

Rubber Board to Verify Stock

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Traders have questioned the authenticity of Rubber Board's stock estimates. The estimate of stock said to be with traders is close to 1 lakh tonne. Traders say that the estimates have to be reworked.

The board's survey, expected to be conducted in May-June period, is being designed by a three-member panel of agricultural scientists.

Field visits and collection of data from over 10,000 farm units would be carried out by Rubber Board field officers. Rubber Board chairman Sheela Thomas had asserted that the statistics of the board were prepared realistically by collecting, compiling and collating data from different sources.

"We had expressed our reservations about the stock assigned to us when the Rubber Board released its December figures," said N Radhakrishnan, adviser to Cochin

Rubber Merchants Association. In a letter to the chairman of Rubber Board, the traders' body had pointed out that the stock assigned to them was on the higher side. As in December, traders and processors together held 1,10,980 tonne, according to the Rubber Board's estimate. "Our share of this was only 25,000 tonne of tradable rubber for industrial use," he said adding that traders do not have the financial might to hold huge quantities of rubber at the prevailing prices.

Sheela Thomas, who took over as the chairman of Rubber Board in February 2011, had clarified that the entire quantity shown as stock will not be available in the market for immediate consumption. The stock estimate includes various forms of rubber across various levels such as growers, dealers, processors and manufacturers. Of this, the stock with the processors and manufacturers and nearly 50% of the stock available with the growers are not available for trading.