



Centre allows growers in A.P. to sell excess FCV tobacco without penalty for 2023-24 crop year

The nod comes following the initiative of BJP MP from Rajahmundry Daggubati Purandeswari, says Tobacco Board Chairman Yashwanth Kumar

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BJP MP Daggubati Purandeswari and Tobacco Board Chairman Ch. Yashwanth Kumar with Union Minister for Industries and Commerce Piyush Goyal during their recent visit to New Delhi. | Photo Credit: Special Arrangement

Union Minister of Commerce and Industry Piyush Goyal has accepted the request of the tobacco farmers from Andhra Pradesh to sell their excess produce without penalty for the 2023-24 crop year.

Though the Tobacco Board had authorised farmers to grow 142 million kg (MKG) of FCV tobacco for the crop year, the farmers had produced more than 206 MKG. "Hence, they faced problem while auctioning the excess tobacco," Yashwanth Kumar Chidipothu, Chairman of Tobacco Board, told The Hindu.

Revealing the decision of the Union Minister for the benefit of the farmers during a stakeholders' meet held recently, Mr. Yashwanth Kumar said BJP Member of Parliament from Rajahmundry Daggubati Purandeswari helped the farmers get these approvals.

Mr. Yashwanth said the authorisation for sale of excess tobacco and exemption from penalty were applicable to farmers in Andhra Pradesh, and not Karnataka.

He said that the farmers in Karnataka had already benefited twice, whereas the growers in A.P. got the chance with respect to authorisation to sell excess tobacco only once.

The Union Minister had also accepted the proposal to increase the strength of employees in the Tobacco Board from 248 to 419, he said.

Mr. Yashwanth Kumar also said that the Centre also accepted subvention of 3% interest on loans availed of by the farmers for remodeling, or repairing the existing barns. It would be implemented through the Agriculture Infrastructure Fund, he added. He said farmers were availing of loans at 9% interest from banks.

The period of validity for registration as tobacco growers would also be increased from the existing one year to three years, and they would be allowed to register through online procedure as well, Mr. Yashwanth Kumar said.

He said the Union Minister ordered the Central Tobacco Research Institute (CTRI) officials to find an alternative to sulfate of potash (SOP) to be used in tobacco growing. The Minister also instructed the CTRI to do research on farm mechanisation technics to reduce the burden on the workforce.

Source: <https://www.thehindu.com/news/national/andhra-pradesh/centre-allows-growers-in-ap-to-sell-excess-fcv-tobacco-without-penalty-for-2023-24-crop-year/article68359917.ece>