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Farmers being encouraged to construct farm ponds



The govt. will provide the complete unit cost of the ponds under MGNREGS

In a bid to recharge the ground water table and enable farmers to provide water to domestic animals in summer, the Agriculture Department is promoting the construction of farm ponds. Farmers will be provided with the complete unit cost of farm ponds under the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MNREGS).

Somasundra, Joint Director of Agriculture, and Nagendra, Agriculture Officer, told *The Hindu* that farmers who have obtained job cards under the MNREGS could construct the ponds in their fields and claim the stipulated amount.

The government has set an amount of ₹87, 000 for each pond, they said.

The department has organised a drive in the district to educate farmers about the scheme. Officers from the department are visiting villages enlightening farmers and prevailing upon them to submit their

applications. The officers are also educating farmers about the scheme at Raitha Samparka Kendras (RSK).

Besides the ponds, farmers are also being advised to build vermicompost pits. The government will bear the complete cost of the construction of the pits. Farmers will be given an amount of ₹22, 000 for each pit. Of this, 60% covers the labour cost and 40% is for materials. Vermicompost pits will enable farmers to generate organic manure besides reducing the use of chemical fertilisers.

Mr. Nagendra said that officials from the Agriculture and Revenue Departments would visit the fields of those farmers who have applied for the construction of ponds and pits to examine the feasibility and the suitability of the land for the same.

It may be recalled here that the district administration has been constructing cement tanks in villages to provide water to domestic animals as most of the tanks across the district have been dried up.

The zilla panchayat and the Karnataka Rural Drinking Water Supply and Sanitation Department have also taken up certain measures to recharge the groundwater table in villages across the district.

Mysuru district has been dealing with back-to-back drought for a few years now.