



MONTHLY POLICY TRACKER FOOD AND AGRICULTURE

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INVESTMENT IN AGRICULTURE

- **The Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojna (RKVY) scheme would provide financial assistance of Rs 1 lakh** to every fruit farmer in Karnataka with an objective to encourage the cultivation of fruits like kokum, jamun and jackfruit. Also value addition will be promoted in the case of jackfruit through a fruit nurseries project along with University of Agricultural Sciences (UAS) Bangalore.
- **J&K government has sanctioned Rs 5 crore for construction of a multi facility 'Kisan Kendra'** at Jammu. The project to be completed by March 2015, will provide the farmers an opportunity to upgrade their knowledge, skill and awareness in agricultural field.
- **The government has decided to immediately stop the newly launched Modified National Agricultural Insurance Scheme (MNAIS).** The agriculture ministry will revamp the crop insurance scheme with focus on increasing crop based income for the farmers rather than insuring them against crop losses. The revamp will also focus on simplifying the procedure for the farmer to get the money in the event of crop failure of a single farmer

PRODUCTION & PROCUREMENT

- **The Himachal Pradesh government has simplified guidelines under the apple rejuvenation project** to enhance productivity of the fruit. Nearly 1500 hectares will be brought under the "Apple Rejuvenation Project" during 2014-15 and orchards covered under the scheme will have 30 per cent pollenisers and micro-irrigation facilities. An additional area of 1000 hectares will be covered under micro-irrigation during the year. Also to protect fruit crops especially apple from hailstorms, the state government has enhanced subsidy on anti hail nets from 50 per cent to 80 per cent.
- **Israel is planning to open two centres of excellence at Nalanda and Vaishali in Bihar** in the field of vegetables and mango respectively to help cultivators increase their productivity. In these centres, Israeli agricultural experts along with local farm scientists would impart knowhow of the latest technology to growers to help them raise the production level. Israel is currently running 20 centres of excellence in the field of agriculture and horticulture across India and these two proposed centres in Bihar were among nine more it was planning to start by 2015.

NEW INITIATIVE

- **Punjab government has launched a special scheme to release direct subsidy to farmers**, allowing them to purchase agricultural and horticultural implements from any empanelled firm of their choice. The proposal allows farmers to avail subsidy of 50 per cent on a list of 61 approved agricultural and horticultural implements under various schemes for the current fiscal 2014-15. This decision would enable the farmers to negotiate price with the supplier of their choice and avail subsidy accordingly. This would also help in stabilisation of prices of subsidised equipments in the market, besides giving a fillip to farm mechanisation and effective management and disposal of crop residues in order to save the environment from pollution.
- **Uttarakhand cabinet has approved a pension scheme for farmers** that would benefit all those farmers doing farming on two hectare piece of land. The farmers will get a monthly pension of Rs 800 under this scheme
- **The Jammu and Kashmir government plans to introduce 'HORTNET' portal** to bring modernisation in the horticulture sector and facilitate the farmers and growers for meeting their day-to-day needs
- **The Department of Food, Supplies and Consumer Affairs, Government of Delhi, has started work** on the setting up of a comprehensive web based, real time tracking system for effective implementation of the Public Distribution System to curb the menace of diversion of rations meant for lakhs of families which are below the poverty line. It will be implemented by the Delhi State Civil Supplies Corporation (DSCSC) Limited which is responsible for supplying foodgrains from the six Food Corporation of India (FCI) godowns in Delhi to about 2,500 Fair Price Shops (FPS) across the city.

EXPORT

- **The Government has imposed a minimum export price of \$450/tonne on potatoes** to prevent shortage in the domestic market and tame rising prices. As per DGFT notification, exporters will not be allowed to ship out consignments of potatoes, both fresh and frozen, priced below \$450 with immediate effect. This follows similar restrictions imposed on onion exports last week where DGFT had fixed an MEP of \$300 on onions.
- **The Agricultural and Processed Food Export Development Authority (APEDA) has imposed mandatory laboratory testing on potatoes and green chillies before export.** This decision was taken after, Saudi Arabia banned the import of green chillies from India due to the presence of a higher-than-permissible level of pesticide residues with effect from May 30, 2014. Also a recent communication by the Federal Services for Veterinary and Phytosanitary Surveillance (FSVPS) of the Russian Federation informed that 23 consignments of Indian potatoes have been intercepted with pests and diseases. It demanded that stringent action be taken
- **India has exempted Bhutan from any ban or quantitative restrictions** on export of milk powder, wheat, edible oil, pulses and non-basmati rice.

IMPORT

- **As per DGFT notification the ban on imports of milk and milk products** (including chocolates and chocolate products and candies/ confectionery/ food preparations with milk or milk solids as an ingredient) from China is extended till 23.6.2015 or until further orders, whichever is earlier. India does not import milk products from China but has imposed the ban as a preventive measure. The ban was earlier imposed in September 2008 due to presence of melamine, used for making plastics and fertiliser.

SUGAR

- **The Government of Maharashtra has decided to exempt sugarcane purchase tax for 2013-14** in order to help the recession-hit sugar industry and offer remunerative prices to cane farmers. As a result of this proposal, Rs 700 crore became available to the sugar industry for paying the remunerative price to the farmers. A provision enabling notification for same is being made in the Sugarcane Purchase Tax Act.
- **The Union Government has decided to extend the export incentive scheme on raw sugar** till the end of September 2015 to enable mills to clear the unpaid dues to farmers. The government has simultaneously approved an export incentive of Rs 3,300 per tonne for the months of June and July, which is almost 45 per cent more than that approved for April and May.

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