

A Correspondent

Brahmanbaria: Bumper production of Litchi has delighted the growers in the district as they are getting fair prices of the seasonal fruit despite the coronavirus situation.

Local farmers said although they were worried over the sale of litchi amid the virus situation now they are happy that the juicy fruit worth around Tk 1 crore is being sold in different markets of the district every day.

The litchi of Bijoy Nagar upazila of the district is famous for its sweetness and taste and that's why fruit traders from different parts of the country throng here to buy the fruit, they said.

In other parts of the country the delicious fruit arrived in the market in the mid April but in Bijoy Nagar upazila it started to come to the market in the month of May.

Sources said the litchi growers in Bijoy Nagar upazila started its commercial cultivation in 2000 and most of the people of the upazila got involved in the business as it proved to be more profitable than other business with less effort. Many farmers in the upazila have turned their cropland into litchi orchard.

Currently there are 500 litchi orchards in Paharpur, Bishnupur, Kanchanpur, Khatinga, Kashimpur, Singarbill, Champaknagar, Adampur, Kalachara, Merashani, Sejamura, Kamalmora, Nurpur, Harashpur, Mukundapur, Noagaon, Alipur, Chandpur, Kashinagar, Saturpur, Rupa, Santamora, Kamalpur, Kachumora, Bhitidaurpur areas of the upazila.

All varieties of litchi including local variety, 'Elachi', 'Chaina', 'Patnai' and 'Bombai' litchis are available in the orchards.

Aulia Bazar in Bijoy Nagar upazila is the biggest wholesale litchi market in the upazila. Besides, it is sold at Merashani, Mukundapur, Kangkoira, Champaknagar, Singarbill and Amtoli Bazars in the upazila.

The traders from Brahmanbaria, Cumilla, Narsingdi, Bhairab, Noakhali, Chandpur, Moulvibazar, Sylhet, Srimangal, Habiganj, Feni and Dhaka come to the markets to buy the fruit, said local traders.

Farmers said this year sale of litchi is a little bit low than the previous year due to the coronavirus but the overall business is good.

Local litchi traders said the sale starts in the markets at 4 am and continues till 8-9 am every day. One thousand local variety litchis are being sold at Tk 2,000, while 'Elachi' and 'Chaina' varieties at Tk 2000-3000 and Patnai and Bombai varieties at Tk 2,200-2500.

Makbul Hossain, a litchi trader in Habiganj district said, "I have bought litchi worth over Tk 1 lakh everyday in the last three days from Aulia Bazar."

"We are facing transportation problem due to the coronavirus situation and we have to give money to police at different points," he said.

Bijoy Nagar Agriculture officer Khujir Hossain, said this year a total of 370 hectares of land have been brought under litchi cultivation which is 20 hectares more than the previous year.

"We provided necessary information, fertilizers and pesticides to the litchi farmers," he said.

Meher Nigar, Upazila Nirbahi Officer, said "There is a directive from the ministry concerned to prevent harassment of businessmen and we'll take action if we receive any complaint."