

21.10.2016



NEC focuses on high-value agricultural products

To address the communication bottleneck of the region, the North Eastern Council on Thursday said it is focussing more on promoting high-value agricultural products for niche markets.

“Given the prohibitive transportation cost in the North East, we cannot compete everywhere. The region must find niche markets and should concentrate on high-value products,” North Eastern Council (NEC) secretary Ram Muivah said on the sidelines of a two-day conference on agriculture-horticulture entrepreneurship in the region.

The North Eastern region has two important advantages — climate and rainfall — over other places in the country, he added.

“Considering these aspects, the NEC is focussing more on promoting such agricultural products giving higher returns and are aimed at niche markets. Some such products include kiwi fruit, stevia and lemongrass,” Mr. Muivah said.

NEC is currently encouraging farmers to produce large cardamom and kiwi fruit in Arunachal Pradesh, lemon grass and stevia in Manipur and tea in Tripura and Sikkim, he added.

The NEC chief further said that the organisation is also helping entrepreneurs in areas like milk production by murreh buffalo in both Manipur and Arunachal Pradesh and fishery, dairy and honey bee output in Nagaland.

Asked about the funding to farmers, Mr. Muivah said: “We are giving grants between Rs three crore and Rs 12 crore to each state in the Northeast for agriculture and horticulture sector.”

The funding pattern consists of 90 per cent assistance from the NEC, while 10 per cent is funded by the State government. - PTI

Cotton price touches all-time high in Karimnagar



Cotton price soared to an all-time high in various agricultural market yards in Karimnagar district, thanks to the demand in the international market. However, incessant rains and stagnation of water in fields had become a cause for concern for farmers who had poor yield.

As against the market price of Rs. 4,160 per quintal fixed by the Cotton Corporation of India (CCI), cotton was being purchased by private traders at all market yards at a whopping price of over Rs. 5,000 per quintal. At Jammikunta market yard, cotton was sold at Rs. 5,400 per quintal and in Karimnagar town, it was sold at Rs. 5,150 per quintal.

But farmers remained a disappointed lot as they could not reap riches owing to poor yield following incessant rains in the recent past.

With the onset of khariff, the State government had asked farmers to not cultivate cotton as there was slump in the international market and they would not get adequate price for their produce.

Against the normal area of cultivation in 2.26 lakh hectares in the integrated Karimnagar district, cotton was cultivated only in 1.6 lakh hectares. During the initial season, cotton did not grow owing to dry weather conditions. Subsequently, heavy rains damaged the existing crop by way of pest attack and lesser yield. The cotton crop that otherwise provides three harvests came down to a single harvest as the result of incessant rains.

“When we get a bumper harvest, the cotton price would be so less that we would be forced to go for distress sale. Now there is lesser yield, but higher price ever. It is time for the government to increase the MSP to Rs. 6,000 per quintal and procure the same through CCI,” urged Ramreddy, a farmer from Gopalraopeta village of Karimnagar mandal.



Centre to establish Krishi Vigyan Kendras in 687 districts



The Centre has said that it will establish at least one Krishi Vigyan Kendra in each of the 687 districts of the country to provide technical assistance to farmers. Union Agriculture Minister Radha Mohan Singh announced this while interacting via video conference with all the Krishi Vigyan Kendra experts, district level officers associated with agriculture development and progressive farmers of 12 states.

He also called upon the farmers to use the residual husk after paddy farming to make organic fertilizer, in paper making and card-board industry and as animal feed, saying this will prevent the adverse effect of husk burning on the environment.

Rajasthan for integrating agriculture segments to raise farmers' income

Rajasthan Agriculture Minister Prabhu Lal Saini on Friday stressed on the need of integrating various segments of agriculture, including horticulture and poultry, for overall development of the sector and doubling farmers' income by the year 2022. "For empowerment of farmers, we need to enhance production, nutrition value and quality-based competition. Horticulture, olericulture, poultry and fisheries should be integrated with agriculture for overall development of the sector," Saini said while delivering inaugural address at the regional conference on doubling farmers' income. He said the state government has formed a policy for agriculture marketing in the interest of marginal farmers.

Saini said the Rajasthan government is organising global agriculture meet from November 9-11 with an objective of promoting agriculture. It will be attended by farmers, technologists, agribusiness companies and others.

Neeraja Adidam, Joint Secretary of the Union Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare said innovating efforts should be made to attract new generation towards the agriculture sector.

"We need to come up with a business model for the agriculture sector. We need to show the light to the young generation so that they come to this sector," she said.

The conference is organised by NABARD and government of Rajasthan.