiting with their heads held high for the demand from wholesalers.

Due to the environment and soil, the yield of potatoes is higher in Joypurhat district than in other districts of the north. Zaidul Islam, a potato farmer from Awalgari village in Akkelpur upazila, said that the potato market was good last year. Therefore, the number of potato farmers and the amount of land have increased this time. He said that it cost 30 thousand taka to cultivate potatoes on one bigha of land. There, potatoes are being sold at 15 to 16 thousand taka per bigha. If the potato market had 1200 to 1300 taka per maund, there would have been some profit.

Md. Sajahan Ali, a potato farmer from Jalalpur village, said that after buying seed potatoes for 100 taka per kg, today the buyers are paying only 10 taka per kg for potatoes in the market. This will not increase the cost of production. This time, the cost share is more than the profit in potato farming.

Pappu Mandal, a potato farmer from Jhalgharia village in Badalgachhi upazila, lamented that if potatoes are sold at this price, there will be no wife and children. When potatoes are brought to the market, they have to sell them for 200 to 300 taka per maund.

According to the Upazila Agricultural Extension Department, potatoes have been cultivated on 6,600 hectares of land in this upazila this season.

Upazila Agriculture Officer and agronomist Md. Imran Hossain said that potatoes have been cultivated on about 700 hectares of land more than the target in Akkelpur this season. The yield has also been bumper. Due to the high production, the price of potatoes in the market has come down.

District Agricultural Marketing Officer, Agriculturist Md.

Mehedi Hasan said, potatoes are a perishable crop. The government is taking measures to store potatoes. There are three private cold storages in Akkelpur. If all farmers cultivate alternative mustard instead of cultivating potatoes at the same time, they would have made some profit. Or they can also cultivate improved varieties of potatoes suitable for export.