

Control chilli crop size to maintain prices: Farmers urge government

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HYDERABAD: Chilli farmers from Andhra Pradesh (AP) and Telangana State (TS) are calling for regulation of the crop on the lines of tobacco and have submitted memorandums to the agriculture ministers in both the states and to the union ministry of agriculture.

They are calling for regulation of chilli acreage and fixing up of a minimum support price in the wake of prices falling by 60% this season due to a 45% increase in cultivated area. The



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farmers have also been suffering due to falling exports on the back of devaluation of the currency and increased incentives offered by competing countries for exports.

Samba Reddy, a farmer from Narsakkapalle in Warrangal district of Telangana and member of the Federation of All India Farmers Association (FAIFA), said, "Last week, we have submitted a memorandum to the agriculture ministers of AP, TS and the Centre to control chilli crop in line with tobacco by fixing a crop acreage, taking care of its offtake and providing a minimum support price of Rs 75 per kg."

The tobacco crop is controlled by the Tobacco Board which decides on the crop size and prices leading to more stable prices.

"Within a span of 10 years, the cost of cultivation of chillies shot up from a mere Rs 30,000 to more than Rs1 lakh per acre. Demonetisation also added to the costs while seed quality, which is a matter of concern, has been increasing every year," said V. V. Venkat Reddy, another farmer and representative of FAIFA.

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Under the banner of FAIFA, the association is also demanding creation of additional cold storage facilities.

"The existing cold storages are all full and the farmers may need 100 more cold storages to mop up the surplus," said Ch.Thirupathi Reddy, a farmer from Gudepally in Telangana.

India approximately contributes to 25% of the world's chilli requirement and is a leader in chilli exports followed by China with 24%. The crop plays a significant role in Indian economy by providing employment to millions of people at various levels including farmers and farm labourers, according to FAIFA.

Source: <http://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/agriculture/control-chilli-crop-size-to-maintain-prices-farmers-urge-government/articleshow/58964003.cms>