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A SIMPLE DEVICE FOR STORING SHEET RUBBER IN SMALLHOLDINGS

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A simple procedure for storing rubber sheet at the farmers' level is suggested in this paper. The sheets could be stored in airtight polythene bags for approximately six months without mould growth. The modified storage practice could contribute approximately 50% of the net gain through the deferred sale.

INTRODUCTION

The practice of stock holding of rubber by the grower is intended to realize a better price for the crop. But there are many constraints on the part of the farmer to store rubber sheets for long periods. Storage in humid atmosphere or on concrete floors favours mould growth on the sheets. The mould adversely affects the quality and grade of the sheet, fetching only lower market prices for the grower. Hence, a device for storage of sheet rubber, which can be practised by the small grower, who can afford to store the crop for a reasonable period, will be beneficial.

houses for 4 days were taken out on the fifth day and allowed to cool for 15-30 minutes. The sheets were then transferred to polythene cover of size 120 cm x 175 cm. In each bag 60 sheets were placed. Air was removed to the maximum possible extent from the bag and it was sealed by folding the open end and sewing the edge with gunny twine. Gunny layers were placed on the dry wooden planks and the bales were stacked in a single layer. The bales were rearranged by turning upside down once a month. The sheets were stored under this environment for a maximum period of 7 months.

METHODOLOGY

RSS 4 grade sheets dried in smoke

OBSERVATIONS

The rubber was sold after six months

Table 1. Economics of deferred sale after storage (Rs per 600 kg of rubber sheets)

Cost of rubber if sold during November 2001 @ Rs.26/kg	15600.00
Cost of rubber realized after storage during June 2002 @ Rs.36.50/kg	21900.00
Difference in selling price due to deferred sale	6300.00
Expenditure incurred on storage	
Cost of 20 polythene bags @Rs. 4.50	90.00
Labour cost towards rearranging bales	300.00
Cost of other items for storage	210.00
Total	600.00
Net profit due to deferred sale after storage	5700.00

K.W: Smallholdings; Sheet storage



of storage and at the time of sale it was observed that there were no mould growths on sheets stored in the polythene bags. It was also evident that the periodic rearranging of the bales had prevented hardening and deformation of the bales. The analysis of profit due to deferred sale after storage is presented in Table 1. Storage of 600 kg of rubber for seven months (November 2001 to June 2002) and sale therefore, resulted in a net gain of Rs. 5700/-. The modified storage practice can be assumed to have contributed approximately 50% of the net gain.

CONCLUSION

The suggested method of storage of rubber sheets could prevent the mould growth for a period of six months. This enables the farmer, who could afford to hold the stock for a reasonable period, to realize a higher price for the sheet by retaining the initial quality of the same. As attempts are being made to export sheet rubber from the country, the availability of good quality, mould free sheets is desirable and the procedure described could supplement such efforts. ■