

# Rubber production up 6.2% in April

**C. J. Punnathara**  
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Intermittent rains throughout April resulted in a spurt in natural rubber production. The high prices have also ensured that the farmers take an active interest in bringing more areas under rain-guarding, ensuring uninterrupted tapping operations even during the rainy season, sources in the Rubber Board said.

Relatively high domestic and global prices have forced farmers to overcome labour shortage by roping in labour from their households. This has also ensured that areas under rubber which were not earlier tapped become productive, the sources added.

Rubber production in-

creased by 6.2 per cent to 56,800 tonnes in April against 53,500 tonne recorded in the corresponding month last year. Consumption, meanwhile, grew at a more nominal pace to 82,500 tonnes. The stocks have depleted to 2,50,250 tonnes as against 2,76,110 tonnes at the end of last fiscal.

According to the provisional figures released by the Rubber Board, the total production in the country in 2010-11 was 8,61,950, while consumption grew to 9,49,205 tonnes.

Going by indications in April, the growth in rubber production recorded last year is likely to be sustained this year as well.

The Rubber Board has forecast that production in 2011-12 is likely to increase by 4.6 per cent to 9,02,000 tonnes, and consumption by 2.9 per cent to 9,77,000 tonnes. Meanwhile, imports are slated to fall this year even as exports are expected to grow. The year is likely to end with a stock of 2,71,000 tonnes, marginally higher than last year's level.

India, once self-sufficient in rubber, is no longer so. With demand-supply mismatch continuing in both the domestic and international markets, the prices have been ruling at all-time highs.

Farmers can look forward to good demand and prices in the days to come.

## PERFORMANCE OF NATURAL RUBBER

	Production	Consumption	Import	Export	Stock at the end
April 2010	53,500	78,250	10,876	2,227	1,96,015
April 2011(p)	56,800	82,500	843	1,043	2,50,250
2010-11(p)	8,61,950	9,49,205	1,77,637	29,851	2,76,110
2011-12 (projection)	9,02,000	9,77,000	1,20,000	50,000	2,71,000
(% Growth)	(4.6)	(2.9)			

(Tonnes)

(p): provisional