

Government banking on organic to boost agri exports

Providing relief to agri-sector major Monsanto, the Supreme Court on Tuesday set aside a Delhi High Court order invalidating Monsanto Technology's patents on BT cotton seeds.

Published: 09th January 2019

NEW DELHI: A month after launching Agriculture Exports Policy, the Central government is now banking on promotion of organic produce and organic processed food to help increase the income of farmers. It is likely to announce more incentives for organic farmers and food processors. "We cannot increase the income of farmers if we do not encourage them to go for value-added agriculture. In the next few months, our focus will be to promote organic farming in a big way, bringing farmers and organic food producers together," said a senior official from the Agriculture Ministry.

The Agriculture Ministry is already working closely with the Commerce Ministry to bring farmers and the food processing industry together. "New policy initiatives cannot be successful without private sector investment in the agriculture value chain. Going organic may offer Indian farmers crucial additional source of income and, at the same time, encourage exports of both organic products. The ministry is working on more incentives for entrepreneurs working on farm produce exports," said a senior Commerce Ministry official.

However, exposure to foreign markets still remains a challenge. The official added that the ministry is working on bringing farmers, food entrepreneurs and foreign importers together, so that they can gain access to the export farmers. The government has also roped in Trade Promotion Council of India to showcase innovation in organic produce to different export markets. "Organic can be a game-changer for farmers. There is a lot of demand for organic food produce in the US and European countries.

There are many entrepreneurs working on food innovation that is suitable for export markets. We are planning to bring all the stakeholders together and will showcase these products to various export markets," said Mohit Singla, chairman, Trade Promotion Council of India. Currently, the organic processed food accounts for just 5.5 per cent of the exports.

Source: <http://www.newindianexpress.com/business/2019/jan/09/court-backs-monsanto-on-bt-cotton-patent-1922439.html>